Essays

MICHEL DE MONTAIGNE
1533–1592

Essays

Essais

Translated from the French with AI (Claude) and edited

FORAGE
forage.com

Essays · Michel de Montaigne (1533–1592)

Translated from the French with AI (Claude) and edited. Parallel-text edition, Forage, October 2026. forage.com/montaigne/essays

French text: the posthumous edition of 1595 (Paris: Abel L'Angelier), edited by Marie de Gournay, in its original spelling, as reprinted from the Bibliothèque nationale copy in *Essais de Montaigne (self-édition)*, ed. G.-E. Michaud, 4 vols. (Paris: Firmin-Didot, 1907–1909), via the proofread transcription at Project Gutenberg (www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/48529) (eBooks 48529, 49168 and 58801; public domain). Michaud's modern-French version, summaries and notes are omitted. The 1595 text does not mark the layers of Montaigne's revisions. The 1595 edition printed essay I.14 as I.40; it is restored here to its usual place and number. English: translated from the French with AI (Claude), then edited for accuracy and consistency. Not reviewed by a human specialist. Free to reuse under CC BY-SA 4.0. Margin numbers are book, essay and paragraph; Montaigne's text runs on with few breaks, and the paragraphs follow the 1595 indentations and the section breaks marked in the 1907 reprint. Where the original uses a term now considered offensive, a neutral term is shown in brackets instead.

The original text is in the public domain. This translation is free to share and adapt under the Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International license (CC BY-SA 4.0): creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0

Set in Source Serif 4, with Gentium Book Plus.

CONTENTS

Introduction xv

To the Reader 1

I.1 By Diverse Means We Arrive at the Same End 3

I.2 Of Sadness 9

I.3 Our Feelings Reach Out Beyond Us 13

I.4 How the Soul Discharges Its Passions on False Objects When the True Are Wanting 21

I.5 Whether the Governor of a Besieged Place Should Go Out to Parley 25

I.6 The Hour of Parley Is Dangerous 29

I.7 That Intention Is Judge of Our Actions 33

I.8 Of Idleness 35

I.9 Of Liars 37

Liars need good memories 39

I.10 Of Prompt or Slow Speech 43

I.11 Of Prognostications 47

I.12 Of Constancy 53

I.13 The Ceremony of the Meeting of Kings 57

I.14 That the Taste of Good and Evil Depends in Large Part on Our Opinion of Them 59

The objection from pain 65

Three ways of living with money 73

Fortune supplies only the matter 78

I.15 One Is Punished for Holding a Place Obstinately Without Reason 81

I.16 Of the Punishment of Cowardice 83

I.17 A Trait of Certain Ambassadors 85

I.18 Of Fear 89

I.19 That We Should Not Judge of Our Happiness Until After Our Death 93

I.20 That to Philosophize Is to Learn to Die 97

Getting used to death 102

Nature's speech on death 108

Taking off death's mask 112

I.21 Of the Power of the Imagination 113

Spells of impotence 115

In defense of an unruly member 118

True stories and possible ones 123

I.22 One Man's Profit Is Another Man's Loss 125

I.23 Of Custom, and Not Easily Changing an Accepted Law 127

A catalog of strange customs 130

Conscience born of custom 135

Laws nobody can read 137

Against changing accepted laws 139

When necessity overrides the law 143

I.24 Different Outcomes of the Same Plan 145

Augustus and Cinna 146

Fortune in art, war and counsel 148

Trust against conspiracies 150

I.25 Of Pedantry 157

Learning without judgment 160

Teaching virtue, Persian and Spartan 166

I.26 Of the Education of Children 171

To the Countess of Gurson 174

A well-made head 176

The world as schoolbook 179

Philosophy's cheerful face 188

Matter before words 197

Montaigne's own education 201

I.27 It Is Folly to Measure the True and False by Our Own Capacity 209

I.28 Of Friendship 215

Kinds of friendship 216

Common friendships 222

Why the Discourse is withheld 227

I.29 Twenty-Nine Sonnets of Étienne de La Boétie 229

The sonnets 230

I.30 Of Moderation 241

I.31 Of Cannibals 247

A plain witness 249

Barbarous and wild 250

War and the eating of prisoners 254

Three visitors at Rouen 260

I.32 That We Must Be Sparing in Judging Divine Ordinances 263
I.33 Of Fleeing from Pleasures at the Cost of Life 267
I.34 Fortune Is Often Found in the Path of Reason 269
I.35 Of a Lack in Our Administrations 273
I.36 Of the Custom of Wearing Clothes 275
I.37 Of Cato the Younger 279
I.38 How We Weep and Laugh at the Same Thing 283
I.39 Of Solitude 287
Withdrawing into oneself 289
How to live in retirement 294
Glory has no place in retreat 297
I.40 A Consideration upon Cicero 299
I.41 Of Not Sharing One's Glory 305
I.42 Of the Inequality That Is Between Us 309
Kings are only men 311
The burdens of kingship 314
I.43 Of Sumptuary Laws 319
I.44 Of Sleep 323
I.45 Of the Battle of Dreux 327
I.46 Of Names 329
I.47 Of the Uncertainty of Our Judgment 335
I.48 Of Warhorses 343
I.49 Of Ancient Customs 353
I.50 Of Democritus and Heraclitus 359
I.51 Of the Vanity of Words 363
I.52 Of the Frugality of the Ancients 367
I.53 Of a Saying of Caesar 369
I.54 Of Vain Subtleties 371
I.55 Of Smells 375
I.56 Of Prayers 379
Scripture in the common tongue 382
I.57 Of Age 389
II.1 Of the Inconstancy of Our Actions 393
II.2 Of Drunkenness 401
My father 405
Wisdom and frenzy 407
II.3 A Custom of the Island of Cea 411
The case against suicide 413
Examples of voluntary death 417

The old woman of Cea 424

II.4 Business Tomorrow 427

II.5 Of Conscience 431

II.6 Of Practice 435
The fall from the horse 437
Portraying oneself 443

II.7 Of Rewards of Honor 447

II.8 Of the Affection of Fathers for Their Children 451
Why love flows downward 452
Sharing with grown children 454
Against the rod 456
Knowing when to step aside 458
The deceived old master 461
Wills and widows 464
Children of the mind 469

II.9 Of the Arms of the Parthians 473

II.10 Of Books 477
The poets he loves 480
Plutarch and Seneca 482
Cicero's long preambles 483
Historians 486
Notes in the back of his books 489

II.11 Of Cruelty 493
Socrates and Cato 495
An innocence owed to luck 499
Hating cruelty 501
Kindness to animals 505

II.12 Apology for Raymond Sebond 509
Translating Sebond 509
The first objection: faith and reason 511
A religion received like any other 516
The second objection: weak arguments 520
Man without grace 521
Presumption, our natural malady 524
How animals communicate 525
The skills of animals 527
Beasts reason too 532
Judging what we do not understand 541
The virtues of animals 545
Human war, animal war 548
Androdus and the lion 551
The beauty of bodies 557
What reason costs us 561
The comforts of ignorance 566
What the philosophers found 576

Three answers: found, unfindable, still seeking 578
Dogmatists who doubt 583
Measuring God by ourselves 590
Setting bounds to God 601
The heavens and the body 615
What is the soul? 622
Doctors and generation 637
A warning to his reader 639
Where knowledge stops 642
A judgment that shifts with the body 645
Holding to the old beliefs 652
Climate, desire and the sovereign good 659
Laws and natural law 662
Interpreting texts 670
The senses 672
Waking and dreaming 681
Animals and the senses 682
No firm ground 686
Being and passing 687

II.13 Of Judging Another's Death 691
Deaths that take their time 695

II.14 How Our Mind Hinders Itself 699

II.15 That Our Desire Is Increased by Difficulty 701
Difficulty in faith and marriage 704
An unguarded house 705

II.16 Of Glory 707
Glory for its own sake 709
Fortune makes reputations 711
To be talked about 715
A useful falsehood 718

II.17 Of Presumption 721
Gestures of pride 722
Valuing what is not mine 723
Never pleased with my work 726
Beauty and the body 729
Clumsy hands, a free soul 732
Without ambition 735
Against dissimulation 737
A memory full of holes 740
Irresolution 745
The one thing I value in myself 748
Not esteeming others enough 750
The notable men of his time 753

II.18 Of Giving the Lie 757
The book that made me 758
Lying and giving the lie 760

II.19 Of Freedom of Conscience 763
The Emperor Julian 763
Freedom of conscience 766

II.20 We Taste Nothing Pure 769
Minds too sharp for affairs 771

II.21 Against Idleness 773
The death of Moley Moluch 775

II.22 Of Riding Post 779

II.23 Of Bad Means Used for a Good End 781
Gladiators 782

II.24 Of the Greatness of Rome 785

II.25 Of Not Pretending to Be Sick 787

II.26 Of Thumbs 791

II.27 Cowardice, the Mother of Cruelty 793
Seconds in duels 795
Learning to fence 797
Why tyrants kill 800
Torments beyond death 802

II.28 All Things Have Their Season 805

II.29 Of Virtue 809
Pyrrho's consistency 810
The widows of India 811
Fate and foreknowledge 813

II.30 Of a Monstrous Child 819
What we call monsters 820

II.31 Of Anger 821
Never punish in anger 822
The preacher and the sermon 823
Hidden anger and my own 826

II.32 A Defense of Seneca and Plutarch 829
Bodin against Plutarch 830

II.33 The Story of Spurina 837
Caesar's two passions 838
Spurina's face 843

II.34 Observations on Julius Caesar's Methods of Making War 847
Caesar's daring 850
Caesar's loyal soldiers 854

II.35 Of Three Good Women 857
A humble wife 858
Arria 859
Paulina and Seneca 861

Living for another's sake 864

II.36 Of the Most Excellent Men 867
Homer 867
Alexander 869
Epaminondas 871

II.37 Of the Resemblance of Children to Their Fathers 875
The stone arrives 875
The mystery of heredity 879
A family without doctors 881
Against the physicians 883
A science at war with itself 889
Taking the waters 895
Two stories 897
How remedies are found 901
To Madame de Duras 903

III.1 Of the Useful and the Honorable 907
Necessary vices 908
An honest negotiator 909
Traitors betrayed 915
When necessity overrides faith 919
Epaminondas again 921

III.2 Of Repentance 925
Why I rarely repent 927
Order at home 929
All of a piece 934
The false repentance of age 937

III.3 Of Three Kinds of Company 941
Men of worth 947
Women 948
Books 950
The library in the tower 952

III.4 Of Diversion 955
Diversions public and private 956
Diverting passions 960
Little things move us 962
The power of imagination 965

III.5 On Some Verses of Virgil 967
The mind follows the body 970
Daring to say it 971
The unspoken act 974
Marriage and love 976
Rules made by men 981
Jealousy 991
The language of the poets 1000
The ridiculous act 1005

Concealment and desire 1008
My portrait, all of it 1016
Love in old age 1019
The same mold 1025

III.6 Of Coaches 1027
Coaches and seasickness 1029
The spending of princes 1031
Roman spectacles 1035
Our narrow knowledge 1037
The New World 1039
Two kings 1042
The five suns 1045

III.7 Of the Disadvantage of Greatness 1049
The burden of kings 1051

III.8 Of the Art of Conversation 1055
Conversation, the best exercise 1056
Order in debate 1059
Learning without judgment 1061
Against my own impatience 1063
The credit of rank 1065
Fortune and outcomes 1068
Testing borrowed wit 1071
Banter among friends 1074
Judging a man's work 1075
Reading Tacitus 1077

III.9 Of Vanity 1081
Running a household 1084
Trusting servants 1089
Living among civil wars 1092
Against innovation 1094
Rome and the survival of states 1097
Memory and public speaking 1098
I add but do not correct 1101
Safety in a lawless country 1102
The burden of obligation 1104
Danger at home 1108
Paris and the world 1110
The pleasures of travel 1112
Marriage and absence 1114
Traveling in old age 1116
The book as a rule of life 1119
Dying away from home 1121
Foreign ways 1126
Is travel vanity? 1128
Precepts beyond our reach 1129
Unfit for public life 1132
On my wandering style 1136

Love of ancient Rome 1138
Look into yourself 1142

III.10 Of Husbanding Your Will 1145
Mayor of Bordeaux 1147
Nature's needs and habit's 1151
The Mayor and Montaigne 1154
Judging one's own party 1155
Stopping passions at the start 1158
His record as mayor 1165

III.11 Of the Lame 1171
How miracles are born 1173
Professing ignorance 1176
Witches 1177
The lame 1180

III.12 Of Physiognomy 1183
Richer than we think 1185
Peasants and death 1187
War on his doorstep 1188
The plague 1195
Forethought of ills 1198
Socrates' defense 1200
Borrowed flowers 1204
Beauty and the face 1206
Goodness from nature 1208
Saved by his face 1209

III.13 Of Experience 1215
Laws and interpretation 1215
The injustice of justice 1221
Studying myself 1224
Judging others, advising kings 1228
My experience of health 1231
The hold of habit 1237
Trusting appetite 1240
Letting illness run its course 1242
Consoling myself for the stone 1244
Sleep, food and daily habits 1251
Dying by degrees 1258
Accepting pleasure 1264
Living fittingly 1266
Passing the time 1269
Body and mind together 1272

INTRODUCTION

In 1571, at thirty-eight, Michel de Montaigne retired from the law courts of Bordeaux to the tower library of his family's château, meaning to spend his remaining years in quiet among his books. Instead he started writing down whatever passed through his mind, and called the pieces *essais*: trials, attempts, tests of his own judgment. Two books appeared in 1580, a third in 1588, and he went on adding to all three, in the margins of his own copy, until his death in 1592.

The essays range over anything: friendship, cannibals, thumbs, coaches, sleep, cruelty, the education of children, the smell of things, the Roman Empire, kidney stones. They wander, contradict themselves and break off into anecdotes and quotations, and always come back to the one subject Montaigne claims to know: "I am myself the matter of my book." Out of that self-scrutiny comes a steady doubt about human certainty, summed up in the motto he took, with the emblem of a pair of balanced scales, "What do I know?", and a humane suspicion of anyone who calls other people's customs barbarous.

This edition gives the text of 1595, published three years after Montaigne's death by his "adopted daughter" Marie de Gournay from his final revisions, in its original spelling. The essays are numbered in the standard way, by book and chapter; the many quotations from Latin, Greek and Italian poets and historians are translated in the English column.

To the Reader

Au lecteur

Montaigne tells the reader the book has only a private, domestic aim: it is a plain portrait of himself.

FRENCH

ENGLISH

Au lecteur

C’est icy vn Liure de bonne foy, Lecteur. Il t’aduertit dés l’entree, que ie ne m’y suis proposé aucune fin, que domestique et priuee: ie n’y ay eu nulle consideration de ton seruice, ny de ma gloire: mes forces ne sont pas capables d’vn tel dessein. Ie l’ay voué à la commodité particuliere de mes parens et amis: à ce que m’ayans perdu (ce qu’ils ont à faire bien tost) ils y puissent retrouuer aucuns traicts de mes conditions et humeurs, et que par ce moyen ils nourrissent plus entiere et plus vifue la connoissance qu’ils ont eu de moy. Si c’eust esté pour rechercher la faueur du monde, ie me fusse mieus paré et me presanterois en vne marche estudiee.

This is a book written in good faith, reader. It warns you from the outset that in it I have set myself no goal but a domestic and private one. I have given no thought in it either to your service or to my own glory; my powers are not equal to such a design. I have dedicated it to the private convenience of my relatives and friends, so that when they have lost me (as they soon must) they may find in it again some features of my character and temperament, and by this means keep the knowledge they have had of me more complete and more alive. Had my purpose been to seek the world’s favor, I would have adorned myself better and would present myself in a studied bearing.

Ie veux qu’on m’y voye en ma façon simple, naturelle et ordinaire, sans contantion et artifice: car c’est moy que ie peins. Mes defauts s’y liront au vif et ma forme naifue, autant que la reuerence publique me l’a permis. Que si i’eusse esté entre ces nations qu’on dit viure encore souz la douce liberté des premieres loix de nature, ie t’asseure que ie m’y fusse tres-volontiers peint tout entier, et tout nud. Ainsi, Lecteur, ie suis moy-mesme la matiere de mon liure, ce n’est pas raison que tu employes ton loisir en vn subiect si friuole et si vain. A Dieu donq. De Montaigne, ce premier de mars, mille cinq cens quattre vins.

I want to be seen here in my simple, natural, ordinary fashion, without straining or artifice; for it is myself that I portray. My faults will be read here to the life, and my natural form, as far as respect for the public has allowed me. Had I been among those nations that are said to live still in the sweet freedom of nature’s first laws, I assure you I would very gladly have portrayed myself here entire, and wholly naked. Thus, reader, I am myself the matter of my book; it is not reasonable that you should spend your leisure on so frivolous and vain a subject. So farewell. From Montaigne, this first day of March, fifteen hundred and eighty.

I.1 By Diverse Means We Arrive at the Same End

Par diuers moyens on arrive à pareille fin
Victors are sometimes softened by submission, sometimes by defiance; Montaigne finds man a marvelously vain, varied, and wavering subject.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
1.1.1	LA plus commune façon d'amollir les cœurs de ceux qu'on a offencez, lors qu'ayans la vengeance en main, ils nous tiennent à leur mercy, c'est de les esmouuoir par submission, à commiseration et à pitié: toutesfois la brauerie, la constance, et la resolution, moyens tous contraires, ont quelquesfois seruy à ce mesme effect.	The most common way of softening the hearts of those we have offended, when they hold vengeance in their hands and have us at their mercy, is to move them to commiseration and pity by submission. Yet defiance, steadfastness and resolution, means quite the opposite, have sometimes served to the same effect.
1.1.2	Edouard Prince de Galles, celuy qui regenta si long temps nostre Guienne: personnage duquel les conditions et la fortune ont beaucoup de notables parties de grandeur; ayant esté bien fort offencé par les Limosins, et prenant leur ville par force, ne peut estre arresté par les cris du peuple, et des femmes, et enfans abandonnez à la boucherie, luy criants mercy, et se iettans à ses pieds: iusqu'à ce que passant tousiours outre dans la ville, il apperçeut trois Gentilshommes François, qui d'vne hardiesse incroyable soustenoient seuls l'effort de son armee victorieuse. La consideration et le respect d'vne si notable vertu, reboucha premierement la pointe de sa cholere: et commença par ces trois, à faire misericorde à tous les autres habitans de la ville.	Edward, Prince of Wales, the one who governed our Guyenne for so long—a man whose character and fortune have many notable elements of greatness—having been very gravely offended by the people of Limoges, and taking their town by force, could not be stopped by the cries of the people, or of the women and children abandoned to the slaughter, who cried to him for mercy and threw themselves at his feet. That lasted until, pressing on ever farther into the town, he caught sight of three French gentlemen who, with incredible daring, were holding out alone against the onslaught of his victorious army. Consideration and respect for such remarkable valor first blunted the edge of his anger; and, beginning with these three, he showed mercy to all the other inhabitants of the town.[1]
1.1.3	Scanderberch, Prince de l'Epire, suyuant vn soldat des siens pour le tuer, et ce soldat ayant essayé par toute espece d'humilité et de supplication de l'appaiser, se resolut à toute extremité de l'attendre l'espee au poing: cette sienne resolution arresta sus bout la furie de son maistre, qui pour luy auoir veu prendre vn si honorable party, le reçeut en grace. Cet exemple pourra souffrir autre interpretation de ceux, qui n'auront leu la prodigieuse force et vaillance de ce Prince là.	Scanderbeg, prince of Epirus, was pursuing one of his soldiers to kill him; and the soldier, having tried every kind of humility and supplication to appease him, resolved as a last resort to await him sword in hand. This resolution stopped his master's fury dead, and Scanderbeg, having seen him take so honorable a course, received him back into favor. This example may admit of another interpretation from those who have not read of the prodigious strength and valor of that prince.[2]

1 Edward the Black Prince (1330–1376), eldest son of Edward III; he sacked Limoges in 1370.
2 George Kastrioti, called Scanderbeg (1405–1468), Albanian leader who resisted the Ottoman Turks.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
1.1.4	L'Empereur Conrad troisiesme, ayant assiegé Guelphe Duc de Bauieres, ne voulut condescendre à plus douces conditions, quelques viles et lasches satisfactions qu'on luy offrist, que de permettre seulement aux gentils-femmes qui estoient assiegees auec le Duc, de sortir leur honneur sauue, à pied, auec ce qu'elles pourroient emporter sur elles. Elles d'vn cœur magnanime, s'aduiserent de charger sur leurs espaules leurs maris, leurs enfans, et le Duc mesme. L'Empereur print si grand plaisir à voir la gentillesse de leur courage, qu'il en pleura d'aise, et amortit toute cette aigreur d'inimitié mortelle et capitale qu'il auoit portee contre ce Duc: et dés lors en auant traita humainement luy et les siens.	The Emperor Conrad III, having besieged Welf, Duke of Bavaria, would not stoop to milder terms, however base and cowardly the amends offered him, than merely to allow the gentlewomen besieged with the Duke to come out with their honor safe, on foot, with whatever they could carry on their persons. They, with magnanimous hearts, hit upon the idea of carrying on their shoulders their husbands, their children, and the Duke himself. The Emperor took such pleasure in seeing the nobility of their courage that he wept for joy, and quenched all the bitterness of the mortal and capital enmity he had borne against this Duke; and from then on he treated him and his people humanely.[3]
1.1.5	L'vn et l'autre de ces deux moyens m'emporteroit aysement: car i'ay vne merueilleuse lascheté vers la misericorde et mansuetude: tant y a, qu'à mon aduis, ie serois pour me rendre plus naturellement à la compassion, qu'à l'estimation. Si est la pitié passion vitieuse aux Stoiques: ils veulent qu'on secoure les affligez, mais non pas qu'on flechisse et compatisse auec eux. Or ces exemples me semblent plus à propos, d'autant qu'on voit ces ames assaillies et essayees par ces deux moyens, en soustenir l'vn sans s'esbranler, et courber sous l'autre. Il se peut dire, que de rompre son cœur à la commiseration, c'est l'effet de la facilité, debonnaireté, et mollesse: d'où il aduient que les natures plus foibles, comme celles des femmes, des enfans, et du vulgaire, y sont plus subiettes: mais ayant eu à desdaing les larmes et les pleurs, de se rendre à la seule reuerence de la saincte image de la vertu, que c'est l'effect d'vne ame forte et imployable, ayant en affection et en honneur vne vigueur masle, et obstinee.	Either of these two means would easily carry me away, for I have a wonderful weakness toward mercy and gentleness. So much so that, in my opinion, I would be likely to surrender more naturally to compassion than to esteem. Yet to the Stoics pity is a vicious passion: they want us to help the afflicted, but not to bend and suffer along with them. Now these examples seem to me the more to the point because we see these souls, assailed and tested by these two means, withstand one without wavering and bow beneath the other. It may be said that to let one's heart break into commiseration is the effect of easygoingness, good nature and softness; whence it comes that the weaker natures, such as those of women, children and the common people, are more subject to it. But to have disdained tears and weeping, and to yield solely to reverence for the sacred image of virtue—that, it may be said, is the effect of a strong and unbending soul, one that holds in affection and honor a manly and stubborn vigor.
1.1.6	Toutesfois és ames moins genereuses, l'estonnement et l'admiration peuuent faire naistre vn pareil effect: tesmoin le peuple Thebain, lequel ayant mis en Iustice d'accusation capitale, ses Capitaines, pour auoir continué leur charge outre le temps qui leur auoit esté prescript et preordonné, absolut à toute peine Pelopidas, qui plioit sous le faix de telles obiections, et n'employoit à se garantir que requestes et supplications: et au contraire Epaminondas, qui vint à raconter magnifiquement les choses par luy faites, et à les reprocher au peuple d'vne	Yet in less noble souls, amazement and admiration can give rise to a similar effect. Witness the people of Thebes. They had put their captains on trial on a capital charge for continuing in their command beyond the time prescribed and appointed for it. They barely acquitted Pelopidas, who bowed under the weight of such accusations and used only petitions and supplications to defend himself. Epaminondas, on the contrary, came forward to

3 The siege of Weinsberg, in Swabia, in 1140.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
	façon fiere et arrogante, il n'eut pas le cœur de prendre seulement les balotes en main, et se departit: l'assemblee louant grandement la hautesse du courage de ce personnage.	recount in grand style the things he had done and to throw them in the people's face in a proud and arrogant manner; and they did not have the heart even to take the ballots in hand, but broke up, the assembly greatly praising the loftiness of this man's spirit.[4]
1.1.7	Dionysius le vieil, apres des longueurs et difficultés extremes, ayant prins la ville de Rege, et en icelle le Capitaine Phyton, grand homme de bien, qui l'auoit si obstinéement defendue, voulut en tirer vn tragique exemple de vengeance. Il luy dict premierement, comment le iour auant, il auoit faict noyer son fils, et tous ceux de sa parenté. A quoy Phyton respondit seulement, qu'ils en estoient d'vn iour plus heureux que luy. Apres il le fit despouiller, et saisir à des Bourreaux, et le trainer par la ville, en le fouëttant tres ignominieusement et cruellement: et en outre le chargeant de felonnes parolles et contumelieuses. Mais il eut le courage tousiours constant, sans se perdre.	Dionysius the Elder, having taken the city of Rhegium after extreme delays and difficulties, and in it the captain Phyton, a very good man, who had defended it so stubbornly, wanted to make a tragic example of vengeance out of him. First he told him how, the day before, he had had his son drowned, and all his kinsmen. To which Phyton replied only that they were happier than he by one day. Then he had him stripped and seized by executioners and dragged through the city, whipping him most ignominiously and cruelly, and heaping cruel and insulting words on him besides. But Phyton kept his courage constant throughout, never losing himself.[5]
	Et d'vn visage ferme, alloit au contraire ramenteuant à haute voix, l'honorable et glorieuse cause de sa mort, pour n'auoir voulu rendre son païs entre les mains d'vn tyran: le menaçant d'vne prochaine punition des dieux. Dionysius, lisant dans les yeux de la commune de son armee, qu'au lieu de s'animer des brauades de cet ennemy vaincu, au mespris de leur chef, et de son triomphe, elle alloit s'amollissant par l'estonnement d'vne si rare vertu, et marchandoit de se mutiner, et mesmes d'arracher Phyton d'entre les mains de ses sergens, feit cesser ce martyre: et à cachettes l'enuoya noyer en la mer.	And with a steady face he went on, on the contrary, recalling in a loud voice the honorable and glorious cause of his death—that he had refused to deliver his country into the hands of a tyrant—and threatening Dionysius with swift punishment from the gods. Dionysius read in the eyes of the rank and file of his army that, instead of being roused by the defiance of this defeated enemy, in contempt of their leader and his triumph, they were softening in their amazement at such rare valor, and were on the verge of mutiny, even of snatching Phyton from the hands of his guards. So he put an end to this martyrdom and had him secretly drowned in the sea.
1.1.8	Certes c'est vn subiect merueilleusement vain, diuers, et ondoyant, que l'homme: il est malaisé d'y fonder iugement constant et vniforme. Voyla Pompeius qui pardonna à toute la ville des Mamertins, contre laquelle il estoit fort animé, en consideration de la vertu et magnanimité du citoyen Zenon, qui se chargeoit seul de la faute publique, et ne requeroit autre grace que d'en porter seul la peine. Et l'hoste de Sylla, ayant vsé en la ville de Peruse de semblable vertu, n'y gaigna rien, ny pour soy, ny pour les autres.	Truly, man is a marvelously vain, diverse and wavering subject; it is hard to found any constant and uniform judgment on him. Here is Pompey, who pardoned the whole city of the Mamertines, against which he was greatly incensed, in consideration of the virtue and magnanimity of the citizen Zeno, who took the public fault upon himself alone and asked no other favor than to bear the punishment for it alone. And Sulla's host, having shown similar virtue in the city of Perusia, gained nothing by it, either for himself or for the others.[6]

4 Pelopidas and Epaminondas, Theban generals of the 4th century BC; the story is from Plutarch.
5 Dionysius I, tyrant of Syracuse, took Rhegium (Reggio, in Calabria) in 387 BC.

FRENCH	ENGLISH
1.1.9 Et directement contre mes premiers exemples, le plus hardy des hommes et si gratieux aux vaincus Alexandre, forçant apres beaucoup de grandes difficultez la ville de Gaza, rencontra Betis qui y commandoit, de la valeur duquel il auoit, pendant ce siege, senty des preuues merueilleuses, lors seul, abandonné des siens, ses armes despecees, tout couuert de sang et de playes, combatant encores au milieu de plusieurs Macedoniens, qui le chamailloient de toutes parts: et luy dit, tout piqué d'vne si chere victoire: car entre autres dommages, il auoit receu deux fresches blessures sur sa personne: Tu ne mourras pas comme tu as voulu, Betis: fais estat qu'il te faut souffrir toutes les sortes de tourmens qui se pourront inuenter contre un captif.	And directly contrary to my first examples, Alexander, the boldest of men and so gracious to the vanquished, storming the city of Gaza after many great difficulties, came upon Betis, who commanded there and whose valor he had experienced in marvelous proofs during that siege. Betis was then alone, deserted by his men, his armor hacked to pieces, covered all over with blood and wounds, still fighting in the midst of a number of Macedonians who were hammering at him from every side. And Alexander, stung by so costly a victory—for among other losses he had received two fresh wounds on his own person—said to him: "You shall not die as you wished, Betis. Make up your mind that you must suffer every kind of torment that can be devised against a captive."[7]
L'autre, d'vne mine non seulement asseuree, mais rogue et altiere, se tint sans mot dire à ces menaces. Lors Alexandre voyant l'obstination à se taire: A il flechy vn genouil? luy est-il eschappé quelque voix suppliante? Vrayement ie vainqueray ce silence: et si ie n'en puis arracher parole, i'en arracheray au moins du gemissement. Et tournant sa cholere en rage, commanda qu'on luy perçast les talons, et le fit ainsi trainer tout vif, deschirer et desmembrer au cul d'vne charrette. Seroit-ce que la force de courage luy fust si naturelle et commune, que pour ne l'admirer point, il la respectast moins?	The other, with a countenance not only assured but haughty and disdainful, stood without a word in the face of these threats. Then Alexander, seeing his stubborn silence: "Has he bent a knee? Has any suppliant cry escaped him? Truly I will conquer this silence; and if I cannot wring a word from it, I will at least wring a groan." And turning his anger into rage, he ordered his heels to be pierced, and had him dragged alive in this way behind a cart, torn and dismembered. Could it be that strength of courage was so natural and commonplace to him that, not admiring it, he respected it the less?
ou qu'il l'estimast si proprement sienne, qu'en cette hauteur il ne peust souffrir de la veoir en vn autre, sans le despit d'vne passion enuieuse? ou que l'impetuosité naturelle de sa cholere fust incapable d'opposition? De vray, si elle eust receu bride, il est à croire, qu'en la prinse et desolation de la ville de Thebes elle l'eust receue: à veoir cruellement mettre au fil de l'espee tant de vaillans hommes, perdus, et n'ayans plus moyen de defence publique. Car il en fut tué bien six mille, desquels nul ne fut veu ny fuiant, ny demandant mercy: au rebours cerchans, qui çà, qui là, par les rues, à affronter les ennemis victorieux: les prouoquans à les faire mourir d'vne mort honorable.	Or that he considered it so peculiarly his own that he could not bear to see it at such a height in another without the spite of an envious passion? Or that the natural impetuosity of his anger could brook no opposition? Indeed, if it could ever have been bridled, it is likely that it would have been at the capture and destruction of the city of Thebes, at the sight of so many valiant men, lost and with no further means of common defense, being cruelly put to the sword. For a good six thousand of them were killed, of whom not one was seen fleeing or begging for mercy; on the contrary, they sought, some here, some there, through the streets, to confront the victorious enemy, provoking them to grant them an honorable death.[8]
Nul ne fut veu, qui n'essaiast en son dernier souspir, de se venger encores: et à tout les armes du desespoir consoler	Not one was seen who did not try, with his last breath, to avenge himself still, and with the

6 The Mamertines held Messina in Sicily; Perusia is modern Perugia.

FRENCH	ENGLISH
sa mort en la mort de quelque ennemy. Si ne trouua l'affliction de leur vertu aucune pitié: et ne suffit la longueur d'vn iour à assouuir sa vengeance. Ce carnage dura iusques à la derniere goute de sang espandable: et ne s'arresta qu'aux personnes desarmées, vieillards, femmes et enfants, pour en tirer trente mille esclaues.	weapons of despair to console his own death with the death of some enemy. Yet the affliction of their valor found no pity, and the length of a day was not enough to sate his vengeance. This carnage lasted to the last drop of blood that could be shed, and stopped only at the unarmed—old men, women and children—so that thirty thousand slaves might be taken from among them.

8 Alexander destroyed Thebes in 335 BC.
7 Alexander took Gaza in 332 BC; the story is from Quintus Curtius.

I.2 Of Sadness

De la tristesse

Montaigne distrusts sadness, a passion he rarely feels, and shows how great grief strikes people dumb.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
1.2.1	IE suis des plus exempts de cette passion, et ne l'ayme ny l'estime: quoy que le monde ayt entrepris, comme à prix faict, de l'honorer de faueur particuliere. Ils en habillent la sagesse, la vertu, la conscience. Sot et vilain ornement. Les Italiens ont plus sortablement baptisé de son nom la malignité. Car c'est vne qualité tousiours nuisible, tousiours folle: et comme tousiours couarde et basse, les Stoïciens en defendent le sentiment à leurs sages.	I am among those most free from this passion, and I neither love nor esteem it, although the world has undertaken, as if by agreement, to honor it with special favor. They dress up wisdom, virtue and conscience in it: a foolish and ugly ornament. The Italians have more fittingly given its name to malignity. For it is a quality always harmful, always mad; and since it is always cowardly and base, the Stoics forbid their sages to feel it.[1]
1.2.2	Mais le conte dit que Psammenitus Roy d'Ægypte, ayant esté deffait et pris par Cambysez Roy de Perse, voyant passer deuant luy sa fille prisonniere habillee en seruante, qu'on enuoyoit puiser de l'eau, tous ses amis pleurans et lamentans autour de luy, se tint coy sans mot dire, les yeux fichez en terre: et voyant encore tantost qu'on menoit son fils à la mort, se maintint en cette mesme contenance: mais qu'ayant apperçeu vn de ses domestiques conduit entre les captifs, il se mit à battre sa teste, et mener vn dueil extreme.	But the story goes that Psammenitus, king of Egypt, having been defeated and captured by Cambyses, king of Persia, saw his daughter pass before him as a prisoner, dressed as a servant and sent to draw water. While all his friends wept and lamented around him, he stayed still without a word, his eyes fixed on the ground; and seeing soon after that his son was being led to his death, he kept the same countenance. But when he caught sight of one of his household servants being led among the captives, he began to beat his head and show extreme grief.[2]
1.2.3	Cecy se pourroit apparier à ce qu'on vid dernierement d'vn Prince des nostres, qui ayant ouy à Trente, où il estoit, nouuelles de la mort de son frere aisné, mais vn frere en qui consistoit l'appuy et l'honneur de toute sa maison, et bien tost apres d'vn puisné, sa seconde esperance, et ayant soustenu ces deux charges d'vne constance exemplaire, comme quelques iours apres vn de ses gens vint à mourir, il se laissa emporter à ce dernier accident; et quitant sa resolution, s'abandonna au dueil et aux regrets; en maniere qu'aucuns en prindrene argument, qu'il n'auoit esté touché au vif que de cette derniere secousse: mais à la verité ce fut, qu'estant d'ailleurs plein et comblé de tristesse, la moindre surcharge brisa les barrieres de la patience.	This might be paired with what we saw recently of one of our princes. At Trent, where he was, he heard news of the death of his elder brother—a brother on whom rested the support and honor of his whole house—and soon after of a younger brother, his second hope. He bore these two blows with exemplary constancy; but when, a few days later, one of his servants happened to die, he let himself be carried away by this last incident and, abandoning his resolution, gave himself up to grief and lamentation, so much so that some concluded from it that he had been touched to the quick only by this last shock. But in truth it was that, being otherwise full and brimming with sor-

1 The essay is "Of Sadness." Italian tristo means both "sad" and "wicked."

2 Psammenitus (Psamtik III) was defeated by Cambyses in 525 BC; the story is from Herodotus.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
		row, the least extra burden broke down the barriers of his endurance.[3]
	Il s'en pourroit, di-ie, autant iuger de nostre histoire, n'estoit qu'elle adiouste, que Cambyses s'enquerant à Psammenitus, pourquoy ne s'estant esmeu au malheur de son filz et de sa fille, il portoit si impatiemment celuy de ses amis: C'est, respondit-il, que ce seul dernier desplaisir se peut signifier par larmes, les deux premiers surpassans de bien loin tout moyen de se pouuoir exprimer.	The same judgment, I say, might be made of our story, were it not that it adds that when Cambyses asked Psammenitus why, having been unmoved by the misfortune of his son and daughter, he bore that of his friend so impatiently, he answered: "Because only this last sorrow can be expressed by tears; the first two far surpass any means of expression."
1.2.4	A l'auenture reuiendroit à ce propos l'inuention de cet ancien peintre, lequel ayant à representer au sacrifice de Iphigenia le dueil des assistans, selon les degrez de l'interest que chacun apportoit à la mort de cette belle fille innocente, ayant espuisé les derniers efforts de son art, quand ce vint au pere de la vierge, il le peignit le visage couuert, comme si nulle contenance ne pouuoit rapporter ce degré de dueil. Voyla pourquoy les Poëtes feignent cette miserable mere Niobé, ayant perdu premierement sept filz, et puis de suite autant de filles, sur-chargee de pertes, auoir esté en fin transmuee en rocher, *diriguisse malis:* pour exprimer cette morne, muette et sourde stupidité, qui nous transsit, lors que les accidens nous accablent surpassans nostre portee.	Perhaps the invention of that ancient painter would fit here. He had to portray, at the sacrifice of Iphigenia, the grief of the bystanders according to the degree of concern each felt in the death of that beautiful innocent girl; and having exhausted the utmost resources of his art, when he came to the maiden's father he painted him with his face covered, as if no countenance could convey that degree of grief. That is why the poets imagine that wretched mother Niobe—having lost first seven sons and then, in succession, as many daughters, overburdened with losses—to have been finally transformed into a rock, *turned to stone by her sorrows*, to express that dull, mute and deaf stupor which numbs us when events overwhelm us beyond what we can bear.[4]
	De vray, l'effort d'vn desplaisir, pour estre extreme, doit estonner toute l'ame, et luy empescher la liberté de ses actions: comme il nous aduient à la chaude alarme d'vne bien mauuaise nouuelle, de nous sentir saisis, transis, et comme perclus de tous mouuemens: de façon que l'ame se relaschant apres aux larmes et aux plaintes, semble se desprendre, se desmeller, et se mettre plus au large, et à son aise. *Et via vix tandem voci laxata dolore est.*	Indeed, the force of a grief, if it is to be extreme, must stun the whole soul and hinder its freedom of action. So it happens to us, at the sudden alarm of some very bad news, that we feel ourselves seized, numbed, and as it were paralyzed in all our movements; so that the soul, afterward giving way to tears and laments, seems to free itself, disentangle itself, and find more room and ease. *And at last, and barely, grief opened a way for the voice.*[5]
1.2.5	En la guerre que le Roy Ferdinand mena contre la veufue du Roy Iean de Hongrie, autour de Bude, vn gendarme fut particulierement remerqué de chacun, pour auoir excessiuement bien faict de sa personne, en certaine meslee: et incognu, hautement loué, et plaint y estant demeuré: mais de nul tant que de Raiscïac Seigneur Allemand, esprins d'vne si rare vertu: le corps estant rapporté, cetuicy d'vne commune curiosité, s'approcha	In the war that King Ferdinand waged against the widow of King John of Hungary, around Buda, a man-at-arms was particularly noticed by everyone for having borne himself exceedingly well in a certain skirmish; unknown, he was highly praised, and mourned when he fell there. But by none so much as by Raïsciac, a German lord, who was taken with such rare valor. When the body was

3 Probably Charles, Cardinal of Lorraine, who at the Council of Trent in 1563 learned of the deaths of his brothers François, Duke of Guise, and François, Grand Prior of France.
4 The painter is Timanthes (4th century BC); the Latin phrase is from Ovid, Metamorphoses VI.
5 Virgil, Aeneid XI.

FRENCH

pour voir qui c'estoit: et les armes ostees au trespassé, il reconut son fils.

Cela augmenta la compassion aux assistans: luy seul, sans rien dire, sans siller les yeux, se tint debout, contemplant fixement le corps de son fils: iusques à ce que la vehemence de la tristesse, aiant accablé ses esprits vitaux, le porta roide mort par terre. *Chi puo dir com' egli arde è in picciol fuoco,* disent les amoureux, qui veulent representer vne passion insupportable. misero quod omnes
Eripit sensu mihi. Nam simul te
Lesbia aspexi, nihil est superîm
Quod loquar amens.

/ Lingua sed torpet, tenuis sub artus
Flamma dimanat, sonitu suopte
Tinniunt aures, gemina teguntur
Lumina nocte. *Aussi n'est ce pas en la viue, et plus cuysante chaleur de l'accés, que nous sommes propres à desployer nos plaintes et nos persuasions: l'ame est lors aggrauee de profondes pensees, et le corps abbatu et languissant d'amour: et de là s'engendre par fois la defaillance fortuite, qui surprent les amoureux si hors de saison; et cette glace qui les saisit par la force d'vne ardeur extreme, au giron mesme de la iouïssance. Toutes passions qui se laissent gouster, et digerer, ne sont que mediocres,* Curæ leues loquuntur, ingentes stupent.

1.2.6 La surprise d'un plaisir inesperé nous estonne de mesme. *Vt me conspexit venientem, et Troïa circum*
Arma amens vidit, magnis exterrita monstris,
Diriguit visu in medio, calor ossa reliquit,
Labitur, et longo vix tandem tempore fatur. Outre la femme Romaine, qui mourut surprise d'aise de voir son fils reuenu de la routte de Cannes: Sophocles et Denis le Tyran, qui trespasserent d'aise: et Talua qui mourut en Corsegue, lisant les nouuelles des honneurs que le Senat de Rome luy auoit decernez; nous tenons en nostre siecle, que le Pape Leon dixiesme ayant esté aduerty de la prinse de Milan, qu'il auoit extremement souhaittee, entra en tel excez de ioye, que la fieure l'en print, et en mourut.

ENGLISH

brought back, this lord, out of common curiosity, went up to see who it was; and when the dead man's armor was removed, he recognized his son.[6]

This increased the bystanders' compassion. He alone, without saying anything, without blinking, stood upright gazing fixedly at his son's body, until the vehemence of his sorrow, having overwhelmed his vital spirits, brought him down stone-dead on the ground. *He who can say how he burns is in a small fire*, say the lovers who wish to represent an unbearable passion. a thing that, wretched as I am,
Snatches all my senses from me. For the moment
I have seen you, Lesbia, nothing is left
That I can say, beside myself.[7]

/ But my tongue grows numb, a subtle flame
Flows down through my limbs, my ears ring
With their own sound, and both my eyes are covered
In night. *Nor indeed is it in the live and most burning heat of the fit that we are able to pour out our laments and our persuasions: the soul is then weighed down with deep thoughts, and the body cast down and languishing with love. And from this sometimes arises the sudden failure that takes lovers by surprise so out of season, and that chill which seizes them through the force of an extreme ardor, in the very lap of enjoyment. All passions that allow themselves to be savored and digested are only moderate.* Light cares speak; great ones are struck dumb.[8]

The shock of an unexpected pleasure stuns us in the same way. *When she saw me coming and, beside herself, saw Trojan*
Arms around me, terrified by such great portents,
She froze as she looked, the warmth left her bones,
She falls, and at last, after a long while, she barely speaks. Besides the Roman woman who died from the shock of joy at seeing her son returned from the rout at Cannae; Sophocles and Dionysius the Tyrant, who died of joy; and Talva, who died in Corsica while reading the news of the honors the Roman Senate had decreed him—we hold that in our own century Pope Leo X, having been told of the capture of Milan, which he had greatly de-

6 Ferdinand I of Habsburg fought Isabella, widow of John Zápolya, for Hungary around 1540–1541.
7 Petrarch, Canzoniere, sonnet 170; then Catullus, poem 51, after Sappho.
8 Seneca, Phaedra (Hippolytus).

FRENCH

Et pour vn plus notable tesmoignage de l'imbecillité humaine, il a esté remerqué par les anciens, que Diodorus le Dialecticien mourut sur le champ, espris d'vne extreme passion de honte, pour en son escole, et en public, ne se pouuoir desuelopper d'vn argument qu'on luy auoit faict. Ie suis peu en prise de ces violentes passions: i'ay l'apprehension naturellement dure; et l'encrouste et espessis tous les iours par discours.

ENGLISH

sired, fell into such an excess of joy that he was seized with fever and died of it.[9]

And as a more notable testimony to human weakness, the ancients noted that Diodorus the Dialectician died on the spot, seized with an extreme passion of shame because, in his school and in public, he could not disentangle himself from an argument that had been put to him. I am little exposed to these violent passions. My capacity for feeling is naturally tough; and I harden and thicken it every day by reasoning.[10]

9 Virgil, Aeneid III (Andromache seeing Aeneas). Leo X died in December 1521, soon after Milan was taken from the French.
10 Diodorus Cronus, Greek philosopher of the Megarian school, 4th century BC.

I.3 Our Feelings Reach Out Beyond Us

Nos affections s'emportent au delà de nous
We always live beyond ourselves in hopes and fears; Montaigne examines wishes about burial, reputation, and acting after death.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
1.3.1	CEVX qui accusent les hommes d'aller tousiours beant apres les choses futures, et nous apprennent à nous saisir des biens presens, et nous rassoir en ceux-là, comme n'ayants aucune prise sur ce qui est à venir, voire assez moins que nous n'auons sur ce qui est passé, touchent la plus commune des humaines erreurs: s'ils osent appeller erreur, chose à quoy nature mesme nous achemine pour le seruice de la continuation de son ouurage, nous imprimant, comme assez d'autres, cette imagination fausse, plus ialouse de nostre action, que de nostre science. Nous ne sommes iamais chez nous, nous sommes tousiours au delà.	Those who accuse men of always gaping after future things, and teach us to seize hold of present goods and settle ourselves in them, since we have no grip on what is to come—indeed rather less than we have on what is past—touch on the most common of human errors. That is, if they dare to call an error something to which nature herself guides us for the service of the continuation of her work, imprinting in us, as she does many others, this false notion, being more jealous of our action than of our knowledge. We are never at home; we are always beyond.
	La crainte, le desir, l'esperance, nous eslancent vers l'aduenir: et nous desrobent le sentiment et la consideration de ce qui est, pour nous amuser à ce qui sera, voire quand nous ne serons plus. *Calamitosus est animus futuri anxius.*	Fear, desire, hope fling us toward the future, and rob us of the feeling and consideration of what is, to occupy us with what will be, even when we shall no longer be. *Wretched is the mind anxious about the future.*[1]
1.3.2	Ce grand precepte est souuent allegué en Platon, Fay ton faict, et te congnoy. Chascun de ces deux membres enueloppe generallement tout nostre deuoir: et semblablement enueloppe son compagnon. Qui auroit à faire son faict, verroit que sa premiere leçon, c'est cognoistre ce qu'il est, et ce qui luy est propre. Et qui se cognoist, ne prend plus l'estranger faict pour le sien: s'ayme, et se cultiue auant toute autre chose: refuse les occupations superflues, et les pensees, et propositions inutiles. Comme la folie quand on luy octroyera ce qu'elle desire, ne sera pas contente: aussi est la sagesse contente de ce qui est present, ne se desplait iamais de soy. Epicurus dispense son sage de la preuoyance et soucy de l'aduenir.	This great precept is often cited in Plato: "Do your own business, and know yourself." Each of these two parts generally embraces our whole duty, and likewise embraces its companion. Whoever had to do his own business would see that his first lesson is to know what he is and what is proper to him. And whoever knows himself no longer takes another's business for his own; he loves and cultivates himself before anything else; he refuses superfluous occupations and useless thoughts and propositions. Just as folly will not be content even when granted what it desires, so wisdom is content with what is present and is never displeased with itself. Epicurus exempts his sage from foresight and care about the future.
1.3.3	Entre les loix qui regardent les trespassez, celle icy me semble autant solide, qui oblige les actions des Princes à estre examinees apres leur mort: ils sont compagnons, sinon maistres des loix: ce que la Iustice n'a peu sur leurs	Among the laws concerning the dead, this one seems to me as sound as any: the one that requires the actions of princes to be examined after their

1 Seneca, Letters 98.

FRENCH

testes, c'est raison qu'elle l'ayt sur leur reputation, et biens de leurs successeurs: choses que souuent nous preferons à la vie. C'est vne vsance qui apporte des commoditez singulieres aux nations où elle est obseruee, et desirable à tous bons Princes: qui ont à se plaindre de ce, qu'on traitte la memoire des meschants comme la leur. Nous deuons la subiection et obeïssance egalement à tous Rois: car elle regarde leur office: mais l'estimation, non plus que l'affection, nous ne la deuons qu'à leur vertu.

Donnons à l'ordre politique de les souffrir patiemment, indignes: de celer leurs vices: d'aider de nostre recommandation leurs actions indifferentes, pendant que leur auctorité a besoin de nostre appuy. Mais nostre commerce finy, ce n'est pas raison de refuser à la Iustice, et à nostre liberté, l'expression de noz vrays ressentiments: et nommément de refuser aux bons subiects, la gloire d'auoir reueremment et fidellement serui vn maistre, les imperfections duquel leur estoient si bien cognues: frustrant la posterité d'vn si vtile exemple. Et ceux, qui, par respect de quelque obligation priuee espousent iniquement la memoire d'vn Prince mesloüable, font iustice particuliere aux despends de la Iustice publique.

Titus Liuius dict vray, que le langage des hommes nourris sous la Royauté, est tousiours plein de vaines ostentations et faux tesmoignages: chascun esleuant indifferemment son Roy, à l'extreme ligne de valeur et grandeur souueraine. On peult reprouuer la magnanimité de ces deux soldats, qui respondirent à Neron, à sa barbe, l'vn enquis de luy, pourquoy il luy vouloit mal: Ie t'aimoy quand tu le valois: mais despuis que tu és deuenu parricide, boutefeu, basteleur, cochier, ie te hay, comme tu merites. L'autre, pourquoy il le vouloit tuer; Par ce que ie ne trouue autre remede à tes continuels malefices.

Mais les publics et vniuersels tesmoignages, qui apres sa mort ont esté rendus, et le seront à tout iamais, à luy, et à tous meschans comme luy, de ses tiranniques et vilains deportements, qui de sain entendement les peut reprouuer?

1.3.4 Il me desplaist, qu'en vne si saincte police que la Lacedemonienne, se fust meslée vne si feinte ceremonie à

ENGLISH

death. They are companions, if not masters, of the laws; what justice could not do to their persons, it is right that it should do to their reputation and to the property of their successors—things we often prefer to life. It is a practice that brings singular benefits to the nations where it is observed, and one to be desired by all good princes, who have reason to complain that the memory of the wicked is treated like their own. We owe subjection and obedience equally to all kings, for that concerns their office; but esteem, no more than affection, we owe only to their virtue.

Let us grant to the political order that we suffer them patiently when they are unworthy, conceal their vices, and support with our commendation their actions that are neither good nor bad, while their authority needs our backing. But once our dealings with them are over, it is not reasonable to refuse justice and our own liberty the expression of our true feelings; and in particular to refuse good subjects the glory of having reverently and faithfully served a master whose imperfections were so well known to them—thus depriving posterity of so useful an example. And those who, out of regard for some private obligation, wrongfully espouse the memory of a blameworthy prince do private justice at the expense of public justice.

Livy speaks truly when he says that the language of men raised under kingship is always full of vain boasting and false testimony, each man indiscriminately exalting his king to the farthest limit of worth and sovereign greatness. One may disapprove of the magnanimity of those two soldiers who answered Nero to his face. The one, asked by him why he wished him ill: "I loved you when you deserved it; but since you have become a parricide, an arsonist, a mountebank, a charioteer, I hate you as you deserve." The other, asked why he wanted to kill him: "Because I can find no other remedy for your continual crimes."[2]

But as for the public and universal testimonies that have been given since his death, and will be forever, to him and to all wicked men like him, concerning his tyrannical and vile conduct—who in his right mind can disapprove of them?

It displeases me that in so holy a government as that of Sparta so false a ceremony should have

FRENCH

la mort des Roys. Tous les confederez et voysins, et tous les Ilotes, hommes, femmes, pesle-mesle, se descoupoient le front, pour tesmoignage de deuil: et disoient en leurs cris et lamentations, Que celuy la, quel qu'il eust esté, estoit le meilleur Roy de tous les leurs: attribuants au reng, le los qui appartenoit au merite; et, qui appartient au premier merite, au postreme et dernier reng.

ENGLISH

been mixed in at the death of kings. All the allies and neighbors, and all the Helots, men and women pell-mell, gashed their foreheads in token of mourning, and said in their cries and lamentations that this king, whatever he had been, was the best king of all they had ever had—attributing to rank the praise that belonged to merit, and giving what belongs to the highest merit to the last and lowest rank.[3]

1.3.5 Aristote, qui remue toutes choses, s'enquiert sur le mot de Solon, Que nul auant mourir ne peut estre dict heureux, Si celuy la mesme, qui a vescu, et qui est mort à souhait, peut estre dict, heureux, si sa renommee va mal, si sa posterité est miserable. Pendant que nous nous remuons, nous nous portons par preoccupation où il nous plaist: mais estant hors de l'estre, nous n'auons aucune communication auec ce qui est. Et seroit meilleur de dire à Solon, que iamais homme n'est donc heureux, puis qu'il ne l'est qu'apres qu'il n'est plus. *quisquam*
Vix radicitus è vita se tollit, et eiicit:
Sed facit esse sui quiddam super inscius ipse,
Nec remouet satis à proiecto corpore sese, et
Vindicat.

Aristotle, who stirs up everything, inquires, concerning Solon's saying that no one can be called happy before his death, whether even the man who has lived and died as he would wish can be called happy if his reputation fares badly and his posterity is wretched. While we are in motion, we carry ourselves by anticipation wherever we please; but once out of being, we have no communication with what is. And it would be better to tell Solon that no man is ever happy, then, since he is happy only when he no longer exists. *Hardly anyone*
Pulls himself up by the roots and casts himself out of life:
Without knowing it, he makes something of himself survive,
Nor does he withdraw and free himself enough from the body he has
Cast away.[4]

1.3.6 Bertrand du Glesquin mourut au siege du Chasteau de Rancon, pres du Puy en Auuergne: les assiegez s'estans rendus apres, furent obligez de porter les clefs de la place sur le corps du trespassé. Barthelemy d'Aluiane, General de l'armee des Venitiens, estant mort au seruice de leurs guerres en la Bresse, et son corps ayant esté rapporté à Venise par le Veronois, terre ennemie; la pluspart de ceux de l'armee estoient d'aduis, qu'on demandast sauf-conduit pour le passage à ceux de Veronne: mais Theodore Triuulce y contredit; et choisit plustost de le passer par viue force, au hazard du combat: N'estant conuenable, disoit-il, que celuy qui en sa vie n'auoit iamais eu peur de ses ennemis, estant mort fist demonstration de les craindre.

Bertrand du Guesclin died at the siege of the castle of Rancon, near Le Puy in Auvergne; the besieged, who surrendered afterward, were obliged to carry the keys of the place to the dead man's body. Bartolomeo d'Alviano, general of the Venetian army, died in the service of their wars in the region of Brescia, and his body was to be carried back to Venice through the territory of Verona, enemy land. Most of the army were of the opinion that they should ask the Veronese for a safe-conduct for the passage; but Theodore Trivulzio opposed this, and chose rather to force a passage, at the risk of battle: "For it is not fitting," he said, "that one who in his lifetime was never afraid of his enemies should, being dead, show any sign of fearing them."[5]

2 Conspirators in the plot against Nero of AD 65, as reported by Tacitus.
3 The Helots were the subject population of Sparta, bound to work the land.
4 Aristotle, Nicomachean Ethics I; the verses are from Lucretius, On the Nature of Things III.
5 Bertrand du Guesclin (c. 1320–1380), Constable of France; Bartolomeo d'Alviano died in 1515.

FRENCH

De vray, en chose voisine, par les loix Grecques, celuy qui demandoit à l'ennemy vn corps pour l'inhumer, renonçoit à la victoire, et ne lui estoit plus loisible d'en dresser trophee: à celuy qui en estoit requis, c'estoit tiltre de gain. Ainsi perdit Nicias l'auantage qu'il auoit nettement gaigné sur les Corinthiens: et au rebours, Agesilaus asseura celuy qui luy estoit bien doubteusement acquis sur les Bœotiens.

1.3.7 Ces traits se pourroient trouuer estranges, s'il n'estoit receu de tout temps, non seulement d'estendre le soing de nous, au delà cette vie, mais encore de croire, que bien souuent les faueurs celestes nous accompaignent au tombeau, et continuent à nos reliques. Dequoy il y a tant d'exemples anciens, laissant à part les nostres, qu'il n'est besoing que ie m'y estende.

Edouard premier Roy d'Angleterre, ayant essayé aux longues guerres d'entre luy et Robert Roy d'Escosse, combien sa presence donnoit d'aduantage à ses affaires, rapportant tousiours la victoire de ce qu'il entreprenoit en personne; mourant, obligea son fils par solennel serment, à ce qu'estant trespassé, il fist bouillir son corps pour desprendre sa chair d'auec les os, laquelle il fit enterrer: et quant aux os, qu'il les reseruast pour les porter auec luy, et en son armee, toutes les fois qu'il luy aduiendroit d'auoir guerre contre les Escossois: comme si la destinee auoit fatalement attaché la victoire à ses membres.

Iean Zischa, qui troubla la Boheme pour la deffence des erreurs de VViclef, voulut qu'on l'escorchast apres sa mort, et de sa peau qu'on fist vn tabourin à porter à la guerre contre ses ennemis: estimant que cela ayderoit à continuer les aduantages qu'il auoit eus aux guerres, par luy conduictes contre eux. Certains Indiens portoient ainsin au combat contre les Espaignols, les ossemens d'vn de leurs Capitaines, en consideration de l'heur qu'il auoit eu en viuant. Et d'autres peuples en ce mesme monde, trainent à la guerre les corps des vaillans hommes, qui sont morts en leurs batailles, pour leur seruir de bonne fortune et d'encouragement.

Les premiers exemples ne reseruent au tombeau, que la reputation acquise par leurs actions passees: mais ceux-cy y veulent encore mesler la puissance d'agir.

1.3.8 Le faict du Capitaine Bayard est de meilleure composition, lequel se sentant blessé à mort d'vne

ENGLISH

Indeed, in a related matter, by Greek law, whoever asked the enemy for a body to bury renounced the victory, and was no longer allowed to raise a trophy for it; for the one who was asked, it was a title to victory. Thus Nicias lost the advantage he had clearly won over the Corinthians; and conversely, Agesilaus secured the one he had very doubtfully gained over the Boeotians.

These traits might seem strange were it not accepted from all time not only to extend our concern for ourselves beyond this life, but also to believe that very often the favors of heaven accompany us to the tomb and continue to our remains. Of this there are so many ancient examples, leaving aside our own, that I need not dwell on it.

Edward I, king of England, had found by trial, in the long wars between him and Robert, king of Scotland, how much his presence gave the advantage to his affairs, for he always carried off the victory in what he undertook in person. When dying, he bound his son by solemn oath that, once he was dead, he should have his body boiled to separate the flesh from the bones, and have the flesh buried; and as for the bones, that he should keep them, to carry them with him and with his army whenever he happened to be at war with the Scots: as if destiny had fatally attached victory to his limbs.[6]

Jan Žižka, who threw Bohemia into turmoil in defense of Wycliffe's errors, wished to be flayed after his death and his skin made into a drum to be carried to war against his enemies, believing that this would help continue the advantages he had had in the wars he had led against them. Certain Indians likewise carried into battle against the Spaniards the bones of one of their captains, in consideration of the good fortune he had had in his lifetime. And other peoples in this same world drag to war the bodies of the valiant men who have died in their battles, to serve them as good luck and encouragement.[7]

The first examples reserve for the tomb only the reputation acquired by past actions; but these want to mix in the power to act as well.

The deed of Captain Bayard is of a more reasonable sort. Feeling himself mortally wounded by an

FRENCH

harquebusade dans le corps, conseillé de se retirer de la meslee, respondit qu'il ne commenceroit point sur sa fin à tourner le dos à l'ennemy: et ayant combatu autant qu'il eut de force, se sentant defaillir, et eschapper du cheual, commanda à son maistre d'hostel, de le coucher au pied d'vn arbre: mais que ce fust en façon qu'il mourust le visage tourné vers l'ennemy: comme il fit.

1.3.9 Il me faut adiouster cet autre exemple aussi remarquable pour cette consideration, que nul des precedens. L'Empereur Maximilian bisayeul du Roy Philippes, qui est à present, estoit Prince doué de tout plein de grandes qualitez, et entre autres d'vne beauté de corps singuliere: mais parmy ces humeurs, il auoit ceste cy bien contraire à celle des Princes, qui pour despescher les plus importants affaires, font leur throsne de leur chaire percee: c'est qu'il n'eut iamais valet de chambre, si priué, à qui il permist de le voir en sa garderobbe: il se desroboit pour tomber de l'eau, aussi religieux qu'vne pucelle à ne descouurir ny à Medecin ny à qui que ce fust les parties qu'on a accoustumé de tenir cachees.

Moy qui ay la bouche si effrontée, suis pourtant par complexion touché de cette honte: si ce n'est à vne grande suasion de la necessité ou de la volupté, ie ne communique gueres aux yeux de personne, les membres et actions, que nostre coustume ordonne estre couuertes: i'y souffre plus de contrainte que ie n'estime bien seant à vn homme, et sur tout à vn homme de ma profession: mais luy en vint à telle superstition, qu'il ordonna par parolles expresses de son testament, qu'on luy attachast des calessons, quand il seroit mort. Il deuoit adiouster par codicille, que celuy qui les luy monteroit eust les yeux bandez.

L'ordonnance que Cyrus faict à ses enfans, que ny eux, ny autre, ne voye et touche son corps, apres que l'ame en sera separee: ie l'attribue à quelque sienne deuotion: car et son Historien et luy, entre leurs grandes qualitez, ont semé par tout le cours de leur vie, vn singulier soin et reuerence à la religion.

1.3.10 Ce conte me despleut, qu'vn grand me fit d'vn mien allié, homme assez cogneu et en paix et en guerre. C'est que

ENGLISH

arquebus shot in the body, and advised to withdraw from the fray, he replied that he would not begin, at his end, to turn his back on the enemy. And having fought as long as he had strength, feeling himself fainting and slipping from his horse, he ordered his steward to lay him at the foot of a tree, but in such a way that he would die with his face turned toward the enemy; and so he did.[8]

I must add this other example, as remarkable in this respect as any of the preceding. The Emperor Maximilian, great-grandfather of King Philip who now reigns, was a prince endowed with a great many fine qualities, and among others a singular beauty of body. But among these traits he had one quite contrary to that of those princes who, to dispatch the most important business, make their close-stool their throne: he never had a valet de chambre so intimate that he would allow him to see him in his privy. He would steal away to pass water, as scrupulous as a maiden about uncovering, to a doctor or to anyone whatever, the parts we are accustomed to keep hidden.[9]

I, who have so bold a mouth, am nonetheless by temperament touched with this sense of shame. Unless under strong pressure from necessity or pleasure, I hardly ever expose to anyone's eyes the members and actions that our custom orders to be covered. I suffer more constraint in this than I think becoming in a man, and above all in a man of my profession. But he carried it to such superstition that he ordered, in express words in his will, that drawers be fastened on him when he was dead. He should have added by codicil that the man who pulled them on him should have his eyes blindfolded.

The order Cyrus gives his children, that neither they nor anyone else should see or touch his body after the soul has left it, I attribute to some piety of his; for both his historian and he himself, among their great qualities, sowed throughout the course of their lives a singular care and reverence for religion.[10]

I was displeased by a story a great man told me about a kinsman of mine by marriage, a man

6 Edward I of England (died 1307) and Robert the Bruce.
7 Jan Žižka (died 1424), general of the Hussites, followers of the English reformer John Wycliffe's teaching.
8 Pierre Terrail, seigneur de Bayard, the "knight without fear and beyond reproach," killed in Italy in 1524.

FRENCH

mourant bien vieil en sa cour, tourmenté de douleurs extremes de la pierre, il amusa toutes ses heures dernieres auec vn soing vehement, à disposer l'honneur et la ceremonie de son enterrement: et somma toute la noblesse qui le visitoit, de luy donner parolle d'assister à son conuoy.

A ce Prince mesme, qui le vid sur ces derniers traits, il fit vne instante supplication que sa maison fust commandee de s'y trouuer; employant plusieurs exemples et raisons, à prouuer que c'estoit chose qui appartenoit à vn homme de sa sorte: et sembla expirer content ayant retiré cette promesse, et ordonné à son gré la distribution, et ordre de sa montre. Ie n'ay guere veu de vanité si perseuerante.

1.3.11 Cette autre curiosité contraire, en laquelle ie n'ay point aussi faute d'exemple domestique, me semble germaine à ceste-cy: d'aller se soignant et passionnant à ce dernier poinct, à regler son conuoy, à quelque particuliere et inusitee parsimonie, à vn seruiteur et vne lanterne. Ie voy louer cett'humeur, et l'ordonnance de Marcus Æmylius Lepidus, qui deffendit à ses heritiers d'employer pour luy les ceremonies qu'on auoit accoustumé en telles choses. Est-ce encore temperance et frugalité, d'euiter la despence et la volupté, desquelles l'vsage et la cognoissance nous est imperceptible? Voila vne aisee reformation et de peu de coust. S'il estoit besoin d'en ordonner, ie seroy d'aduis, qu'en celle là, comme en toutes actions de la vie, chascun en rapportast la regle, au degré de sa fortune.

Et le Philosophe Lycon prescrit sagement à ses amis, de mettre son corps où ils aduiseront pour le mieux: et quant aux funerailles, de les faire ny superflues ny mechaniques. Ie lairrois purement la coustume ordonner de cette ceremonie, et m'en remettray à la discretion des premiers à qui ie tomberay en charge. *Totus hic locus est contemnendus in nobis, non negligendus in nostris.* Et est sainctement dict à vn sainct: *Curatio funeris, conditio sepulturæ, pompa exequiarum, magis sunt viuorum solatia, quàm subsidia mortuorum*. Pourtant Socrates à Criton, qui sur l'heure de sa fin luy demande, comment il veut estre enterré: Comme vous voudrez, respond-il.

ENGLISH

rather well known in both peace and war. It is that, dying very old at his court, tormented by extreme pains from the stone, he spent all his last hours with intense concern arranging the honor and ceremony of his burial, and called upon all the nobility who visited him to give him their word that they would attend his funeral procession.

Of this very prince, who saw him in his last moments, he made an urgent request that his household be ordered to attend, using several examples and reasons to prove that it was a thing befitting a man of his rank. And he seemed to die content, having obtained this promise and arranged to his liking the distribution and order of his parade. I have hardly ever seen so persevering a vanity.

This other, opposite fussiness, of which I also do not lack examples in my own family, seems to me close kin to this one: to go on worrying and fretting at this last moment over regulating one's funeral to some particular and unusual parsimony—one servant and one lantern. I see this temperament praised, and the instruction of Marcus Aemilius Lepidus, who forbade his heirs to employ for him the ceremonies customary in such matters. Is it still temperance and frugality to avoid an expense and a pleasure whose use and knowledge are imperceptible to us? That is an easy reform, and one of small cost. If there were need to give orders about it, I would be of the opinion that in this, as in all the actions of life, each man should measure the rule by the degree of his fortune.

And the philosopher Lycon wisely instructs his friends to put his body wherever they think best, and as for the funeral, to make it neither extravagant nor shabby. I would leave it purely to custom to order this ceremony, and I shall defer to the discretion of the first people into whose charge I fall. *This whole matter is to be despised in our own case, not neglected in that of our people.* And it is saintly said by a saint: *The care of a funeral, the manner of burial, the pomp of obsequies, are more a consolation to the living than a help to the dead.* So Socrates, when Crito asked him at the hour of his end how he wished to be buried, answered: "As you wish."[11]

9 Emperor Maximilian I (1459–1519); Philip II of Spain.
10 Cyrus the Great, as portrayed by Xenophon in the Cyropaedia.

FRENCH	ENGLISH
Si i'auois à m'en empescher plus auant, ie trouuerois plus galand, d'imiter ceux qui entreprennent viuans et respirans, iouyr de l'ordre et honneur de leur sepulture: et qui se plaisent de voir en marbre leur morte contenance. Heureux qui sachent resiouyr et gratifier leur sens par l'insensibilité, et viure de leur mort!	If I had to concern myself any further with it, I would find it more stylish to imitate those who undertake, while alive and breathing, to enjoy the order and honor of their tomb, and who take pleasure in seeing their dead countenance in marble. Happy those who know how to delight and gratify their senses through insensibility, and to live by their death!
1.3.12 A peu, que ie n'entre en haine irreconciliable contre toute domination populaire: quoy qu'elle me semble la plus naturelle et equitable: quand il me souuient de cette inhumaine iniustice du peuple Athenien: de faire mourir sans remission, et sans les vouloir seulement ouïr en leurs defenses, ces braues Capitaines, venants de gaigner contre les Lacedemoniens la bataille naualle pres les Isles Arginenses: la plus contestee, la plus forte bataille, que les Grecs aient onques donnee en mer de leurs forces: par ce qu'apres la victoire, ils auoient suiuy les occasions que la loy de la guerre leur presentoit, plustost que de s'arrester à recueillir et inhumer leurs morts. Et rend cette execution plus odieuse, le faict de Diomedon.	I come close to conceiving an irreconcilable hatred against all popular rule—though it seems to me the most natural and equitable—when I remember that inhuman injustice of the Athenian people: putting to death without mercy, and without even being willing to hear their defense, those brave captains who had just won the naval battle against the Spartans near the Arginusae islands, the most hotly contested and the strongest battle the Greeks ever fought at sea with their own forces—because after the victory they had followed up the opportunities that the law of war offered them rather than stopping to gather and bury their dead. And what makes this execution more odious is the conduct of Diomedon.[12]
Cettuy cy est l'vn des condamnez, homme de notable vertu, et militaire et politique: lequel se tirant auant pour parler, apres auoir ouy l'arrest de leur condemnation, et trouuant seulement lors temps de paisible audience, au lieu de s'en seruir au bien de sa cause, et à descouurir l'euidente iniquité d'vne si cruelle conclusion, ne representa qu'vn soin de la conseruation de ses iuges: priant les Dieux de tourner ce iugement à leur bien: et à fin que, par faute de rendre les vœux que luy et ses compagnons auoient voué, en recognoissance d'vne si illustre fortune, ils n'attirassent l'ire des Dieux sur eux, les aduertissant quels vœux c'estoient. Et sans dire autre chose, et sans marchander, s'achemina de ce pas courageusement au supplice.	He was one of the condemned, a man of notable virtue, both military and political. He stepped forward to speak after hearing the sentence of their condemnation, finding only then time for a quiet hearing. Instead of using it for the good of his cause, and to expose the evident iniquity of so cruel a decision, he showed concern only for the preservation of his judges: he prayed the gods to turn this judgment to their good; and, lest by failing to pay the vows that he and his companions had made in gratitude for so illustrious a fortune they should bring the wrath of the gods upon themselves, he informed them what those vows were. And without saying anything more, and without haggling, he went straight off courageously to his execution.
1.3.13 La fortune quelques annees apres les punit de mesme pain souppe. Car Chabrias Capitaine general de leur armee de mer, ayant eu le dessus du combat contre Pollis Admiral de Sparte, en l'isle de Naxe, perdit le fruict tout net et content de sa victoire, tres-important à leurs affaires, pour n'encourir le malheur de cet exemple, et	A few years later Fortune paid them back in the same coin. For Chabrias, captain-general of their navy, having gained the upper hand in the battle against Pollis, admiral of Sparta, at the island of Naxos, lost the clear and solid fruit of his victory, which was of great importance to their affairs, so

11 Cicero, Tusculan Disputations I; then Saint Augustine, City of God I.
12 The battle of Arginusae, off Lesbos, in 406 BC.

FRENCH

pour ne perdre peu de corps morts de ses amis, qui flottoyent en mer, laissa voguer en sauueté vn monde d'ennemis viuants, qui depuis leur feirent bien acheter cette importune superstition. Quæris, quo iaceas, post obitum, loco?

/ Quo non nata iacent. *Cet autre redonne le sentiment du repos, à vn corps sans ame,* Neque sepulcrum, quo recipiat, habeat portum corporis: / Vbi, remissa humana vita, corpus requiescat à malis. Tout ainsi que nature nous faict voir, que plusieurs choses mortes ont encore des relations occultes à la vie. Le vin s'altere aux caues, selon aucunes mutations des saisons de sa vigne. Et la chair de venaison change d'estat aux saloirs et de goust, selon les loix de la chair viue, à ce qu'on dit.

ENGLISH

as not to incur the misfortune of that example. So as not to lose a few dead bodies of his friends floating in the sea, he let a world of living enemies sail off in safety, who afterward made them pay dearly for this ill-timed superstition. Do you ask where you will lie after death?[13]

/ Where the unborn lie. *This other one restores the feeling of rest to a soulless body:* May he have no tomb to receive him, no haven for his body, / Where, human life laid down, the body may rest from its ills. Just as nature shows us that many dead things still have hidden relations with life. Wine changes in the cellars according to certain changes in the seasons of its vine. And the flesh of game changes its condition and its taste in the salting tubs according to the laws of living flesh, so they say.[14]

13 The battle of Naxos, 376 BC. The verse is from Seneca, Trojan Women.
14 Ennius, quoted by Cicero in the Tusculan Disputations I.

I.4 How the Soul Discharges Its Passions on False Objects When the True Are Wanting

Comme l'ame descharge ses passions sur des obiects faux, quand les vrais luy defaillent
When the soul lacks a real target for its passions, it invents one—even lashing out at objects or itself.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
1.4.1	VN Gentil-homme des nostres merueilleusement subiect à la goutte, estant pressé par les Medecins de laisser du tout l'vsage des viandes salees, auoit accoustumé de respondre plaisamment, que sur les efforts et tourments du mal, il vouloit auoir à qui s'en prendre; et que s'escriant et maudissant tantost le ceruelat, tantost la langue de bœuf et le iambon, il s'en sentoit d'autant allegé.	A gentleman of our country, marvelously subject to gout, being urged by his doctors to give up salted meats altogether, used to reply humorously that in the attacks and torments of the disease he wanted to have something to blame; and that by shouting and cursing now the sausage, now the ox tongue and the ham, he felt that much relieved.
1.4.2	Mais en bon escient, comme le bras estant haussé pour frapper, il nous deult si le coup ne rencontre, et qu'il aille au vent: aussi que pour rendre vne veuë plaisante, il ne faut pas qu'elle soit perduë et escartee dans le vague de l'air, ains qu'elle ayt butte pour la soustenir à raisonnable distance. *Ventus vt amittit vires, nisi robore densæ / Occurrant siluæ spatio diffusus inani.* De mesme il semble que l'ame esbranlee et esmeuë se perde en soy-mesme, si on ne luy donne prinse: et faut tousiours luy fournir d'obiect où elle s'abutte et agisse.	But in earnest: just as an arm raised to strike hurts us if the blow does not land and goes into the wind; and just as, to make a view pleasant, it must not be lost and scattered in the emptiness of the air, but must have a mark to hold it at a reasonable distance—*As the wind loses its strength, scattered in empty space, / Unless dense forests stand in its way*—so it seems that the soul, shaken and stirred, loses itself in itself if it is not given something to grip; and it must always be supplied with an object to aim at and act upon.[1]
1.4.3	Plutarque dit à propos de ceux qui s'affectionnent aux guenons et petits chiens, que la partie amoureuse qui est en nous, à faute de prise legitime, plustost que de demeurer en vain, s'en forge ainsin vne faulce et friuole. Et nous voyons que l'ame en ses passions se pipe plustost elle mesme, se dressant vn faux subiect et fantastique, voire contre sa propre creance, que de n'agir contre quelque chose. Ainsin emporte les bestes leur rage à s'attaquer à la pierre et au fer, qui les a blessees: et à se venger à belles dents sur soy-mesmes du mal qu'elles sentent. *Pannonis haud aliter post ictum sæuior vrsa* *Cui iaculum parua Lybis amentauit habena,* *Se rotat in vulnus, telumque irata receptum* *Impetit, et secum fugientem circuit hastam.*	Plutarch says, of those who grow fond of monkeys and little dogs, that the loving part in us, for lack of a legitimate object, rather than remain idle, forges a false and frivolous one for itself in this way. And we see that the soul, in its passions, would rather deceive itself, setting up a false and fanciful object, even against its own belief, than not act against something. Thus beasts are carried by their rage to attack the stone or the steel that has wounded them, and to take revenge on themselves with their teeth for the pain they feel. *Just so the Pannonian she-bear, fiercer after the blow* *Of the javelin the Libyan has hurled with its slender thong,* *Whirls round upon her wound and, raging, attacks*

1 Lucan, Pharsalia III.

FRENCH	ENGLISH
	The dart she has taken, and circles after the spear that flees with her.
1.4.4 Quelles causes n'inuentons nous des malheurs qui nous aduiennent? à quoy ne nous prenons nous à tort ou à droit, pour auoir où nous escrimer? Ce ne sont pas ces tresses blondes, que tu deschires, ny la blancheur de cette poictrine, que despitée tu bats si cruellement, qui ont perdu d'vn malheureux plomb ce frere bien aymé: prens t'en ailleurs. Liuius parlant de l'armee Romaine en Espaigne, apres la perte des deux freres ses grands Capitaines, *Flere omnes repente, et offensare capita*: c'est vn vsage commun. Et le Philosophe Bion, de ce Roy, qui de dueil s'arrachoit le poil, fut plaisant, Cetuy-cy pense-il que la pelade soulage le dueil?	What causes do we not invent for the misfortunes that befall us? What do we not lay hold of, rightly or wrongly, so as to have something to fence with? It is not those blond tresses that you are tearing, nor the whiteness of that breast that you beat so cruelly in your distress, that killed that beloved brother with an unlucky bullet: take it out on something else. Livy, speaking of the Roman army in Spain after the loss of its two great captains, who were brothers: *All at once they began to weep and beat their heads.* It is a common practice. And the philosopher Bion was amusing about that king who tore out his hair in grief: "Does this man think baldness relieves grief?"[2]
Qui n'a veu mascher et engloutir les cartes, se gorger d'vne bale de dez, pour auoir où se venger de la perte de son argent? Xerxes foita la mer, et escriuit vn cartel de deffi au mont Athos: et Cyrus amusa toute vne armee plusieurs iours à se venger de la riuiere de Gyndus, pour la peur qu'il auoit eu en la passant: et Caligula ruina vne tresbelle maison, pour le plaisir que sa mere y auoit eu.	Who has not seen people chew and swallow the cards, or gorge themselves on a mouthful of dice, so as to have something to take revenge on for the loss of their money? Xerxes whipped the sea and wrote a letter of challenge to Mount Athos; Cyrus kept a whole army busy for several days taking revenge on the river Gyndes for the fright he had had crossing it; and Caligula ruined a very beautiful house because of the pleasure his mother had had there.
1.4.5 Le peuple disoit en ma ieunesse, qu'vn Roy de noz voysins, ayant receu de Dieu vne bastonade, iura de s'en venger: ordonnant que de dix ans on ne le priast, ny parlast de luy, ny autant qu'il estoit en son auctorité, qu'on ne creust en luy. Par où on vouloit peindre non tant la sottise, que la gloire naturelle à la nation, dequoy estoit le compte. Ce sont vices tousiours conioincts: mais telles actions tiennent, à la verité, vn peu plus encore d'outrecuidance, que de bestise.	In my youth people used to say that a king of one of our neighboring countries, having received a beating from God, swore to take revenge: he ordered that for ten years no one should pray to Him, or speak of Him, or, as far as his authority extended, believe in Him. By this they meant to depict not so much the stupidity as the vainglory natural to the nation the story was about. These are vices that always go together; but such actions, in truth, have even a little more of presumption than of stupidity.
Augustus Cesar ayant esté battu de la tempeste sur mer, se print à deffier le Dieu Neptunus, et en la pompe des ieux Circenses fist oster son image du reng où elle estoit parmy les autres Dieux, pour se venger de luy. Enquoy il est encore moins excusable, que les precedens, et moins qu'il ne fut depuis, lors qu'ayant perdu vne bataille sous Quintilius Varus en Allemaigne, il alloit de colere et de desespoir, choquant sa teste contre la muraille, en s'escriant, Varus rens moy mes soldats: car ceux la	Augustus Caesar, having been battered by a storm at sea, took to defying the god Neptune, and in the procession of the Circensian games had his image removed from its place among the other gods, to take revenge on him. In which he is even less excusable than the preceding, and less than he was later when, having lost a battle under Quintilius Varus in Germany, he went about in anger and despair beating his head against the wall and cry-

2 The brothers Publius and Gnaeus Scipio, killed in Spain in 211 BC; Bion of Borysthenes, Greek philosopher of the 3rd century BC.

FRENCH

surpassent toute follie, d'autant que l'impieté y est ioincte, qui s'en adressent à Dieu mesmes, ou à la fortune, comme si elle auoit des oreilles subiectes à nostre batterie.

A l'exemple des Thraces, qui, quand il tonne ou esclaire, se mettent à tirer contre le ciel d'vne vengeance Titanienne, pour renger Dieu à raison, à coups de fleche. Or, comme dit cet ancien Poëte chez Plutarque, *Point ne se faut courroucer aux affaires. / Il ne leur chaut de toutes nos choleres*. Mais nous ne dirons iamais assez d'iniures au desreglement de nostre esprit.

ENGLISH

ing out, "Varus, give me back my soldiers!" For those who direct their attacks at God himself, or at fortune, as if she had ears open to our assault, surpass all folly, since impiety is joined to it.[3]

Like the Thracians, who, when it thunders or lightens, start shooting at the sky with a Titanic vengeance, to bring God to reason with arrows. Now, as that ancient poet in Plutarch says, *We must not grow angry at events: / They care nothing for all our rages.* But we shall never heap enough abuse on the unruliness of our own mind.[4]

3 Varus lost three legions in the Teutoburg Forest in AD 9.
4 The Thracians' custom is from Herodotus; the lines, quoted in Plutarch's essay On the Control of Anger, are given by Montaigne in French verse.

I.5 Whether the Governor of a Besieged Place Should Go Out to Parley

Si le chef d'vne place assiegee, doit sortir pour parlementer
Ancient Romans scorned trickery in war; modern soldiers prize surprise, so a besieged commander should not go out to negotiate.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
1.5.1	LVCIVS Marcius Legat des Romains, en la guerre contre Perseus Roy de Macedoine, voulant gaigner le temps qu'il luy falloit encore à mettre en point son armee, sema des entregets d'accord, desquels le Roy endormy accorda trefue pour quelques iours: fournissant par ce moyen son ennemy d'opportunité et loisir pour s'armer: d'où le Roy encourut sa derniere ruine. Si est-ce, que les vieux du Senat, memoratifs des mœurs de leurs Peres, accuserent cette prattique, comme ennemie de leur stile ancien: qui fut, disoient-ils, combattre de vertu, non de finesse, ny par surprinses et rencontres de nuict, ny par fuittes apostees, et recharges inopinees: n'entreprenans guerre, qu'apres l'auoir denoncee, et souuent apres auoir assigné l'heure et lieu de la bataille.	Lucius Marcius, the Roman legate in the war against Perseus, king of Macedonia, needed time to get his army ready. To gain it, he put out hints of a settlement. Lulled by these, the king granted a truce for a few days, and so gave his enemy the opportunity and leisure to arm, which brought about the king's final ruin. And yet the old men of the Senate, mindful of their fathers' ways, condemned this practice as contrary to their ancient style. That style, they said, was to fight with valor, not with cunning: not by surprises and night encounters, not by feigned flights and unexpected counterattacks. They never undertook a war until they had declared it, and often only after appointing the hour and place of battle.[1]
	De cette conscience ils renuoierent à Pyrrhus son traistre Medecin, et aux Phalisques leur desloyal maistre d'escole. C'estoient les formes vrayement Romaines, non de la Grecque subtilité et astuce Punique, où le vaincre par force est moins glorieux que par fraude. Le tromper peut seruir pour le coup: mais celuy seul se tient pour surmonté, qui scait l'auoir esté ny par ruse, ny de sort, mais par vaillance de troupe à troupe, en vne franche et iuste guerre. Il appert bien par ce langage de ces bonnes gents, qu'ils n'auoient encore receu cette belle sentence, *dolus an virtus quis in hoste requirat?*	Out of this scruple they sent back to Pyrrhus his treacherous physician, and to the Faliscans their disloyal schoolmaster. These were the truly Roman ways, not those of Greek subtlety and Punic cunning, where conquering by force is thought less glorious than conquering by fraud. Deceit may serve for the moment. But the only one who considers himself beaten is the one who knows he was beaten neither by trickery nor by chance, but by valor, troop against troop, in an open and just war. It is clear enough from the way these good people talk that they had not yet taken up that fine maxim: *who asks, of an enemy, whether it was guile or valor?*[2]
1.5.2	Les Achaïens, dit Polybe, detestoient toute voye de tromperie en leurs guerres, n'estimants victoire, sinon où les courages des ennemis sont abbatus. *Eam vir sanctus et sapiens sciet veram esse victoriam, quæ salua fide, et integra*	The Achaeans, says Polybius, detested every kind of deceit in their wars, and counted no victory a victory except where the enemy's courage had been broken. *A good and wise man will know that the*

1 From Livy's account of the Third Macedonian War (172 BC); Livy names the envoy Quintus Marcius Philippus.
2 Virgil, Aeneid. Pyrrhus's physician offered to poison his master, and the Faliscan schoolmaster tried to deliver his pupils to the Romans.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
	dignitate parabitur, dit vn autre: *Vos ne velit, an me regnare hera: quidue ferat fors / Virtute experiamur.*	*only true victory is one won with honor intact and dignity unimpaired*, says another. *Whether our mistress Fortune wills that you reign or I, and whatever chance may bring, / let us put it to the test of valor.*[3]
1.5.3	Au Royaume de Ternate, parmy ces nations que si à pleine bouche nous appelons Barbares, la coustume porte, qu'ils n'entreprennent guerre sans l'auoir denoncee: y adioustans ample declaration des moiens qu'ils ont à y emploier, quels, combien d'hommes, quelles munitions, quelles armes, offensiues et defensiues. Mais aussi cela faict, ils se donnent loy de se seruir à leur guerre, sans reproche, de tout ce qui aide à vaincre.	In the kingdom of Ternate, among those nations we so roundly call barbarians, custom requires that they never undertake a war without first declaring it. They add a full statement of the means they have to wage it: what kind, how many men, what munitions, what weapons, offensive and defensive. But once that is done, they also allow themselves to use in their war, without reproach, whatever helps them win.[4]
1.5.4	Les anciens Florentins estoient si esloignés de vouloir gaigner aduantage sur leurs ennemis par surprise, qu'ils les aduertissoient vn mois auant que de mettre leur exercite aux champs, par le continuel son de la cloche qu'ils nommoient, *Martinella*.	The old Florentines were so far from wanting to gain an advantage over their enemies by surprise that they warned them a month before taking their army into the field, by the continual ringing of the bell they called *Martinella*.
1.5.5	Quant à nous moins superstitieux, qui tenons celuy auoir l'honneur de la guerre, qui en a le profit, et qui apres Lysander, disons que, Où la peau du Lyon ne peut suffire, il y faut coudre vn lopin de celle du Regnard, les plus ordinaires occasions de surprise se tirent de cette praticque: et n'est heure, disons nous, où vn chef doiue auoir plus l'œil au guet, que celle des parlemens et traités d'accord. Et pour cette cause, c'est vne regle en la bouche de tous les hommes de guerre de nostre temps, Qu'il ne faut iamais que le Gouuerneur en vne place assiegee sorte luy mesmes pour parlementer.	As for us, who are less superstitious, we hold that the honor of war belongs to whoever has the profit of it, and we say, after Lysander, that where the lion's skin will not do, you must sew on a patch of the fox's. So the most common occasions for surprise are drawn from this very practice. There is no hour, we say, when a commander should keep a sharper watch than during parleys and peace talks. And for this reason it is a rule on the lips of every military man of our time that the governor of a besieged place must never go out himself to parley.[5]
1.5.6	Du temps de nos peres cela fut reproché aux Seigneurs de Montmord et de l'Assigni, deffendans Mouson contre le Comte de Nansau. Mais aussi à ce conte, celuy la seroit excusable, qui sortiroit en telle façon, que la seureté et l'audantage demeurast de son costé: comme fit en la ville de Regge, le Comte Guy de Rangon (s'il en faut croire du Bellay, car Guicciardin dit que ce fut luy mesmes) lors que le Seigneur de l'Escut s'en approcha pour parlementer: car il abandonna de si peu son fort, qu'vn trouble s'estant esmeu pendant ce parlement, non seulement Monsieur de l'Escut et sa trouppe, qui estoit approchee auec luy, se trouua le plus foible, de façon qu'Alexandre Triuulce y fut tué, mais luy mesme fut contrainct, pour le plus seur, de	In our fathers' time this was held against the Seigneurs de Montmord and de l'Assigni, who were defending Mouzon against the Count of Nassau. But by the same reckoning, a man would be excusable who went out in such a way that safety and advantage remained on his side. So did Count Guido Rangoni in the town of Reggio (if we are to believe du Bellay, for Guicciardini says it was he himself), when the Seigneur de l'Escut approached it to parley. He left his stronghold by so little that when a disturbance broke out during the parley, Monsieur de l'Escut and the troop that had come up with him found themselves the weaker,

3 Florus, Epitome of Roman History; the verses are Ennius, quoted by Cicero in On Duties.
4 Ternate is an island in the Moluccas, in present-day Indonesia.
5 Lysander was the Spartan commander who defeated Athens at the end of the Peloponnesian War (404 BC).

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
	suiure le Comte, et se ietter sur sa foy à l'abri des coups dans la ville.	so much so that Alessandro Trivulzio was killed there. More than that, l'Escut himself was forced, as the safest course, to follow the Count and throw himself on his word, into the town and out of reach of the blows.[6]
1.5.7	Eumenes en la ville de Nora pressé par Antigonus qui l'assiegeoit, de sortir pour luy parler, alleguant que c'estoit raison qu'il vinst deuers luy, attendu qu'il estoit le plus grand et le plus fort: apres auoir faict cette noble responce: Ie n'estimeray iamais homme plus grand que moy, tant que i'auray mon espee en ma puissance, n'y consentit, qu'Antigonus ne luy eust donné Ptolemæus son propre nepueu ostage, comme il demandoit.	Eumenes, in the town of Nora, was pressed by Antigonus, who was besieging him, to come out and talk with him. Antigonus argued that it was only right for Eumenes to come to him, since he was the greater and the stronger. Eumenes first gave this noble reply: "I will never consider any man greater than I, as long as I have my sword in my power." Then he would not consent until Antigonus had given him his own nephew Ptolemy as a hostage, as he demanded.[7]
1.5.8	Si est ce qu'encores en y a-il, qui se sont tresbien trouuez de sortir sur la parole de l'assaillant: tesmoing Henry de Vaux, Cheualier Champenois, lequel estant assiegé dans le Chasteau de Commercy par les Anglois, et Barthelemy de Bonnes, qui commandoit au siege, ayant par dehors faict sapper la plus part du Chasteau, si qu'il ne restoit que le feu pour accabler les assiegez sous les ruines, somma ledit Henry de sortir à parlementer pour son profict, comme il fit luy quatriesme; et son euidente ruyne luy ayant esté montree à l'œil, il s'en sentit singulierement obligé à l'ennemy: à la discretion duquel apres qu'il se fut rendu et sa trouppe, le feu estant mis à la mine, les estansons de bois venus à faillir, le Chasteau fut emporté de fons en comble.	And yet there are some who have done very well by going out on the attacker's word. Witness Henri de Vaux, a knight of Champagne. He was besieged by the English in the castle of Commercy, and Barthélemy de Bonnes, who commanded the siege, had sapped most of the castle from outside, so that only the fire was needed to bring the ruins down on the besieged. He then summoned Henri to come out and parley for his own good. Henri did so, with three companions; and when his obvious ruin had been shown to him before his eyes, he felt singularly obliged to the enemy. He and his troop surrendered at the enemy's discretion. Then the fire was set to the mine, the wooden props gave way, and the castle was brought down from top to bottom.[8]
1.5.9	Ie me fie aysement à la foy d'autruy: mais mal-aysement le feroi-ie, lors que ie donrois à iuger l'auoir plustost faict par desespoir et faute de cœur, que par franchise et fiance de sa loyauté.	I readily trust another man's word. But I would find it hard to do so if I gave people reason to think I had done it out of despair and lack of courage, rather than out of frankness and confidence in his good faith.

6 Montaigne draws on the memoirs of Martin du Bellay and the History of Italy of Francesco Guicciardini, who was then governor of Reggio; the Seigneur de l'Escut is Thomas de Foix-Lescun, marshal of France.
7 Eumenes and Antigonus were generals who fought over Alexander's empire after his death; the story is in Plutarch's Life of Eumenes.
8 The episode comes from Froissart's Chronicles.

I.6 The Hour of Parley Is Dangerous

L'heure des parlemens dangereuse
Towns taken by surprise during truce talks show that no agreement is safe until sealed, and victorious armies are hard to restrain.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
1.6.1	TOVTES-FOIS ie vis dernierement en mon voysinage de Mussidan, que ceux qui en furent délogez à force par nostre armee, et autres de leur party, crioyent comme de trahison, de ce que pendant les entremises d'accord, et le traicté se continuant encores, on les auoit surpris et mis en pieces. Chose qui eust eu à l'auanture apparence en autre siecle; mais, comme ie viens de dire, nos façons sont entierement esloignées de ces regles: et ne se doit attendre fiance des vns aux autres, que le dernier seau d'obligation n'y soit passé: encores y a il lors assés affaire.	Nevertheless, I saw recently in my neighborhood, at Mussidan, that those who were driven out by force by our army, and others of their party, cried treachery: during the negotiations for a settlement, and while the treaty was still under way, they had been taken by surprise and cut to pieces. Such a complaint might perhaps have seemed reasonable in another age. But, as I have just said, our ways are entirely removed from these rules. No one should expect trust of another until the last seal of obligation has been set on the agreement; and even then there is plenty to worry about.[1]
1.6.2	Et a tousiours esté conseil hazardeux, de fier à la licence d'vne armee victorieuse l'obseruation de la foy, qu'on a donnee à vne ville, qui vient de se rendre par douce et fauorable composition, et d'en laisser sur la chaude, l'entree libre aux soldats. L. Æmylius Regillus Preteur Romain, ayant perdu son temps à essayer de prendre la ville de Phocees à force, pour la singuliere proüesse des habitants à se bien defendre, feit pache auec eux, de les receuoir pour amis du peuple Romain, et d'y entrer comme en ville confederee: leur ostant toute crainte d'action hostile.	And it has always been a risky course to trust the license of a victorious army with keeping the faith one has given to a town that has just surrendered on mild and favorable terms, and to let the soldiers in freely while their blood is still hot. Lucius Aemilius Regillus, a Roman praetor, had wasted his time trying to take the city of Phocaea by force, because its inhabitants were remarkably skilled at defending themselves. So he made a pact with them: he would receive them as friends of the Roman people and enter the city as an allied town, and he relieved them of all fear of hostile action.[2]
	Mais y ayant quand et luy introduict son armee, pour s'y faire voir en plus de pompe, il ne fut en sa puissance, quelque effort qu'il y employast, de tenir la bride à ses gents: et veit deuant ses yeux fourrager bonne partie de la ville: les droicts de l'auarice et de la vengeance suppeditant ceux de son autorité et de la discipline militaire.	But he brought his army in with him to make a grander show, and then, whatever effort he made, it was not in his power to keep his men in check. He saw a good part of the city plundered before his eyes, the claims of greed and vengeance overriding those of his authority and of military discipline.
1.6.3	Cleomenes disoit, Que quelque mal qu'on peust faire aux ennemis en guerre, cela estoit par-dessus la Iustice, et	Cleomenes used to say that whatever harm one might do to the enemy in war was above justice

1 Mussidan, in Périgord near Montaigne's estate, was besieged and taken by the royal army in 1569, during the Wars of Religion.
2 Phocaea was a Greek city on the coast of Asia Minor; the episode (190 BC) is in Livy.

FRENCH

non subiect à icelle, tant enuers les Dieux, qu'enuers les hommes: et ayant faict treue auec les Argiens pour sept iours, la troisiesme nuict apres il les alla charger tous endormis, et les défict, alleguant qu'en sa treue il n'auoit pas esté parlé des nuicts: mais les Dieux vengerent ceste perfide subtilité.

1.6.4 Pendant le parlement, et qu'ils musoient sur leurs seurtez, la ville de Casilinum fust saisie par surprinse. Et cela pourtant au siecle et des plus iustes Capitaines et de la plus parfaicte milice Romaine: car il n'est pas dict, qu'en temps et lieu il ne soit permis de nous preualoir de la sottise de noz ennemis, comme nous faisons de leur lascheté. Et certes la guerre a naturellement beaucoup de priuileges raisonnables au preiudice de la raison. Et icy faut la regle, *neminem id agere, vt ex alterius prædetur inscitia.*

Mais ie m'estonne de l'estendue que Xenophon leur donne, et par les propos, et par diuers exploicts de son parfaict Empereur: autheur de merueilleux poids en telles choses, comme grand Capitaine et Philosophe des premiers disciples de Socrates; et ne consens pas à la mesure de sa dispense en tout et par tout.

1.6.5 Monsieur d'Aubigny assiegeant Cappoüe, et apres y auoir fait vne furieuse baterie, le Seigneur Fabrice Colonne, Capitaine de la ville, ayant commencé à parlementer de dessus vn bastion, et ses gens faisants plus molle garde, les nostres s'en emparerent, et mirent tout en pieces. Et de plus fresche memoire à Yuoy, le Seigneur Iulian Rommero, ayant fait ce pas de clerc de sortir pour parlementer auec Monsieur le Connestable, trouua au retour sa place saisie.

Mais afin que nous ne nous en allions pas sans reuanche, le Marquis de Pesquaire assiegeant Genes, où le Duc Octauian Fregose commandoit soubs nostre protection, et l'accord entre eux ayant esté poussé si auant, qu'on le tenoit pour fait, sur le point de la conclusion, les Espagnols s'estans coullés dedans, en vserent comme en vne victoire planiere: et depuis à Ligny en Barrois, où le Comte de Brienne commandoit, l'Empereur l'ayant assiegé en personne, et Bertheuille Lieutenant dudict

ENGLISH

and not subject to it, in the eyes of the gods as well as of men. Having made a seven-day truce with the Argives, on the third night he went and fell on them while they were all asleep and defeated them, claiming that nothing had been said about nights in his truce. But the gods avenged this treacherous subtlety.[3]

During a parley, while the townspeople were dawdling over their guarantees, the city of Casilinum was seized by surprise. And this, mind you, in the age of the most just captains and of the most perfect Roman military discipline. For it is not laid down that, at the right time and place, we may not take advantage of our enemies' stupidity, as we do of their cowardice. And certainly war naturally has many reasonable privileges to the prejudice of reason. Here the rule fails: *that no one should seek to profit from another's ignorance*.[4]

But I am astonished at how far Xenophon extends these privileges, both in the speeches and in the various exploits of his perfect commander. He is an author of marvelous weight in such matters, being both a great captain and a philosopher among the first disciples of Socrates; and yet I do not agree with the full extent of his dispensation in every respect.[5]

Monsieur d'Aubigny was besieging Capua and had subjected it to a furious bombardment. Signor Fabrizio Colonna, captain of the town, began to parley from a bastion, and as his men kept a slacker guard, ours seized the place and put everything to the sword. And in more recent memory, at Ivoy, Signor Julian Romero made the novice's blunder of going out to parley with the Constable, and on his return found his position taken.[6]

But so that we do not get off without being paid back: the Marquis of Pescara was besieging Genoa, where Duke Ottaviano Fregoso held command under our protection. The agreement between them had been pushed so far that it was considered done, but just as it was about to be concluded, the Spaniards slipped inside and treated it as an outright victory. And later, at Ligny-en-Barrois, where

3 Cleomenes I, king of Sparta (c. 520–490 BC).
4 Casilinum, in Campania, was taken by the Romans in 214 BC; the Latin is from Cicero, On Duties.
5 The "perfect commander" is Cyrus the Great as portrayed in Xenophon's Cyropaedia.
6 Capua was taken by the French in 1501; Ivoy, in the Ardennes, in 1552 by the Constable Anne de Montmorency.

FRENCH

Comte estant sorty pour parlementer, pendant le parlement la ville se trouue saisie. *Fù il vincer sempre mai laudabil cosa, / Vinca si ò per fortuna ò per ingegno,* disent-ils: mais le Philosophe Chrysippus n'eust pas esté de cet aduis: et moy aussi peu.

Car il disoit que ceux qui courent à l'enuy, doiuent bien employer toutes leurs forces à la vistesse, mais il ne leur est pourtant aucunement loisible de mettre la main sur leur aduersaire pour l'arrester: ny de luy tendre la iambe, pour le faire cheoir. Et plus genereusement encore ce grand Alexandre, à Polypercon, qui luy suadoit de se seruir de l'auantage que l'obscurité de la nuict luy donnoit pour assaillir Darius: Point, dit-il, ce n'est pas à moy de chercher des victoires desrobees: *malo me fortunæ pœniteat, quàm victoriæ pudeat. Atque idem fugientem haud est dignatus Orodem*
Sternere, nec iacta cæcum dare cuspide vulnus:
Obuius, aduersóque occurrit, séque viro vir
Contulit, haud furto melior, sed fortibus armis.

ENGLISH

the Count of Brienne was in command, the Emperor besieged the town in person; Bertheville, the Count's lieutenant, went out to parley, and during the parley the town was seized. *Victory was ever a thing to praise, / whether won by fortune or by wit,* they say. But the philosopher Chrysippus would not have been of that opinion; and neither am I.[7]

For he said that those who run a race must indeed use all their strength for speed, but that they are by no means allowed to lay hands on their opponent to stop him, or to stick out a leg to trip him. And more nobly still, the great Alexander answered Polyperchon, who was urging him to use the advantage the darkness of night gave him to attack Darius: "No," he said, "it is not for me to seek stolen victories. *I would rather regret my fortune than be ashamed of my victory*." *And he did not deign to strike down Orodes as he fled,*
nor deal him a blind wound with a thrown spear;
he ran to meet him face to face, and man against man
he closed with him, the better not by stealth but by valiant arms.[8]

7 The Italian is from Ariosto, Orlando Furioso; Chrysippus was a leading Stoic philosopher of the 3rd century BC.
8 Alexander's words are from Quintus Curtius, History of Alexander; the verses are from Virgil's Aeneid.

I.7 That Intention Is Judge of Our Actions

Que l'intention iuge nos actions
Since only our will is in our power, duty rests on intention—so wrongs repaired only by deathbed wills earn little credit.

FRENCH

ENGLISH

1.7.1 LA mort, dit-on, nous acquitte de toutes nos obligations. I'en sçay qui l'ont prins en diuerse façon. Henry septiesme Roy d'Angleterre fit composition auec Dom Philippe fils de l'Empereur Maximilian, ou pour le confronter plus honnorablement, pere de l'Empereur Charles cinquiesme, que ledict Philippe remettoit entre ses mains le Duc de Suffolc de la Rose blanche, son ennemy, lequel s'en estoit fuy et retiré au pays bas, moyennant qu'il promettoit de n'attenter rien sur la vie dudict Duc: toutesfois venant à mourir, il commanda par son testament à son fils, de le faire mourir, soudain apres qu'il seroit decedé.

Death, they say, releases us from all our obligations. I know some who have taken this in different ways. Henry VII, king of England, made an agreement with Don Philip, son of the Emperor Maximilian—or, to give him a more honorable comparison, father of the Emperor Charles V. Philip was to hand over to him the Duke of Suffolk of the White Rose, his enemy, who had fled and taken refuge in the Low Countries, in return for Henry's promise to make no attempt on the Duke's life. Yet when Henry came to die, he ordered his son in his will to have the Duke put to death immediately after his own decease.[1]

Dernierement en cette tragedie que le Duc d'Albe nous fit voir à Bruxelles és Contes de Horne et d'Aiguemond, il y eut tout plein de choses remerquables: et entre autres que ledict Comte d'Aiguemond, soubs la foy et asseurance duquel le Comte de Horne s'estoit venu rendre au Duc d'Albe, requit auec grande instance, qu'on le fist mourir le premier: affin que sa mort l'affranchist de l'obligation qu'il auoit audict Comte de Horne. Il semble que la mort n'ayt point deschargé le premier de sa foy donnee, et que le second en estoit quitte, mesmes sans mourir. Nous ne pouuons estre tenus au delà de nos forces et de nos moyens.

Recently, in that tragedy the Duke of Alba staged for us in Brussels with the Counts of Horn and Egmont, there were a great many remarkable things. Among others, Count Egmont, on whose word and assurance Count Horn had come to give himself up to the Duke of Alba, earnestly begged to be put to death first, so that his death might free him from the obligation he owed Count Horn. It seems that death did not discharge the first man of the word he had given, and that the second was quit of his even without dying. We cannot be bound beyond our strength and our means.[2]

A cette cause, par ce que les effects et executions ne sont aucunement en nostre puissance, et qu'il n'y a rien en bon escient en nostre puissance, que la volonté: en celle là se fondent par necessité et s'establissent toutes les regles du deuoir de l'homme. Par ainsi le Comte d'Aiguemond tenant son ame et volonté endebtee à sa promesse, bien que la puissance de l'effectuer ne fust pas en ses mains, estoit sans doute absous de son deuoir, quand il eust suruescu le Comte de Horne.

For this reason—since the outcomes and the carrying out of things are not in our power at all, and nothing is truly in our power but the will—all the rules of man's duty are necessarily founded and established on the will. So Count Egmont, holding his soul and will bound to his promise, although the power to carry it out was not in his hands, would undoubtedly have been absolved of his duty even if he had outlived Count Horn.

Mais le Roy d'Angleterre faillant à sa parolle par son intention, ne se peut excuser pour auoir retardé iusques

But the king of England, breaking his word in his intention, cannot be excused for having put off

1 Edmund de la Pole, Earl of Suffolk, a Yorkist claimant, was executed by Henry VIII in 1513.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
	apres sa mort l'execution de sa desloyauté: non plus que le masson de Herodote, lequel ayant loyallement conserué durant sa vie le secret des thresors du Roy d'Egypte son maistre, mourant les descouurit à ses enfans.	carrying out his treachery until after his death. No more can Herodotus's mason, who faithfully kept the secret of the treasures of the king of Egypt, his master, all his life, and revealed it to his children as he was dying.[3]
1.7.2	I'ay veu plusieurs de mon temps conuaincus par leur conscience retenir de l'autruy, se disposer à y satisfaire par leur testament, et apres leur decés. Ils ne font rien qui vaille. Ny de prendre terme à chose si pressante, ny de vouloir restablir vne iniure auec si peu de leur ressentiment et interest. Ils doiuent du plus leur. Et d'autant qu'ils payent plus poisamment, et incommodéement: d'autant en est leur satisfaction plus iuste et meritoire. La penitence demande à charger. Ceux la font encore pis, qui reseruent la declaration de quelque haineuse volonté enuers le proche à leur derniere volonté, l'ayants cachee pendant la vie.	I have seen many people in my time who, convicted by their conscience of keeping what belongs to others, arranged to make amends by their will, after their death. They achieve nothing worthwhile—neither by setting a deadline on a matter so urgent, nor by trying to redress a wrong at so little cost to their feelings and their interest. They owe something more truly their own. The more heavily and inconveniently they pay, the more just and meritorious their reparation. Penitence asks to be a burden. Those do still worse who save for their last will the declaration of some spiteful intention toward a relative, having hidden it during their lifetime.
	Et monstrent auoir peu de soin du propre honneur, irritans l'offencé à l'encontre de leur memoire: et moins de leur conscience, n'ayants pour le respect de la mort mesme, sceu faire mourir leur maltalent: et en estendant la vie outre la leur. Iniques iuges, qui remettent à iuger alors qu'ils n'ont plus cognoissance de cause. Ie me garderay, si ie puis, que ma mort die chose, que ma vie n'ayt premierement dit et apertement.	They show they care little for their own honor, since they provoke the injured party against their memory; and less for their conscience, since not even out of respect for death itself could they make their ill will die, but instead extended its life beyond their own. Unjust judges, who put off judging until they no longer know the case. I shall take care, if I can, that my death says nothing my life has not said first, and said openly.

2 Lamoral, Count of Egmont, and Philippe de Montmorency, Count of Horn, leaders of the Netherlands nobility, were beheaded in Brussels in 1568.

3 The story of the mason who built King Rhampsinitus's treasury is in Herodotus, Histories, Book II.

I.8 Of Idleness

De l'oysiueté

Retiring to rest his mind, Montaigne finds it bolting off into chimeras, so he writes them down to shame it.

FRENCH

ENGLISH

1.8.1 COMME nous voyons des terres oysiues, si elles sont grasses et fertilles, foisonner en cent mille sortes d'herbes sauuages et inutiles et que pour les tenir en office, il les faut assubiectir et employer à certaines semences, pour nostre seruice. Et comme nous voyons, que les femmes produisent bien toutes seules, des amas et pieces de chair informes, mais que pour faire vne generation bonne et naturelle, il les faut embesongner d'vne autre semence: ainsin est-il des esprits; si on ne les occupe à certain subiect, qui les bride et contraigne, ils se iettent desreiglez, par-cy par-là, dans le vague champ des imaginations.

Sicut aquæ tremulum labris vbi lumen ahenis
Sole repercussum, aut radiantis imagine Lunæ,
Omnia peruolitat latè loca, iámque sub auras
Erigitur, summique ferit laquearia tecti. Et n'est folie ny réuerie, qu'ils ne produisent en cette agitation, *velut ægri somnia, vanæ*
Finguntur species. L'ame qui n'a point de but estably, elle se perd: Car comme on dit, c'est n'estre en aucun lieu, que d'estre par tout. *Quisquis vbique habitat, Maxime, nusquam habitat.*

We see that fallow lands, if they are rich and fertile, teem with a hundred thousand kinds of wild and useless weeds, and that to keep them doing their job we must subdue them and put them to certain seeds for our use. And we see that women, all by themselves, produce shapeless masses and lumps of flesh, but that to make a good and natural offspring they must be set to work with another seed. So it is with minds. If we do not occupy them with some definite subject that will bridle and restrain them, they throw themselves in disorder, this way and that, into the vague field of imaginings.

As when the trembling light of water in bronze basins,
thrown back by the sun or the image of the radiant moon,
flits far and wide over every place, and now rises into the air
and strikes the paneled ceiling of the lofty roof. And there is no folly or raving that they do not produce in this agitation: *like a sick man's dreams, they shape vain images.* The mind that has no fixed goal loses itself; for, as they say, to be everywhere is to be nowhere. *He who lives everywhere, Maximus, lives nowhere.*[1]

1.8.2 Dernierement que ie me retiray chez moy, deliberé autant que ie pourroy, ne me mesler d'autre chose, que de passer en repos, et à part, ce peu qui me reste de vie, il me sembloit ne pouuoir faire plus grande faueur à mon esprit, que de le laisser en pleine oysiueté, s'entretenir soy-mesmes, et s'arrester et rasseoir en soy: ce que i'esperois qu'il peust meshuy faire plus aysément, deuenu auec le temps, plus poisant, et plus meur; mais ie trouue, *variam semper dant otia mentem,* qu'au rebours faisant le cheual eschappé, il se donne cent fois plus de carriere à soy-mesmes, qu'il ne prenoit pour autruy: et m'enfante tant de chimeres et monstres fantasques les vns sur les

Lately, when I retired to my home, determined as far as I could to concern myself with nothing but spending in rest and seclusion the little life I have left, it seemed to me I could do my mind no greater favor than to leave it in complete idleness, to entertain itself and to settle and rest in itself. I hoped it could do this more easily from now on, having grown weightier and riper with time. But I find—*idleness always makes the mind unsteady*—that, on the contrary, like a runaway horse, it gives itself a hundred times more free rein than it ever took for others. It gives birth to so many chimeras

1 Virgil, Aeneid; then Horace, Art of Poetry, and Martial, Epigrams.

FRENCH	ENGLISH
autres, sans ordre, et sans propos, que pour en contempler à mon ayse l'ineptie et l'estrangeté, i'ay commencé de les mettre en rolle: esperant auec le temps, luy en faire honte à luy mesmes.	and fantastic monsters, one on top of another, without order or purpose, that in order to contemplate their absurdity and strangeness at my leisure, I have begun to put them on record, hoping in time to make my mind ashamed of itself.[2]

2 Montaigne retired to his château in 1571, at the age of 38. The Latin is from Lucan, Pharsalia.

I.9 Of Liars

Des menteurs
Montaigne laments his poor memory, then argues that lying is an accursed vice to be fought from childhood.

FRENCH

ENGLISH

1.9.1 IL n'est homme à qui il siese si mal de se mesler de parler de memoire. Car ie n'en recognoy quasi trace en moy: et ne pense qu'il y en ayt au monde, vne autre si merueilleuse en defaillance. I'ay toutes mes autres parties viles et communes, mais en cette-là ie pense estre singulier et tres-rare, et digne de gaigner nom et reputation.

There is no man it suits worse to talk about memory. For I recognize hardly a trace of it in myself, and I do not think there is another in the world so marvelously deficient. All my other faculties are mean and ordinary, but in this one I think I am singular and very rare, and worthy of earning a name and a reputation.

Outre l'inconuenient naturel que i'en souffre: car certes, veu sa necessité, Platon a raison de la nommer vne grande et puissante deesse: si en mon pays on veut dire qu'vn homme n'a point de sens, ils disent, qu'il n'a point de memoire: et quand ie me plains du defaut de la mienne, ils me reprennent et mescroient, comme si ie m'accusois d'estre insensé: ils ne voyent pas de chois entre memoire et entendement. C'est bien empirer mon marché: mais ils me font tort: car il se voit par experience plustost au rebours, que les memoires excellentes se ioignent volontiers aux iugemens debiles.

Besides the natural inconvenience I suffer from it—and indeed, given how necessary memory is, Plato is right to call it a great and powerful goddess—in my part of the country, when they want to say a man has no sense, they say he has no memory. And when I complain of the failings of mine, they reprove me and refuse to believe me, as if I were accusing myself of being witless. They see no difference between memory and understanding. That makes a bad bargain worse for me. But they do me wrong, for experience shows rather the opposite: excellent memories are often joined to feeble judgments.

Ils me font tort aussi en cecy, qui ne sçay rien si bien faire qu'estre amy, que les mesmes paroles qui accusent ma maladie, representent l'ingratitude. On se prend de mon affection à ma memoire, et d'vn defaut naturel, on en fait vn defaut de conscience. Il a oublié, dict-on, cette priere ou cette promesse: il ne se souuient point de ses amys: il ne s'est point souuenu de dire, ou faire, ou taire cela, pour l'amour de moy. Certes ie puis aysément oublier: mais de mettre à nonchalloir la charge que mon amy m'a donnee, ie ne le fay pas. Qu'on se contente de ma misere, sans en faire vne espece de malice: et de la malice autant ennemye de mon humeur.

They wrong me in this too—I who can do nothing so well as be a friend—that the same words that accuse my infirmity describe ingratitude. They blame my affection for what is the fault of my memory, and turn a natural defect into a defect of conscience. "He has forgotten," they say, "this request or that promise. He does not remember his friends. He did not remember to say, or do, or keep quiet about such and such, for my sake." Certainly I can easily forget; but to neglect a charge my friend has given me—that I do not do. Let them be content with my wretchedness, without making it into a kind of malice, and a malice so contrary to my temperament.

1.9.2 Ie me console aucunement. Premierement sur ce, que c'est vn mal duquel principallement i'ay tiré la raison de corriger vn mal pire, qui se fust facilement produit en moy: sçauoir est l'ambition, car cette deffaillance est

I console myself somewhat. First, because it is an evil from which I have chiefly drawn the means of correcting a worse one that would easily have grown in me, namely ambition; for this defect is

FRENCH

insuportable à qui s'empestre des negotiations du monde. Que comme disent plusieurs pareils exemples du progres de nature, elle a volontiers fortifié d'autres facultés en moy, à mesure que cette-cy s'est affoiblie, et irois facilement couchant et allanguissant mon esprit et mon iugement, sur les traces d'autruy, sans exercer leurs propres forces, si les inuentions et opinions estrangieres m'estoient presentes par le benefice de la memoire.

Que mon parler en est plus court: car le magasin de la memoire, est volontiers plus fourny de matiere, que n'est celuy de l'inuention. Si elle m'eust tenu bon, i'eusse assourdi tous mes amys de babil: les subiects esueillans cette telle quelle faculté que i'ay de les manier et employer, eschauffant et attirant mes discours. C'est pitié: ie l'essaye par la preuue d'aucuns de mes priuez amys: à mesure que la memoire leur fournit la chose entiere et presente, ils reculent si arriere leur narration, et la chargent de tant de vaines circonstances, que si le conte est bon, ils en estouffent la bonté: s'il ne l'est pas, vous estes à maudire ou l'heur de leur memoire, ou le malheur de leur iugement.

Et c'est chose difficile, de fermer vn propos, et de le coupper despuis qu'on est arroutté. Et n'est rien, où la force d'vn cheual se cognoisse plus, qu'à faire vn arrest rond et net. Entre les pertinents mesmes, i'en voy qui veulent et ne se peuuent deffaire de leur course. Ce pendant qu'ils cerchent le point de clorre le pas, ils s'en vont baliuernant et trainant comme des hommes qui deffaillent de foiblesse. Sur tout les vieillards sont dangereux, à qui la souuenance des choses passees demeure, et ont perdu la souuenance de leurs redites. I'ay veu des recits bien plaisants, deuenir tres-ennuyeux, en la bouche d'vn Seigneur, chascun de l'assistance en ayant esté abbreuué cent fois.

1.9.3 Secondement qu'il me souuient moins des offences receuës, ainsi que disoit cet ancien: il me faudroit vn protocolle, comme Darius, pour n'oublier l'offense qu'il auoit receue des Atheniens, faisoit qu'vn page à touts les coups qu'il se mettoit à table, luy vinst rechanter par trois fois à l'oreille, Sire, souuienne vous des Atheniens: et que les lieux et les liures que ie reuoy, me rient tousiours d'vne fresche nouuelleté.

ENGLISH

unbearable in anyone who gets entangled in the world's affairs. Also, as many similar examples of nature's workings show, she has readily strengthened other faculties in me as this one has weakened. If other people's ideas and opinions were present to me by the benefit of memory, I might easily let my mind and judgment lie down and languish in others' tracks, without exercising their own powers.

Also, my talk is shorter for it; for the storehouse of memory is usually better stocked with material than that of invention. If my memory had served me well, I would have deafened all my friends with chatter, since subjects rouse this faculty I have, such as it is, of handling and using them, warming up and drawing out my reasoning. It is a pity: I see it tested in some of my close friends. As their memory supplies them with the whole thing, complete and present, they start their story so far back and load it with so many pointless details that if the tale is good, they smother its goodness; and if it is not, you are left cursing either the good luck of their memory or the bad luck of their judgment.

And it is a hard thing to close a speech and cut it short once you are under way. There is nothing in which a horse's strength shows more than in making a clean, neat stop. Even among those who speak to the point, I see some who want to break off their run and cannot. While they are looking for the place to end their stride, they go rambling and trailing on like men fainting from weakness. Old men above all are dangerous: they keep the memory of things past and have lost the memory of their repetitions. I have seen very amusing stories become extremely tiresome in the mouth of a certain lord, everyone present having been regaled with them a hundred times.

Second, I remember less of the offenses I have received, as that ancient said. I would need a prompter, like Darius: to keep from forgetting the offense he had received from the Athenians, he had a page come and chant in his ear three times, every time he sat down to table, "Sire, remember the Athenians." And the places and books I see again always smile at me with fresh novelty.[1]

1 Cicero said of Caesar that he forgot nothing but injuries; the story of Darius is in Herodotus.

LIARS NEED GOOD MEMORIES

Lying is a cursed vice; liars who forget their own inventions are caught out.

FRENCH

1.9.4 Ce n'est pas sans raison qu'on dit, que qui ne se sent point assez ferme de memoire, ne se doit pas mesler d'estre menteur. Ie sçay bien que les grammairiens font difference, entre dire mensonge, et mentir: et disent que dire mensonge, c'est dire chose fausse, mais qu'on a pris pour vraye, et que la definition du mot de mentir en Latin, d'où nostre François est party, porte autant comme aller contre sa conscience: et que par consequent cela ne touche que ceux qui disent contre ce qu'ils sçauent, desquels ie parle. Or ceux icy, ou ils inuentent marc et tout, ou ils déguisent et alterent vn fons veritable.

Lors qu'ils déguisent et changent, à les remettre souuent en ce mesme conte, il est mal-aisé qu'ils ne se desferrent: par ce que la chose, comme elle est, s'estant logée la premiere dans la memoire, et s'y estant empreincte, par la voye de la connoissance et de la science, il est mal-aisé qu'elle ne se represente à l'imagination, délogeant la fausceté, qui n'y peut auoir le pied si ferme, ny si rassis: et que les circonstances du premier aprentissage, se coulant à tous coups dans l'esprit, ne facent perdre le souuenir des pieces raportées faulses ou abastardies. En ce qu'ils inuentent tout à faict, d'autant qu'il n'y a nulle impression contraire, qui choque leur fausceté, ils semblent auoir d'autant moins à craindre de se mesconter.

Toutefois encore cecy, par ce que c'est vn corps vain, et sans prise, eschappe volontiers à la memoire, si elle n'est bien asseuree. Dequoy i'ay souuent veu l'experience, et plaisamment, aux despens de ceux qui font profession de ne former autrement leur parole, que selon qu'il sert aux affaires qu'ils negotient, et qu'il plaist aux grands à qui ils parlent.

Car ces circonstances à quoy ils veulent asseruir leur foy et leur conscience, estans subiettes à plusieurs changements, il faut que leur parole se diuersifie quand et quand: d'où il aduient que de mesme chose, ils disent, tantost gris, tantost iaune: à tel homme d'vne sorte, à tel d'vne autre: et si par fortune ces hommes rapportent en butin leurs instructions si contraires, que deuient ce bel art? Outre ce qu'imprudemment ils se desferrent eux-

ENGLISH

It is not without reason that people say that anyone who does not feel his memory firm enough should not meddle with being a liar. I know well that the grammarians distinguish between telling a falsehood and lying. They say that telling a falsehood is saying something false that one has taken to be true, whereas the definition of the word "lie" in Latin, from which our French word comes, amounts to going against one's conscience; and that consequently it concerns only those who say the contrary of what they know. It is of these that I am speaking. Now such people either invent the whole thing outright, or they disguise and alter something that is true at bottom.

When they disguise and alter, if you bring them back often to the same story, it is hard for them not to trip themselves up. For the thing as it really is, having lodged first in the memory and imprinted itself there by way of knowledge and understanding, will hardly fail to present itself to the imagination and dislodge the falsehood, which cannot have so firm or settled a foothold there. And the circumstances of what they first learned, slipping into the mind at every turn, will make them forget the false or spurious pieces they have patched on. In what they invent outright, since there is no contrary impression to clash with their falsehood, they seem to have that much less to fear of slipping up.

Yet even this, being an empty body with nothing to grip, readily escapes the memory unless it is very sure. I have often seen proof of this, and amusingly, at the expense of those who make a profession of shaping their words only according to what serves the business they are negotiating and what pleases the great men they are speaking to.

For since these circumstances, to which they are willing to enslave their faith and their conscience, are subject to many changes, their words must vary along with them. Hence it happens that of the same thing they say now gray, now yellow; to one man one thing, to another something else. And if by chance these men pool their contradictory in-

FRENCH

mesmes si souuent: car quelle memoire leur pourroit suffire à se souuenir de tant de diuerses formes, qu'ils ont forgées en vn mesme subiect?

I'ay veu plusieurs de mon temps, enuier la reputation de cette belle sorte de prudence: qui ne voyent pas, que si la reputation y est, l'effect n'y peut estre.

1.9.5 En verité le mentir est vn maudit vice. Nous ne sommes hommes, et ne nous tenons les vns aux autres que par la parole. Si nous en connoissions l'horreur et le poids, nous le poursuiurions à feu, plus iustement que d'autres crimes. Ie trouue qu'on s'amuse ordinairement à chastier aux enfans des erreurs innocentes, tres mal à propos, et qu'on les tourmente pour des actions temeraires, qui n'ont ny impression ny suitte. La menterie seule, et vn peu au dessous, l'opiniastreté, me semblent estre celles desquelles on deuroit à toute instance combattre la naissance et le progrez, elles croissent quand et eux: et depuis qu'on a donné ce faux train à la langue, c'est merueille combien il est impossible de l'en retirer.

Par où il aduient, que nous voyons des honnestes hommes d'ailleurs, y estre subiects et asseruis. I'ay vn bon garçon de tailleur, à qui ie n'ouy iamais dire vne verité, non pas quand elle s'offre pour luy seruir vtilement. Si comme la verité, le mensonge n'auoit qu'vn visage, nous serions en meilleurs termes: car nous prendrions pour certain l'opposé de ce que diroit le menteur. Mais le reuers de la verité a cent mille figures, et vn champ indefiny. Les Pythagoriens font le bien certain et finy, le mal infiny et incertain. Mille routtes desuoyent du blanc: vne y va.

Certes ie ne m'asseure pas, que ie peusse venir à bout de moy, à guarentir vn danger euident et extresme, par vne effrontee et solenne mensonge. Vn ancien pere dit, que nous sommes mieux en la compagnie d'vn chien cognu, qu'en celle d'vn homme, duquel le langage nous est inconnu. *Vt externus alieno non sit hominis vice.* Et de combien est le langage faux moins sociable que le silence?

1.9.6 Le Roy François premier, se vantoit d'auoir mis au rouet par ce moyen, Francisque Tauerna, Ambassadeur de François Sforce Duc de Milan, homme tres-fameux en science de parlerie. Cettuy-cy auoit esté despesché pour

ENGLISH

formation like booty, what becomes of this fine art? Besides, they so often trip themselves up out of sheer carelessness: for what memory could be enough to remember so many different shapes they have forged on one and the same subject?

I have seen many in my time envy the reputation of this fine kind of prudence, without seeing that if the reputation is there, the effect cannot be.

Truly, lying is an accursed vice. We are men, and hold together with one another, only by our word. If we recognized its horror and its gravity, we would hunt it down with fire more justly than other crimes. I find that people commonly busy themselves punishing children for innocent mistakes, very inappropriately, and torment them for thoughtless actions that leave no mark and have no consequences. Lying alone, and a little below it obstinacy, seem to me the faults whose birth and growth we ought to fight at every turn. They grow along with the children; and once the tongue has been set on this false track, it is amazing how impossible it is to pull it back.

Hence we see men who are otherwise decent being subject and enslaved to it. I have a good lad of a tailor whom I have never heard tell a single truth, not even when it would serve him usefully. If falsehood, like truth, had only one face, we would be in better shape, for we would take as certain the opposite of what the liar said. But the reverse of truth has a hundred thousand shapes and a limitless field. The Pythagoreans make good certain and finite, evil infinite and uncertain. A thousand paths miss the target; one leads to it.

Certainly I cannot be sure that I could bring myself to ward off an obvious and extreme danger by a brazen and solemn lie. An ancient Father says that we are better off in the company of a dog we know than in that of a man whose language we do not know. *So that to a stranger a foreigner is not a man.* And how much less sociable is false speech than silence?[2]

King Francis I boasted of having driven to his wits' end, by this means, Francesco Taverna, ambassador of Francesco Sforza, duke of Milan, a man very famous for his skill at speechmaking. Taverna had been sent to excuse his master to His Majesty for

2 The Father is Saint Augustine, City of God; the Latin is from Pliny the Elder, Natural History.

FRENCH

excuser son maistre enuers sa Maiesté, d'vn fait de grande consequence; qui estoit tel.

Le Roy pour maintenir tousiours quelques intelligences en Italie, d'où il auoit esté dernierement chassé, mesme au Duché de Milan, auoit aduisé d'y tenir pres du Duc vn Gentilhomme de sa part, Ambassadeur par effect, mais par apparence homme priué, qui fist la mine d'y estre pour ses affaires particulieres: d'autant que le Duc, qui dependoit beaucoup plus de l'Empereur, lors principallement qu'il estoit en traicté de mariage auec sa niepce, fille du Roy de Dannemarc, qui est à present douairiere de Lorraine, ne pouuoit descouurir auoir aucune praticque et conference auecques nous, sans son grand interest. A cette commission, se trouua propre vn Gentil-homme Milannois, escuyer d'escurie chez le Roy, nommé Merueille.

Cettuy-cy despesché auecques lettres secrettes de creance, et instructions d'Ambassadeur, et auec d'autres lettres de recommendation enuers le Duc, en faueur de ses affaires particulieres, pour le masque et la montre, fut si long temps aupres du Duc, qu'il en vint quelque ressentiment à l'Empereur: qui donna cause à ce qui s'ensuiuit apres, comme nous pensons: ce fut, que soubs couleur de quelque meurtre, voila le Duc qui luy faict trancher la teste de belle nuict, et son proces faict en deux iours.

Messire Francisque estant venu prest d'vne longue deduction contrefaicte de cette histoire; car le Roy s'en estoit adressé, pour demander raison, à tous les Princes de Chrestienté, et au Duc mesmes: fut ouy aux affaires du matin, et ayant estably pour le fondement de sa cause, et dressé à cette fin, plusieurs belles apparences du faict: Que son maistre n'auoit iamais pris nostre homme, que pour Gentil-homme priué, et sien subiect, qui estoit venu faire ses affaires à Milan, et qui n'auoit iamais vescu là soubs autre visage: desaduouant mesme auoir sçeu qu'il fust en estat de la maison du Roy, ny connu de luy, tant s'en faut qu'il le prist pour Ambassadeur.

Le Roy à son tour le pressant de diuerses obiections et demandes, et le chargeant de toutes pars, l'acculla en fin sur le point de l'execution faicte de nuict, et comme à la desrobée. A quoy le pauure homme embarrassé,

ENGLISH

an act of great consequence, which was as follows.[3]

The King, in order always to keep some lines of intelligence in Italy, from which he had lately been driven out, and especially in the duchy of Milan, had decided to keep a gentleman there near the Duke on his behalf: an ambassador in fact, but in appearance a private man, who would pretend to be there on his own business. For the Duke, who depended much more on the Emperor—especially at the time, when he was negotiating a marriage with the Emperor's niece, daughter of the King of Denmark, who is now dowager of Lorraine—could not let it be discovered that he had any dealings or talks with us without great harm to his interests. A Milanese gentleman, an equerry in the King's stables, named Merveille, was found suitable for this commission.[4]

Merveille was sent with secret letters of credence and an ambassador's instructions, along with other letters recommending him to the Duke in support of his private affairs, as a mask and a show. He stayed so long near the Duke that the Emperor got some inkling of it, which, we think, gave rise to what followed. It was this: on the pretext of some murder, there is the Duke having his head cut off in the dead of night, after a trial lasting two days.

Messer Francesco had come prepared with a long, fabricated account of this story—for the King had appealed for satisfaction to all the princes of Christendom, and to the Duke himself. He was given a hearing at the morning council. As the foundation of his case, he laid out several plausible versions of the facts, arranged to this end: that his master had never taken our man for anything but a private gentleman and his own subject, who had come to Milan on business and had never lived there under any other guise. He even denied having known that Merveille was in the service of the King's household, or known to the King—let alone taking him for an ambassador.

The King in his turn pressed him with various objections and questions, attacked him from every side, and finally drove him into a corner on the point of the execution carried out by night, and as

3 Francesco II Sforza was the last Sforza duke of Milan; the affair took place in 1533.
4 The niece was Christina of Denmark, who married Sforza in 1534 and later the Duke of Lorraine.

FRENCH

respondit, pour faire l'honneste, que pour le respect de sa Maiesté, le Duc eust esté bien marry, que telle execution se fust faicte de iour. Chacun peut penser, comme il fut releué, s'estant si lourdement couppé, à l'endroit d'vn tel nez que celuy du Roy François.

1.9.7 Le Pape Iulle second, ayant enuoyé vn Ambassadeur vers le Roy d'Angleterre, pour l'animer contre le Roy François, l'Ambassadeur ayant esté ouy sur sa charge, et le Roy d'Angleterre s'estant arresté en sa response, aux difficultez qu'il trouuoit à dresser les preparatifs qu'il faudroit pour combattre vn Roy si puissant, et en alleguant quelques raisons: l'Ambassadeur repliqua mal à propos, qu'il les auoit aussi considerées de sa part, et les auoit bien dictes au Pape.

De cette parole si esloignée de sa proposition, qui estoit de le pousser incontinent à la guerre, le Roy d'Angleterre print le premier argument de ce qu'il trouua depuis par effect, que cet Ambassadeur, de son intention particuliere pendoit du costé de France, et en ayant aduerty son maistre, ses biens furent confisquez, et ne tint à guere qu'il n'en perdist la vie.

ENGLISH

it were by stealth. To which the poor embarrassed man answered, trying to be polite, that out of respect for His Majesty the Duke would have been very sorry to have such an execution carried out by day. Anyone can imagine how he was taken up on this, having contradicted himself so clumsily before such a nose as King Francis's.

Pope Julius II had sent an ambassador to the King of England to rouse him against King Francis. The ambassador was heard on his commission, and the King of England, in his reply, dwelt on the difficulties he found in making the preparations needed to fight so powerful a king, and gave some reasons. The ambassador replied, inappropriately, that he too had considered them on his part, and had indeed told them to the Pope.

From this remark, so far removed from his mission, which was to push the King into war at once, the King of England drew the first evidence of what he later found to be a fact: that this ambassador, in his private intentions, leaned toward France. When the King informed the ambassador's master, the man's goods were confiscated, and he very nearly lost his life over it.

I.10 Of Prompt or Slow Speech

Du parler prompt ou tardif
Some speakers shine when improvising and others need preparation; Montaigne finds his own mind works best unpremeditated.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
1.10.1	ONC *ne furent à tous toutes graces données.* Aussi voyons nous qu'au don d'eloquence, les vns ont la facilité et la promptitude, et ce qu'on dit, le boutehors si aisé, qu'à chasque bout de champ ils sont prests: les autres plus tardifs ne parlent iamais rien qu'elaboure et premedité.	Never *were all gifts given to all*. So too we see that in the gift of eloquence some have facility and promptness, and, as they say, such an easy delivery that they are ready at every turn, while others, slower, never say anything that is not worked out and premeditated.[1]
1.10.2	Comme on donne des regles aux dames de prendre les ieux et les exercices du corps, selon l'auantage de ce qu'elles ont le plus beau. Si i'auois à conseiller de mesmes, en ces deux diuers aduantages de l'eloquence, de laquelle il semble en nostre siecle, que les Prescheurs et les Aduocats facent principalle profession, le tardif seroit mieux Prescheur, ce me semble, et l'autre mieux Aduocat: par ce que la charge de celuy-là luy donne autant qu'il luy plaist de loisir pour se preparer; et puis sa carriere se passe d'vn fil et d'vne suite, sans interruption: là où les commoditez de l'Aduocat le pressent à toute heure de se mettre en lice: et les responces improuueuës de sa partie aduerse, le reiettent de son branle, où il luy faut sur le champ prendre nouueau party.	Just as ladies are given rules for choosing games and bodily exercises so as to show off what is most beautiful in them, so, if I had to give similar advice about these two different advantages in eloquence —which in our age preachers and lawyers seem to make their chief profession—the slow speaker would make the better preacher, it seems to me, and the other the better lawyer. For the preacher's office gives him as much leisure as he likes to prepare, and then his course runs on in one thread and sequence, without interruption. The lawyer's situation, by contrast, presses him at every hour to enter the lists, and the unexpected replies of the opposing party throw him off his stride, so that he must take a new line on the spot.
1.10.3	Si est-ce qu'à l'entreueuë du Pape Clement et du Roy François à Marseille, il aduint tout au rebours, que Monsieur Poyet, homme toute sa vie nourry au barreau, en grande reputation, ayant charge de faire la harangue au Pape, et l'ayant de longue main pourpensee, voire, à ce qu'on dict, apportée de Paris toute preste, le iour mesme qu'elle deuoit estre prononcée, le Pape se craignant qu'on luy tinst propos qui peust offenser les Ambassadeurs des autres Princes qui estoyent autour de luy, manda au Roy l'argument qui luy sembloit estre le plus propre au temps et au lieu, mais de fortune, tout autre que celuy, sur lequel Monsieur Poyet s'estoit trauaillé: de façon que sa harengue demeuroit inutile, et luy en falloit promptement refaire vne autre.	And yet at the meeting of Pope Clement and King Francis at Marseille, quite the opposite happened. Monsieur Poyet, a man trained all his life at the bar and of great reputation, was charged with making the address to the Pope. He had thought it out long in advance, and had even, so they say, brought it from Paris all ready. On the very day it was to be delivered, the Pope, fearing that something might be said that could offend the ambassadors of the other princes around him, sent the King the subject that seemed to him best suited to the time and place—but, as luck would have it, quite different from the one Monsieur Poyet had worked on. So his speech was useless, and he had to make another one quickly.[2]

1 A line of verse by Étienne de La Boétie (1530–1563), Montaigne's closest friend.

FRENCH

Mais s'en sentant incapable, il fallut que Monsieur le Cardinal du Bellay en prinst la charge. La part de l'Aduocat est plus difficile que celle du Prescheur: et nous trouuons pourtant ce m'est aduis plus de passables Aduocats que Prescheurs, au moins en France. Il semble que ce soit plus le propre de l'esprit, d'auoir son operation prompte et soudaine, et plus le propre du iugement, de l'auoir lente et posée. Mais qui demeure du tout muet, s'il n'a loisir de se preparer, et celuy aussi, à qui le loisir ne donne aduantage de mieux dire, ils sont en pareil degré d'estrangeté.

1.10.4 On recite de Seuerus Cassius, qu'il disoit mieux sans y auoir pensé: qu'il deuoit plus à la fortune qu'à sa diligence; qu'il luy venoit à proufit d'estre troublé en parlant: et que ses aduersaires craignoyent de le picquer, de peur que la colere ne luy fist redoubler son eloquence. Ie cognois par experience cette condition de nature, qui ne peut soustenir vne vehemente premeditation et laborieuse: si elle ne va gayement et librement, elle ne va rien qui vaille. Nous disons d'aucuns ouurages qu'ils puent à l'huyle et à la lampe, pour certaine aspreté et rudesse, que le trauail imprime en ceux où il a grande part.

Mais outre cela, la solicitude de bien faire, et cette contention de l'ame trop bandée et trop tendue à son entreprise, la rompt et l'empesche, ainsi qu'il aduient à l'eau, qui par force de se presser de sa violence et abondance, ne peut trouuer yssue en vn goulet ouuert. En cette condition de nature, dequoy ie parle, il y a quant et quant aussi cela, qu'elle demande à estre non pas esbranlée et picquée par ces passions fortes, comme la colere de Cassius, car ce mouuement seroit trop aspre: elle veut estre non pas secoüée, mais sollicitée: elle veut estre eschauffée et resueillée par les occasions estrangeres, presentes et fortuites.

Si elle va toute seule, elle ne fait que trainer et languir: l'agitation est sa vie et sa grace.

1.10.5 Ie ne me tiens pas bien en ma possession et disposition: le hazard y a plus de droit que moy: l'occasion, la compaignie, le branle mesme de ma voix, tire plus de mon esprit, que ie n'y trouue lors que ie le sonde et employe à part moy. Ainsi les paroles en valent mieux que les escrits, s'il y peut auoir chois où il n'y a point de prix.

ENGLISH

But he felt unable to do it, and Cardinal du Bellay had to take on the task. The lawyer's part is harder than the preacher's; and yet, in my opinion, we find more passable lawyers than preachers, at least in France. It seems that working promptly and suddenly is more the nature of wit, and working slowly and deliberately more the nature of judgment. But the man who stays utterly mute if he has no time to prepare, and the man to whom time to prepare gives no advantage in speaking better, are equally odd.[3]

It is told of Cassius Severus that he spoke better without having thought about it; that he owed more to chance than to his own diligence; that it helped him to be interrupted while speaking; and that his opponents were afraid to provoke him, for fear that anger would redouble his eloquence. I know by experience this cast of nature, which cannot bear vehement and laborious premeditation: if it does not move along cheerfully and freely, it gets nowhere worthwhile. We say of certain works that they smell of oil and the lamp, because of a certain harshness and roughness that labor imprints on those in which it has a large part.[4]

But besides that, the anxiety to do well, and the straining of a soul too taut and too intent on its undertaking, breaks it and hampers it. So it is with water that, pressing on itself through its own violence and abundance, cannot find a way out through an open bottleneck. In this cast of nature I am speaking of, there is also this: it asks not to be shaken and goaded by strong passions, like Cassius's anger, for that movement would be too harsh. It wants not to be jolted but coaxed; it wants to be warmed and roused by occasions from outside, present and fortuitous.

If it goes on its own, it merely drags and languishes. Agitation is its life and its grace.

I do not have myself well in my own possession and control: chance has more rights over me than I do. The occasion, the company, the very rhythm of my voice draw more out of my mind than I find there when I sound it and use it on my own. So my spoken words are worth more than my writings, if

2 Pope Clement VII met Francis I at Marseille in 1533; Guillaume Poyet later became chancellor of France.
3 Jean du Bellay, cardinal and diplomat, brother of the memoirist Martin du Bellay.
4 Cassius Severus was a Roman orator of the Augustan age, described by Seneca the Elder.

FRENCH	ENGLISH
Cecy m'aduient aussi, que ie ne me trouue pas où ie me cherche: et me trouue plus par rencontre, que par l'inquisition de mon iugement. I'auray eslancé quelque subtilité en escriuant. I'entens bien, mornée pour vn autre, affilée pour moy. Laissons toutes ces honnestetez. Cela se dit par chacun selon sa force.	there can be any choosing where nothing has any value. This too happens to me: I do not find myself where I look for myself, and I find myself more by chance encounter than by the searching of my judgment. I will have tossed off some subtle point while writing. I mean, of course, blunt for someone else, sharp for me. Let us drop all these polite disclaimers: everyone says this according to his own powers.
Ie l'ay si bien perdue que ie ne sçay ce que i'ay voulu dire: et l'a l'estranger descouuerte par fois auant moy. Si ie portoy le rasoir par tout où cela m'aduient, ie me desferoy tout. Le rencontre m'en offrira le iour quelque autre fois, plus apparent que celuy du midy: et me fera estonner de ma hesitation.	I have lost it so completely that I do not know what I meant to say, and sometimes a stranger has discovered it before I did. If I took the razor to every passage where this happens to me, I would erase myself entirely. Some other time, chance will show it to me in a light brighter than noonday, and make me astonished at my hesitation.

I.11 Of Prognostications

Des prognostications
Oracles and omens have lost credit; Montaigne mocks divination and the anxious curiosity that seeks to know the future.

FRENCH

1.11.1 QVANT aux oracles, il est certain que bonne piece auant la venue de Iesus Christ, ils auoyent commencé à perdre leur credit: car nous voyons que Cicero se met en peine de trouuer la cause de leur defaillance.

Et ces mots sont à luy: *Cur isto modo iam oracula Delphis non eduntur, non modò nostra ætate, sed iamdiu, vt nihil possit esse contemptius?* Mais quant aux autres prognostiques, qui se tiroyent de l'anatomie des bestes aux sacrifices, ausquels Platon attribue en partie la constitution naturelle des membres internes d'icelles, du trepignement des poulets, du vol des oyseaux, *Aues quasdam rerum augurandarum causa natas esse putamus*, des fouldres, du tournoyement des riuieres, *Multa cernunt aruspices: multa augures prouident: multa oraculis declarantur: multa vaticinationibus: multa somniis: multa portentis*, et autres sur lesquels l'ancienneté appuyoit la pluspart des entreprises, tant publicques que priuées; nostre Religion les a abolies.

1.11.2 Et encore qu'il reste entre nous quelques moyens de diuination és astres, és esprits, és figures du corps, és songes, et ailleurs: notable exemple de la forcenée curiosité de nostre nature, s'amusant à preoccuper les choses futures, comme si elle n'auoit pas assez affaire à digerer les presentes: *cur hanc tibi rector Olympi*
Sollicitis visum mortalibus addere curam,
Noscant venturas vt dira per omina clades?
Sit subitum quodcunque paras, sit cæca futuri
Mens hominum fati, liceat sperare timenti:

1.11.3 *Ne vtile quidem est scire quid futurum sit: Miserum est enim nihil proficientem angi*: si est-ce qu'elle est de beaucoup

ENGLISH

As for oracles, it is certain that a good while before the coming of Jesus Christ they had begun to lose their credit; for we see Cicero taking pains to find the cause of their decline.

These are his words: *Why are oracles no longer delivered at Delphi in this way, not only in our own age but for a long time now, so that nothing could be more despised?* But as for the other kinds of prognostication—drawn from the anatomy of animals at sacrifices (to which Plato partly attributes the natural structure of their internal organs), from the stamping of chickens, from the flight of birds (*We think certain birds were born for the purpose of augury*), from thunderbolts, from the eddying of rivers (*The haruspices see many things, the augurs foresee many; many are revealed by oracles, many by prophecies, many by dreams, many by portents*), and others on which antiquity based most of its undertakings, public and private—our religion has abolished them.[1]

And although there remain among us some means of divination by the stars, by spirits, by the shapes of the body, by dreams, and in other ways—a notable example of the frenzied curiosity of our nature, which busies itself anticipating future things as if it did not have enough to do digesting present ones: *Why, ruler of Olympus, did it please you to add this care to anxious mortals,*
that they should learn of coming disasters through dire omens?
Let whatever you are preparing come suddenly; let men's minds be blind
to future fate; let the fearful be allowed to hope—[2]

It is not even useful to know what is going to happen; for it is wretched to be tormented to no purpose—still,

1 The first quotation is from Cicero, On Divination; the other two are also Cicero, On the Nature of the Gods.
2 Lucan, Pharsalia.

FRENCH

moindre auctorité. Voylà pourquoy l'exemple de François Marquis de Sallusse m'a semblé remerquable: car Lieutenant du Roy François en son armée delà les monts, infiniment fauorisé de nostre cour, et obligé au Roy du Marquisat mesmes, qui auoit esté confisqué de son frere:

au reste ne se presentant occasion de le faire, son affection mesme y contredisant, se laissa si fort espouuanter, comme il a esté adueré, aux belles prognostications qu'on faisoit lors courir de tous costez à l'aduantage de l'Empereur Charles cinquiesme, et à nostre desauantage (mesmes en Italie, où ces folles propheties auoyent trouué tant de place, qu'à Rome fut baillée grande somme d'argent au change, pour cette opinion de nostre ruine) qu'apres s'estre souuent condolu à ses priuez, des maux qu'il voyoit ineuitablement preparez à la couronne de France, et aux amis qu'il y auoit, se reuolta, et changea de party: à son grand dommage pourtant, quelque constellation qu'il y eust.

Mais il s'y conduisit en homme combatu de diuerses passions: car ayant et villes et forces en sa main, l'armee ennemie soubs Antoine de Leue à trois pas de luy, et nous sans soupçon de son faict, il estoit en luy de faire pis qu'il ne fit. Car pour sa trahison nous ne perdismes ny homme, ny ville que Fossan: encore apres l'auoir long temps contestee. *Prudens futuri temporis exitum*
Caliginosa nocte premit Deus,
Ridétque si mortalis vltra
Fas trepidat.
Ille potens sui
Lætúsque deget, cui licet in diem
Dixisse, vixi; cras vel atra
Nube polum pater occupato,
Vel sole puro.
Lætus in præsens animus, quod vltra est,
Oderit curare.

1.11.4 Et ceux qui croyent ce mot au contraire, le croyent à tort. *Ista sic reciprocantur, vt et si diuinatio sit, dij sint: et si dij sint, sit diuinatio.* Beaucoup plus sagement Pacuuius, *Nam istis qui linguam auium intelligunt,*
Plúsque ex alieno iecore sapiunt, quàm ex suo,
Magis audiendum quàm auscultandum censeo.

ENGLISH

such divination carries far less authority now. That is why the example of Francesco, Marquis of Saluzzo, has struck me as remarkable. He was King Francis's lieutenant in his army beyond the Alps, infinitely favored by our court, and indebted to the King for the very marquisate, which had been confiscated from his brother;[3]

and though no occasion for doing so presented itself, and his own affection was against it, he let himself be so badly frightened—as has been established—by the fine prognostications then being spread on all sides in favor of the Emperor Charles V and to our disadvantage (especially in Italy, where these mad prophecies had found so much room that in Rome large sums of money were wagered on this belief in our ruin), that after often lamenting to his intimates the evils he saw inevitably in store for the crown of France and for the friends he had there, he revolted and changed sides. To his great loss, however, whatever constellation there may have been.

But he behaved in this like a man torn by conflicting passions. He had both towns and forces in his hand, the enemy army under Antonio de Leyva was a few steps away, and we had no suspicion of what he was doing, so it was in his power to do worse than he did. For through his treachery we lost neither a man nor a town, except Fossano, and that only after contesting it for a long time. *The outcome of the future a prudent god*
buries in murky night,
and laughs if a mortal beyond
what is right takes fright.
He will live master of himself
and happy, who can say each day,
"I have lived"; tomorrow let the Father fill the sky
with black cloud
or with clear sun.
A mind glad in the present will refuse to care
for what lies beyond.[4]

And those who take this saying the other way round are wrong to do so. *These things are so reciprocal that if there is divination, there are gods; and if there are gods, there is divination.* Much more wisely Pacuvius: *As for those who understand the language of birds*

3 The Latin is from Cicero, On Divination. Francesco, Marquis of Saluzzo, went over to Charles V in 1536.
4 Horace, Odes; Antonio de Leyva commanded Charles V's army in Italy.

FRENCH

ENGLISH

and learn more from another creature's liver than from their own,
I think they should be heard rather than heeded.[5]

1.11.5 Cette tant celebree art de deuiner des Toscans nasquit ainsin. Vn laboureur perçant de son coultre profondement la terre, en veid sourdre Tages demi-dieu, d'vn visage enfantin, mais de senile prudence. Chacun y accourut, et furent ses paroles et science recueillie et conseruee à plusieurs siecles, contenant les principes et moyens de cette art. Naissance conforme à son progrez. I'aymerois bien mieux regler mes affaires par le sort des dez que par ces songes. Et de vray en toutes republiques on a tousiours laissé bonne part d'auctorité au sort. Platon en la police qu'il forge à discretion, luy attribue la decision de plusieurs effects d'importance, et veut entre autres choses, que les mariages se facent par sort entre les bons.

This much-celebrated Tuscan art of divination was born like this. A ploughman, driving his ploughshare deep into the earth, saw Tages, a demigod, spring up out of it, with a child's face but an old man's wisdom. Everyone came running, and his words and his knowledge, which contained the principles and methods of this art, were gathered up and preserved for many centuries. A birth in keeping with its later progress. I would much rather regulate my affairs by a throw of the dice than by these dreams. And indeed, in all commonwealths a good share of authority has always been left to lot. Plato, in the government he shapes as he pleases, assigns to it the decision of several important matters, and wants, among other things, marriages among the good to be arranged by lot.[6]

Et donne si grand poids à cette election fortuite, que les enfans qui en naissent, il ordonne qu'ils soyent nourris au païs: ceux qui naissent des mauuais, en soyent mis hors: toutesfois si quelqu'vn de ces bannis venoit par cas d'aduenture à montrer en croissant quelque bonne esperance de soy, qu'on le puisse rappeller, et exiler aussi celuy d'entre les retenus, qui montrera peu d'esperance de son adolescence.

And he gives such weight to this chance selection that he orders the children born of these marriages to be brought up in the country, and those born of the bad to be put out of it. Yet if one of these exiles should happen, as he grows, to show some good promise of himself, he may be called back; and likewise one of those kept at home may be banished if he shows little promise in his youth.

1.11.6 I'en voy qui estudient et glosent leurs Almanacs, et nous en alleguent l'authorité aux choses qui se passent. A tant dire, il faut qu'ils dient et la verité et le mensonge. *Quis est enim, qui totum diem iaculans, non aliquando conlineet?* Ie ne les estime de rien mieux, pour les voir tomber en quelque rencontre. Ce seroit plus de certitude s'il y auoit regle et verité à mentir tousiours. Ioint que personne ne tient registre de leurs mescontes, d'autant qu'ils sont ordinaires et infinis: et fait-on valoir leurs diuinations de ce qu'elles sont rares, incroiables, et prodigieuses.

I see some people who study and annotate their almanacs, and cite their authority to us about whatever happens. Saying so much, they are bound to say both truth and falsehood. *For who is there who, throwing his javelin all day long, does not sometimes hit the mark?* I think none the better of them for seeing them hit it now and then. There would be more certainty if there were a rule and a truth in always lying. Besides, nobody keeps a record of their misses, since they are common and countless; and their predictions are prized for being rare, incredible and prodigious.[7]

Ainsi respondit Diagoras, qui fut surnommé l'Athee, estant en la Samothrace, à celuy qui en luy montrant au Temple force vœuz et tableaux de ceux qui auoyent

That was how Diagoras, nicknamed the Atheist, answered when he was in Samothrace and a man showed him in the temple a great many votive of-

5 The first Latin sentence is the Stoic argument as reported by Cicero, On Divination, which also quotes the Roman tragic poet Pacuvius.
6 The Tuscans are the ancient Etruscans, famed for divination; the story of Tages is told in Cicero, On Divination. Plato's marriage lottery is in the Republic, Book V.
7 Cicero, On Divination.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
	eschapé le naufrage, luy dit: Et bien vous, qui pensez que les Dieux mettent à nonchaloir les choses humaines, que dittes vous de tant d'hommes sauuez par leur grace? Il se fait ainsi, respondit-il: ceux là ne sont pas peints qui sont demeurez noyez, en bien plus grand nombre.	ferings and pictures of people who had escaped shipwreck, and said to him: "Well now, you who think the gods do not care about human affairs, what do you say to all these men saved by their grace?" "It happens like this," he answered: "those who were drowned, and they are far more numerous, are not painted."[8]
1.11.7	Cicero dit, que le seul Xenophanes Colophonien entre tous les Philosophes, qui ont aduoué les Dieux, a essayé de desraciner toute sorte de diuination. D'autant est-il moins de merueille, si nous auons veu par fois à leur dommage, aucunes de nos ames principesques s'arrester à ces vanitez. Ie voudrois bien auoir reconnu de mes yeux ces deux merueilles, du liure de Ioachim Abbé Calabrois, qui predisoit tous les Papes futurs; leurs noms et formes; et celuy de Leon l'Empereur qui predisoit les Empereurs et Patriarches de Grece.	Cicero says that, of all the philosophers who acknowledged the gods, Xenophanes of Colophon alone tried to uproot every kind of divination. It is all the less surprising, then, if we have sometimes seen some of our princely souls dwell on these vanities, to their cost. I would very much like to have seen with my own eyes those two marvels: the book of Joachim, the Calabrian abbot, which foretold all the future popes, their names and their forms; and that of the Emperor Leo, which foretold the emperors and patriarchs of Greece.[9]
	Cecy ay-ie reconnu de mes yeux, qu'és confusions publiques, les hommes estonnez de leur fortune, se vont reiettant, comme à toute superstition, à rechercher au ciel les causes et menaces anciennes de leur malheur: et y sont si estrangement heureux de mon temps, qu'ils m'ont persuadé, qu'ainsi que c'est vn amusement d'esprits aiguz et oisifs, ceux qui sont duicts à ceste subtilité de les replier et desnouër, seroyent en tous escrits capables de trouuer tout ce qu'ils y demandent. Mais sur tout leur preste beau ieu, le parler obscur, ambigu et fantastique du iargon prophetique, auquel leurs autheurs ne donnent aucun sens clair, afin que la posterité y en puisse appliquer de tel qu'il luy plaira.	This I have seen with my own eyes: that in times of public turmoil, men stunned by their fortune throw themselves back, as on any superstition, on searching the heavens for the ancient causes and portents of their misfortune. And in my time they have been so strangely lucky at it that they have persuaded me of this: since it is a pastime for sharp and idle minds, those who are trained in this subtle art of folding and unfolding such writings would be able to find in any text whatever they look for. But what gives them most scope is the obscure, ambiguous and fanciful language of prophetic jargon, to which its authors give no clear meaning, so that posterity can apply to it whatever meaning it likes.
1.11.8	Le demon de Socrates estoit à l'aduanture certaine impulsion de volonté, qui se presentoit à luy sans le conseil de son discours. En vne ame bien espuree, comme la sienne, et preparee par continu exercice de sagesse et de vertu, il est vray-semblable que ces inclinations, quoy que temeraires et indigestes, estoyent tousiours importantes et dignes d'estre suiuies. Chacun sent en soy quelque image de telles agitations d'vne opinion prompte, vehemente et fortuite. C'est à moy de leur donner quelque authorité, qui en donne si peu à nostre prudence.	The daemon of Socrates was perhaps a certain impulse of the will that came to him without the counsel of his reasoning. In a soul as well refined as his, and prepared by continual exercise of wisdom and virtue, it is likely that these inclinations, though rash and unconsidered, were always important and worth following. Everyone feels within himself some semblance of such stirrings of a sudden, vehement and chance opinion. It is for me to give them some authority, I who give so little to our prudence.[10]

8 Diagoras of Melos, Greek poet of the 5th century BC; the anecdote is in Cicero, On the Nature of the Gods.
9 Joachim of Fiore (c. 1135–1202), Calabrian abbot and prophetic writer; Leo VI the Wise, Byzantine emperor (886–912), to whom a set of oracles was attributed.
10 The daemon was the inner divine sign that Socrates said warned him against certain actions.

FRENCH	ENGLISH
Et en ay eu de pareillement foibles en raison, et violentes en persuasion, ou en dissuasion, qui estoit plus ordinaire à Socrates, ausquelles ie me laissay emporter si vtilement et heureusement, qu'elles pourroyent estre iugees tenir quelque chose d'inspiration diuine.	And I have had some that were equally weak in reason and violent in persuasion—or in dissuasion, which was more usual with Socrates—and I let myself be carried away by them so profitably and so happily that they might be judged to hold something of divine inspiration.

I.12 Of Constancy

De la constance
Constancy means bearing misfortunes that cannot be avoided, not refusing to dodge dangers—even by flinching from a cannon shot.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
1.12.1	LA loy de la resolution et de la constance ne porte pas que nous ne nous deuions couurir, autant qu'il est en nostre puissance, des maux et inconueniens qui nous menassent, ny par consequent d'auoir peur qu'ils nous surpreignent. Au rebours, tous moyens honnestes de se garentir des maux, sont non seulement permis, mais louables. Et le ieu de la constance se iouë principalement à porter de pied ferme, les inconueniens où il n'y a point de remede. De maniere qu'il n'y a soupplesse de corps, ny mouuement aux armes de main, que nous trouuions mauuais, s'il sert à nous garantir du coup qu'on nous rue.	The law of resolution and constancy does not require that we should not shield ourselves, as far as is in our power, from the evils and misfortunes that threaten us, nor, consequently, that we should not fear their taking us by surprise. On the contrary, all honorable means of guarding against evils are not only permitted but praiseworthy. And the game of constancy is played chiefly in bearing steadfastly the misfortunes for which there is no remedy. So there is no suppleness of body, no movement of the weapons in our hands, that we think wrong if it serves to protect us from the blow aimed at us.
1.12.2	Plusieurs nations tresbelliqueuses se seruoyent en leurs faits d'armes, de la fuite, pour aduantage principal, et montroyent le dos à l'ennemy plus dangereusement que leur visage. Les Turcs en retiennent quelque chose. Et Socrates en Platon se mocque de Laches, qui auoit definy la fortitude, se tenir ferme en son reng contre les ennemis. Quoy, feit-il, seroit ce donc lascheté de les battre en leur faisant place? Et luy allegue Homere, qui louë en Æneas la science de fuir.	Several very warlike nations used flight as their principal advantage in their feats of arms, and showed their backs to the enemy more dangerously than their faces. The Turks keep something of this. And Socrates, in Plato, mocks Laches, who had defined courage as standing firm in one's rank against the enemy. "What," he said, "would it then be cowardice to beat them by giving ground?" And he cites Homer to him, who praises in Aeneas the skill of fleeing.[1]
	Et par ce que Laches se r'aduisant, aduouë cet vsage aux Scythes, et en fin generallement à tous gens de cheual: il luy allegue encore l'exemple des gens de pied Lacedemoniens (nation sur toutes duitte à combatre de pied ferme) qui en la iournee de Platees, ne pouuant ouurir la phalange Persienne, s'aduiserent de s'escarter et sier arriere: pour, par l'opinion de leur fuitte, faire rompre et dissoudre cette masse, en les poursuiuant. Par où ils se donnerent la victoire.	And because Laches, on second thought, grants this practice to the Scythians, and finally to all horsemen in general, he cites to him further the example of the Spartan foot soldiers (a nation trained above all others to fight standing firm), who at the battle of Plataea, unable to break the Persian phalanx, hit on the idea of scattering and falling back, so that the Persians, believing they were fleeing, would break up and dissolve that mass in pursuing them. By this they won the victory.[2]
1.12.3	Touchant les Scythes, on dit d'eux, quand Darius alla pour les subiuger, qu'il manda à leur Roy force reproches,	As for the Scythians, it is said of them that when Darius went to subjugate them, he sent their king

FRENCH

pour le voir tousiours reculant deuant luy, et gauchissant la meslee. A quoy Indathyrsez, car ainsi se nommoit-il, fit responce, que ce n'estoit pour auoir peur de luy, ny d'homme viuant: mais que c'estoit la façon de marcher de sa nation: n'ayant ny terre cultiuee, ny ville, ny maison à deffendre, et à craindre que l'ennemy en peust faire profit. Mais s'il auoit si grand faim d'en manger, qu'il approchast pour voir le lieu de leurs anciennes sepultures, et que là il trouueroit à qui parler tout son saoul.

1.12.4 Toutes-fois aux canonnades, depuis qu'on leur est planté en butte, comme les occasions de la guerre portent souuent, il est messeant de s'esbranler pour la menace du coup: d'autant que par sa violence et vitesse nous le tenons ineuitable: et en y a meint vn qui pour auoir ou haussé la main, ou baissé la teste, en a pour le moins appresté à rire à ses compagnons.

Si est-ce qu'au voyage que l'Empereur Charles cinquiesme fit contre nous en Prouence, le Marquis de Guast estant allé recognoistre la ville d'Arle, et s'estant ietté hors du couuert d'vn moulin à vent, à la faueur duquel il s'estoit approché, fut apperceu par les Seigneurs de Bonneual et Seneschal d'Agenois, qui se promenoyent sus le theatre aux arenes: lesquels l'ayant montré au Seigneur de Villiers Commissaire de l'artillerie, il braqua si à propos vne couleurine, que sans ce que ledict Marquis voyant mettre le feu se lança à quartier, il fut tenu qu'il en auoit dans le corps.

Et de mesmes quelques annees auparavant, Laurent de Medicis, Duc d'Vrbin, pere de la Royne, mere du Roy, assiegeant Mondolphe, place d'Italie, aux terres qu'on nomme du Vicariat, voyant mettre le feu à vne piece qui le regardoit, bien luy seruit de faire la cane: car autrement le coup, qui ne luy rasa que le dessus de la teste, luy donnoit sans doute dans l'estomach. Pour en dire le vray, ie ne croy pas que ces mouuements se fissent auecques discours: car quel iugement pouuez-vous faire de la mire haute ou basse en chose si soudaine?

ENGLISH

many reproaches for always retreating before him and dodging battle. To which Indathyrsus—for that was his name—replied that it was not out of fear of him or of any man alive, but that this was the way his nation marched, having neither cultivated land, nor town, nor house to defend, nor any to fear the enemy might profit by. But if Darius was so hungry to get a bite of them, let him come close and see the place of their ancient tombs, and there he would find people to talk to as much as he liked.[3]

Yet with cannon fire, once we are set up as their target, as the circumstances of war often require, it is unbecoming to flinch at the threat of the shot, since we consider it unavoidable because of its violence and speed; and there is many a man who, for having raised his hand or ducked his head, has at the very least given his companions something to laugh at.

And yet, during the expedition that the Emperor Charles V made against us in Provence, the Marquis del Vasto went to reconnoiter the town of Arles, and came out from the cover of a windmill under which he had approached. He was spotted by the Lord of Bonneval and the Seneschal of Agenais, who were walking on the theater in the arena; they pointed him out to the Lord of Villiers, commissary of the artillery, who aimed a culverin so accurately that, had the said Marquis not leapt aside when he saw the fuse lit, it was held that he would have taken the shot in his body.[4]

And likewise, some years before, Lorenzo de' Medici, Duke of Urbino, father of the Queen who is the King's mother, was besieging Mondolfo, a stronghold in Italy in the lands called the Vicariate, when he saw the fuse put to a gun pointed at him; it served him well to duck, for otherwise the shot, which only grazed the top of his head, would doubtless have hit him in the stomach. To tell the truth, I do not believe these movements were made with any reasoning: for what judgment can you make about a high or low aim in something so sudden?[5]

1 Plato, Laches.
2 Plataea, in Boeotia, where the Greeks defeated the Persians in 479 BC.
3 Darius I of Persia invaded Scythia around 513 BC; the exchange is in Herodotus, Book IV.
4 Charles V invaded Provence in 1536; Alfonso d'Avalos, Marquis del Vasto, was one of his generals.
5 Lorenzo II de' Medici (1492–1519), father of Catherine de' Medici, mother of Henry III; the siege of Mondolfo was in 1517.

FRENCH

et est bien plus aisé à croire, que la fortune fauorisa leur frayeur: et que ce seroit moyen vne autre fois aussi bien pour se ietter dans le coup, que pour l'euiter. Ie ne me puis deffendre si le bruit esclatant d'vne harquebusade vient à me fraper les oreilles à l'improuueu, en lieu où ie ne le deusse pas attendre, que ie n'en tressaille: ce que i'ay veu encores aduenir à d'autres qui valent mieux que moy.

1.12.5 Ny n'entendent les Stoiciens, que l'ame de leur sage puisse resister aux premieres visions et fantaisies qui luy suruiennent: ains comme à vne subiection naturelle consentent qu'il cede au grand bruit du ciel, ou d'vne ruine, pour exemple, iusques à la palleur et contraction: ainsin aux autres passions, pourueu que son opinion demeure sauue et entiere, et que l'assiette de son discours n'en souffre atteinte ny alteration quelconque, et qu'il ne preste nul consentement à son effroy et souffrance. De celuy, qui n'est pas sage, il en va de mesmes en la premiere partie, mais tout autrement en la seconde. Car l'impression des passions ne demeure pas en luy superficielle: ains va penetrant iusques au siege de sa raison, l'infectant et la corrompant.

Il iuge selon icelles, et s'y conforme. Voyez bien disertement et plainement l'estat du sage Stoique: *Mens immota manet, lacrymæ voluuntur inanes.* Le sage Peripateticien ne s'exempte pas des perturbations, mais il les modere.

ENGLISH

and it is much easier to believe that fortune favored their fright, and that another time it would be as likely a way to throw oneself into the shot as to avoid it. I cannot help starting if the crack of a harquebus shot suddenly strikes my ears in a place where I would not expect it; and I have seen this happen to others who are worth more than I am.

Nor do the Stoics mean that the soul of their sage can resist the first visions and fancies that come upon it. Rather, as to a natural subjection, they grant that he yields to a great clap of thunder, say, or a building collapsing, to the point of turning pale and shrinking; and so with the other passions, provided that his opinion remains safe and whole, that the seat of his reasoning suffers no harm or alteration whatsoever, and that he gives no consent to his fright and suffering. With one who is not a sage, it goes the same way in the first part, but quite otherwise in the second. For the impression of the passions does not remain on his surface, but penetrates to the very seat of his reason, infecting and corrupting it.

He judges according to them and conforms to them. See the state of the Stoic sage very eloquently and plainly expressed: *The mind remains unmoved; the tears roll down in vain.* The Peripatetic sage does not exempt himself from disturbances, but he moderates them.[6]

6 Virgil, Aeneid IV, of Aeneas resisting Dido's pleas. The Peripatetics are the followers of Aristotle.

I.13 The Ceremony of the Meeting of Kings

Ceremonie de l'entreueuë des rois
Starting from the etiquette of royal meetings, Montaigne describes his own impatience with ceremony and the servitude of manners.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
1.13.1	IL n'est subiect si vain, qui ne merite vn rang en cette rapsodie. A nos regles communes, ce seroit vne notable discourtoisie et à l'endroit d'vn pareil, et plus à l'endroit d'vn grand, de faillir à vous trouuer chez vous, quand il vous auroit aduerty d'y deuoir venir: Voire adioustoit la Royne de Nauarre Marguerite à ce propos, que c'estoit inciuilité à vn Gentil-homme de partir de sa maison, comme il se faict le plus souuent, pour aller au deuant de celuy qui le vient trouuer, pour grand qu'il soit: et qu'il est plus respectueux et ciuil de l'attendre, pour le receuoir, ne fust que de peur de faillir sa route: et qu'il suffit de l'accompagner à son partement.	There is no subject so trivial that it does not deserve a place in this rhapsody. By our common rules, it would be a notable discourtesy, both toward an equal and still more toward a great man, to fail to be at home when he had told you he would come. Indeed, Queen Margaret of Navarre added on this point that it was uncivil for a gentleman to leave his house, as is most often done, to go and meet a visitor who is coming to see him, however great he may be; that it is more respectful and civil to wait for him in order to receive him, if only for fear of missing him on the road; and that it is enough to escort him when he leaves.[1]
	Pour moy i'oublie souuent l'vn et l'autre de ces vains offices: comme ie retranche en ma maison autant que ie puis de la cerimonie. Quelqu'vn s'en offence: qu'y feroisie? Il vaut mieux que ie l'offence pour vne fois, que moy tous les iours: ce seroit vne subiection continuelle. A quoy faire fuit-on la seruitude des cours, si on l'entraine iusques en sa taniere? C'est aussi vne regle commune en toutes assemblees, qu'il touche aux moindres de se trouuer les premiers à l'assignation, d'autant qu'il est mieux deu aux plus apparans de se faire attendre.	For my part, I often forget both of these empty duties, just as I cut out as much ceremony in my house as I can. Someone takes offense: what can I do about it? Better that I offend him once than myself every day: it would be a perpetual subjection. What is the point of fleeing the servitude of courts if we drag it all the way into our own den? It is also a common rule in all gatherings that it falls to the lesser to be first at the appointed place, since it is more fitting for the most eminent to be waited for.
1.13.2	Toutesfois à l'entreueuë qui se dressa du Pape Clement, et du Roy François à Marseille, le Roy y ayant ordonné les apprests necessaires, s'esloigna de la ville, et donna loisir au Pape de deux ou trois iours pour son entree et refreschissement, auant qu'il le vinst trouuer. Et de mesmes à l'entree aussi du Pape et de l'Empereur à Bouloigne, l'Empereur donna moyen au Pape d'y estre le premier et y suruint apres luy.	However, at the meeting arranged between Pope Clement and King Francis at Marseille, the King, having ordered the necessary preparations, withdrew from the city and gave the Pope two or three days' leisure for his entry and rest before he came to see him. And likewise, at the entry of the Pope and the Emperor into Bologna, the Emperor allowed the Pope to be there first, and arrived after him.[2]
	C'est, disent-ils, vne cerimonie ordinaire aux abouchemens de tels Princes, que le plus grand soit auant les autres au lieu assigné, voire auant celuy chez qui se	It is, they say, an ordinary ceremony at meetings of such princes that the greatest should be at the appointed place before the others, even before the

1 Marguerite de Navarre (1492–1549), sister of Francis I and author of the Heptameron.
2 Clement VII met Francis I at Marseille in 1533, and Charles V at Bologna in 1529–1530.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
	fait l'assemblee: et le prennent de ce biais, que c'est afin que cette apparence tesmoigne, que c'est le plus grand que les moindres vont trouuer, et le recherchent, non pas luy eux.	one in whose territory the meeting is held; and they take it this way: the purpose is for this appearance to show that it is the greatest whom the lesser go to find and seek out, not he them.
1.13.3	Non seulement chasque païs, mais chasque cité et chasque vacation a sa ciuilité particuliere. I'y ay esté assez soigneusement dressé en mon enfance, et ay vescu en assez bonne compaignie, pour n'ignorer pas les loix de la nostre Françoise: et en tiendrois eschole. I'aime à les ensuiure, mais non pas si couardement, que ma vie en demeure contraincte. Elles ont quelques formes penibles, lesquelles pourueu qu'on oublie par discretion, non par erreur, on n'en a pas moins de grace. I'ay veu souuent des hommes inciuils par trop de ciuilité, et importuns de courtoisie.	Not only each country, but each city and each profession has its own particular civility. I was trained in it carefully enough in my childhood, and have lived in good enough company, not to be ignorant of the laws of our French civility; I could teach a school in them. I like to follow them, but not so timidly that my life is constrained by them. They have some tiresome forms, and provided one forgets them out of discretion and not by mistake, one is no less gracious for it. I have often seen men uncivil through too much civility, and importunate with courtesy.
1.13.4	C'est au demeurant vne tres-vtile science que la science de l'entregent. Elle est, comme la grace et la beauté, conciliatrice des premiers abords de la societé et familiarité: et par consequent nous ouure la porte à nous instruire par les exemples d'autruy, et à exploitter et produire nostre exemple, s'il a quelque chose d'instruisant et communicable.	For the rest, the art of dealing with people is a very useful knowledge. Like grace and beauty, it smooths the first approaches of society and familiarity; and consequently it opens the door for us to learn from the examples of others, and to put to use and display our own example, if it has anything instructive and communicable.

I.14 That the Taste of Good and Evil Depends in Large Part on Our Opinion of Them

Que le goust des biens et des maux despend en bonne partie de l'opinion que nous en auons
If evils reach us only through our opinions, we can change their taste; Montaigne tests this on death, pain, and poverty.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
1.14.1	LES hommes, dit vne sentence Grecque ancienne, sont tourmentez par les opinions qu'ils ont des choses, non par les choses mesmes. Il y auroit vn grand poinct gaigné pour le soulagement de nostre miserable condition humaine, qui pourroit establir cette proposition vraye tout par tout. Car si les maux n'ont entrée en nous, que par nostre iugement, il semble qu'il soit en nostre pouuoir de les mespriser ou contourner à bien. Si les choses se rendent à nostre mercy, pourquoy n'en cheuirons nous, ou ne les accommoderons nous à nostre aduantage?	Men, says an old Greek maxim, are tormented by the opinions they have of things, not by the things themselves. A great point would be gained for the relief of our wretched human condition by anyone who could establish this proposition as true everywhere. For if evils enter us only through our judgment, it seems that it is in our power to despise them or turn them to good. If things surrender to our mercy, why shall we not master them, or adapt them to our advantage?[1]
	Si ce que nous appellons mal et tourment, n'est ny mal ny tourment de soy, ains seulement que nostre fantasie luy donne cette qualité, il est en nous de la changer: et en ayant le choix, si nul ne nous force, nous sommes estrangement fols de nous bander pour le party qui nous est le plus ennuyeux: et de donner aux maladies, à l'indigence et au mespris vn aigre et mauuais goust, si nous le leur pouuons donner bon: et si la fortune fournissant simplement de matiere, c'est à nous de luy donner la forme.	If what we call evil and torment is neither evil nor torment in itself, but only our fancy gives it that quality, it is in our power to change it. And having the choice, if nothing compels us, we are strangely foolish to strain ourselves for the side that is most painful to us, and to give sickness, poverty and contempt a bitter and bad taste if we can give them a good one—if, fortune merely supplying the matter, it is up to us to give it the form.
	Or que ce que nous appellons mal, ne le soit pas de soy, ou au moins tel qu'il soit, qu'il depende de nous de luy donner autre saueur, et autre visage, car tout reuient à vn, voyons s'il se peut maintenir.	Now, that what we call evil is not so in itself, or at least that, whatever it is, it depends on us to give it another flavor and another face—for it all comes to the same—let us see whether this can be maintained.
1.14.2	Si l'estre originel de ces choses que nous craignons, auoit credit de se loger en nous de son authorité, il logeroit pareil et semblable en tous: car les hommes sont tous d'vne espece: et sauf le plus et le moins, se trouuent garnis de pareils outils et instruments pour conceuoir et iuger. Mais la diuersité des opinions, que nous auons de ces choses là, montre clairement qu'elles n'entrent en nous que par composition. Tel à l'aduenture les loge chez soy en leur vray estre, mais mille autres leur donnent vn	If the original being of these things we fear had the power to lodge itself in us on its own authority, it would lodge alike and the same in all; for men are all of one species, and, apart from more or less, are furnished with the same tools and instruments for conceiving and judging. But the diversity of opinions we have about these things shows clearly that they enter us only on terms we agree to. One man perhaps lodges them in himself

1 The maxim is from Epictetus, Manual 5.

FRENCH

estre nouueau et contraire chez eux. Nous tenons la mort, la pauureté et la douleur pour nos principales parties.

Or cette mort que les vns appellent des choses horribles la plus horrible, qui ne sçait que d'autres la nomment l'vnique port des tourmens de cette vie? le souuerain bien de nature? seul appuy de nostre liberté? et commune et prompte recepte à tous maux? Et comme les vns l'attendent tremblans et effrayez, d'autres la supportent plus aysement que la vie. Celuy-là se plaint de sa facilité: *Mors, vtinam pauidos vitæ subducere nolles, / Sed virtus te sola daret!*

1.14.3 Or laissons ces glorieux courages: Theodorus respondit à Lysimachus menaçant de le tuer: Tu feras vn grand coup d'arriuer à la force d'vne cantharide. La plus part des Philosophes se trouuent auoir ou preuenu par dessein, ou hasté et secouru leur mort. Combien voit-on de personnes populaires, conduictes à la mort, et non à vne mort simple, mais meslee de honte, et quelquefois de griefs tourmens, y apporter vne telle asseurance, qui par opiniatreté, qui par simplesse naturelle, qu'on n'y apperçoit rien de changé de leur estat ordinaire: establissans leurs affaires domestiques, se recommandans à leurs amis, chantans, preschans et entretenans le peuple: voire y meslans quelquefois des mots pour rire, et beuuans à leurs cognoissans, aussi bien que Socrates?

1.14.4 Vn qu'on menoit au gibet, disoit que ce ne fust pas par telle ruë, car il y auoit danger qu'vn marchant luy fist mettre la main sur le collet, à cause d'vn vieux debte. Vn autre disoit au bourreau qu'il ne le touchast pas à la gorge, de peur de le faire tressaillir de rire, tant il estoit chatouilleux: l'autre respondit à son confesseur, qui luy promettoit qu'il soupperoit ce iour là auec nostre Seigneur, Allez vous y en vous, car de ma part ie ieusne. Vn autre ayant demandé à boire, et le bourreau ayant beu le premier, dit ne vouloir boire apres luy, de peur de prendre la verolle.

Chacun a ouy faire le conte du Picard, auquel estant à l'eschelle on presente vne garse, et que, comme nostre

ENGLISH

in their true being, but a thousand others give them a new and contrary being within themselves. We take death, poverty and pain as our principal adversaries.

Now this death, which some call the most horrible of horrible things—who does not know that others call it the only harbor from the torments of this life? the sovereign good of nature? the sole support of our liberty? and the common and ready remedy for all ills? And as some await it trembling and terrified, others bear it more easily than life. One man complains of how easy it is: *O Death, would that you refused to take the cowards from life, / and that valor alone could bestow you!*[2]

But let us leave aside these lofty spirits: Theodorus answered Lysimachus, who was threatening to kill him, "You will have done a great feat if you match the strength of a Spanish fly." Most philosophers are found either to have forestalled their death deliberately, or to have hastened and assisted it. How many common people we see led to death—and not a simple death, but one mixed with shame and sometimes with grievous torments—who bring to it such assurance, some from obstinacy, some from natural simplicity, that one can see no change in their ordinary state: settling their household affairs, commending themselves to their friends, singing, preaching and talking to the crowd, sometimes even mixing in jokes, and drinking to their acquaintances, just as Socrates did![3]

One man being taken to the gallows said they should not go by a certain street, because there was a danger that a merchant might have him seized by the collar for an old debt. Another told the executioner not to touch his throat for fear of making him jump with laughter, he was so ticklish. Another answered his confessor, who promised him that he would sup that day with our Lord: "You go there yourself; as for me, I am fasting." Another, having asked for a drink, and the executioner having drunk first, said he would not drink after him for fear of catching the pox.

Everyone has heard the tale of the man from Picardy who, when he was on the ladder, was presented with a girl and told that, as our justice

2 Lucan, Pharsalia IV.

FRENCH

iustice permet quelquefois, s'il la vouloit espouser, on luy sauueroit la vie: luy l'ayant vn peu contemplee, et apperçeu qu'elle boittoit: Attache, attache, dit-il, elle cloche. Et on dit de mesmes qu'en Dannemarc vn homme condamné à auoir la teste tranchee, estant sur l'eschaffaut, comme on luy presenta vne pareille condition, la refusa, par ce que la fille qu'on luy offrit, auoit les iouës auallees, et le nez trop pointu.

Vn valet à Thoulouse accusé d'heresie, pour toute raison de sa creance, se rapportoit à celle de son maistre, ieune escolier prisonnier avec luy, et ayma mieux mourir, que se laisser persuader que son maistre peust errer. Nous lisons de ceux de la ville d'Arras, lors que le Roy Loys vnziesme la print, qu'il s'en trouua bon nombre parmy le peuple qui se laisserent pendre, plustost que de dire, Viue le Roy. Et de ces viles ames de bouffons, il s'en est trouué qui n'ont voulu abandonner leur gaudisserie en la mort mesme. Celuy à qui le bourreau donnoit le branle, s'escria, Vogue la gallee, qui estoit son refrain ordinaire.

Et l'autre qu'on auoit couché sur le point de rendre sa vie le long du foier sur vne paillasse, à qui le medecin demandant où le mal le tenoit; Entre le banc et le feu, respondit-il. Et le prestre, pour luy donner l'extreme onction, cherchant ses pieds, qu'il auoit reserrez et contraints par la maladie: Vous les trouuerez, dit-il, au bout de mes iambes. A l'homme qui l'exhortoit de se recommander à Dieu, Qui y va? demanda-il: et l'autre respondant, Ce sera tantost vous mesmes, s'il luy plaist: Y fusse-ie bien demain au soir, repliqua-il: Recommandez vous seulement à luy, suiuit l'autre, vous y serez bien tost: Il vaut donc mieux, adiousta-il, que ie luy porte mes recommandations moy-mesmes.

1.14.5 Au Royaume de Narsingue encores auiourd'huy, les femmes de leurs prestres sont viues enseuelies avec le corps de leurs maris. Toutes autres femmes sont bruslees aux funerailles des leurs: non constamment seulement, mais gaïement. A la mort du Roy, ses femmes et concubines, ses mignons et tous ses officiers et seruiteurs, qui sont vn peuple, se presentent si

ENGLISH

sometimes allows, his life would be spared if he would marry her. He looked at her a little, noticed that she limped, and said: "Tie the rope, tie the rope—she hobbles." And similarly it is said that in Denmark a man condemned to be beheaded, when he was on the scaffold and offered a similar condition, refused it because the girl they offered him had sagging cheeks and too pointed a nose.

A servant in Toulouse accused of heresy gave as the whole ground of his belief that of his master, a young student imprisoned with him, and preferred to die rather than let himself be persuaded that his master could be wrong. We read of the people of the town of Arras, when King Louis XI took it, that a good number were found among the common people who let themselves be hanged rather than say "Long live the King." And among those base souls the buffoons, there have been some who would not give up their jesting even in death itself. The one whom the hangman was pushing off the ladder cried, "Row on, galley!"—which was his usual refrain.[4]

And the other, who had been laid on a straw mattress along the hearth, on the point of giving up his life: when the doctor asked him where the pain held him, he answered, "Between the bench and the fire." And when the priest, to give him extreme unction, was searching for his feet, which the illness had drawn up and contracted, he said, "You'll find them at the end of my legs." To the man who was urging him to commend himself to God, he asked, "Who is going there?" And when the other answered, "You yourself, soon, if it pleases Him," he replied, "If only I were there by tomorrow evening!" "Just commend yourself to Him," the other went on, "you will soon be there." "Then it is better," he added, "that I take Him my commendations myself."

In the kingdom of Narsingue, even today, the wives of their priests are buried alive with the bodies of their husbands. All other women are burned at their husbands' funerals, not only steadfastly but gaily. At the death of the king, his wives and concubines, his favorites and all his officers and servants, who make up a whole population,

3 Theodorus of Cyrene, called the Atheist; Lysimachus, Macedonian general who became king of Thrace. The Spanish fly is a blister beetle whose poison can kill.

4 Louis XI took Arras in 1477. "Vogue la galère" was a proverbial cry meaning "come what may."

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
	allegrement au feu où son corps est bruslé, qu'ils montrent prendre à grand honneur d'y accompaigner leur maistre.	present themselves so cheerfully at the fire where his body is burned that they show they take it as a great honor to accompany their master there.[5]
	Pendant nos dernieres guerres de Milan, et tant de prises et récousses, le peuple impatient de si diuers changemens de fortune, print telle resolution à la mort, que i'ay ouy dire à mon pere, qu'il y veit tenir comte de bien vingt et cinq maistres de maison, qui s'estoient deffaits eux-mesmes en vne sepmaine. Accident approchant à celuy des Xanthiens, lesquels assiegez par Brutus se precipiterent pesle mesle hommes, femmes, et enfans à vn si furieux appetit de mourir, qu'on ne fait rien pour fuir la mort, que ceux-cy ne fissent pour fuir la vie: en maniere qu'à peine peut Brutus en sauuer vn bien petit nombre.	During our recent wars in the Milanese, with so many captures and recaptures, the people, unable to bear such varied changes of fortune, became so resolved on death that I heard my father say he saw a count kept of a good twenty-five heads of household who had done away with themselves in one week. An incident close to that of the Xanthians, who, besieged by Brutus, threw themselves headlong to their deaths, men, women and children together, with so furious an appetite for dying that nothing is done to escape death which these did not do to escape life; so that Brutus could barely save a very small number of them.[6]
1.14.6	Toute opinion est assez forte, pour se faire espouser au prix de la vie. Le premier article de ce courageux serment, que la Grece iura, et maintint, en la guerre Medoise, ce fut, que chacun changeroit plustost la mort à la vie, que les loix Persiennes aux leurs. Combien void on de monde en la guerre des Turcs et des Grecs, accepter plustost la mort tres-aspre, que de se descirconcire pour se baptizer? Exemple dequoy nulle sorte de religion est incapable.	Any opinion is strong enough to get itself embraced at the cost of life. The first article of that courageous oath which Greece swore and kept in the Median war was that each man would sooner exchange life for death than their own laws for Persian ones. How many people do we see, in the war between the Turks and the Greeks, accept a very harsh death rather than be uncircumcised in order to be baptized? An example of which no kind of religion is incapable.[7]
1.14.7	Les Roys de Castille ayants banni de leur terre, les Iuifs, le Roy Iehan de Portugal leur vendit à huict escus pour teste, la retraicte aux siennes pour vn certain temps: à condition, que iceluy venu, ils auroient à les vuider: et leur promettoit fournir de vaisseaux à les traiecter en Afrique.	When the kings of Castile had banished the Jews from their land, King John of Portugal sold them, at eight crowns a head, refuge in his own for a certain time, on condition that when it was up they would have to leave; and he promised to supply ships to carry them over to Africa.[8]
	Le iour arriue, lequel passé il estoit dit, que ceux qui n'auroient obeï, demeureroient esclaues: les vaisseaux leur furent fournis escharcement: et ceux qui s'y embarquerent, rudement et villainement traittez par les passagers: qui outre plusieurs autres indignitez les amuserent sur mer, tantost auant, tantost arriere, iusques à ce qu'ils eussent consumé leurs victuailles, et contreints d'en acheter d'eux si cherement et si longuement, qu'on ne les mit à bord, qu'ils ne fussent du tout en chemise. La nouuelle de cette inhumanité, rapportee à ceux qui estoient en terre, la plus part se	The day came after which, it had been declared, those who had not obeyed would remain slaves. Ships were supplied to them sparingly, and those who embarked were harshly and basely treated by the crews, who, besides many other indignities, kept them idling at sea, now forward, now back, until they had used up their provisions and were forced to buy food from them at such a price and for so long that they were not put ashore until they were stripped to their shirts. When news of this inhumanity was brought to those still on land,

5 Narsingue was the European name for the kingdom of Vijayanagara in southern India.
6 Montaigne's father, Pierre Eyquem, fought in the Italian wars of Francis I. Brutus besieged Xanthus in Lycia in 42 BC.
7 The Median war is the Greeks' war against the Persians (490–479 BC).
8 The Jews were expelled from Castile and Aragon in 1492; John II was king of Portugal (1481–1495).

FRENCH

resolurent à la seruitude: aucuns firent contenance de changer de religion.

Emmanuel successeur de Iehan, venu à la couronne, les meit premierement en liberté, et changeant d'aduis depuis, leur ordonna de sortir de ses païs, assignant trois ports à leur passage. Il esperoit, dit l'Euesque Osorius, non mesprisable historien Latin, de noz siecles: que la faueur de la liberté, qu'il leur auoit rendue, aiant failli de les conuertir au Christianisme, la difficulté de se commettre à la volerie des mariniers, d'abandonner vn païs, où ils estoient habituez, auec grandes richesses, pour s'aller ietter en region incognue et estrangere, les y rameineroit.

Mais se voyant decheu de son esperance, et eux tous deliberez au passage: il retrancha deux des ports, qu'il leur auoit promis: affin que la longueur et incommodité du traiect en reduisist aucuns: ou qu'il eust moien de les amonceller tous à vn lieu, pour vne plus grande commodité de l'execution qu'il auoit destinée. Ce fut, qu'il ordonna qu'on arrachast d'entre les mains des peres et des meres, tous les enfans au dessous de quatorze ans, pour les transporter hors de leur veüe et conuersation, en lieu où ils fussent instruits à nostre religion.

Il dit que cet effect produisit vn horrible spectacle: la naturelle affection d'entre les peres et enfants, et de plus, le zele à leur ancienne creance, combattant à l'encontre de cette violente ordonnance. Il fut veu communement des peres et meres se deffaisants eux mesmes: et d'vn plus rude exemple encore, precipitants par amour et compassion, leurs ieunes enfans dans des puits, pour fuir à la loy. Au demeurant le terme qu'il leur auoit prefix expiré, par faute de moiens, ils se remirent en seruitude.

Quelques vns se feirent Chrestiens: de la foy desquels, ou de leur race, encore auiourd'huy, cent ans apres, peu de Portugais s'asseurent: quoy que la coustume et la longueur du temps, soient bien plus fortes conseilleres à telles mutations, que toute autre contreinte. En la ville de Castelnau Darry, cinquante Albigeois heretiques, souffrirent à la fois, d'vn courage determiné, d'estre bruslez vifs en vn feu, auant desaduouer leurs opinions.

ENGLISH

most of them resolved on servitude; some made a show of changing their religion.

Emmanuel, John's successor, on coming to the crown, first set them free, and later, changing his mind, ordered them to leave his lands, assigning three ports for their passage. He hoped, says Bishop Osorius, a Latin historian of our times who is not to be despised, that since the favor of the freedom he had restored to them had failed to convert them to Christianity, the difficulty of exposing themselves to the plundering of the sailors, and of abandoning a country where they were settled with great wealth to go and cast themselves into an unknown and foreign region, would bring them round to it.[9]

But seeing himself disappointed in his hope, and all of them determined to make the crossing, he cut out two of the ports he had promised them, so that the length and hardship of the journey might bring some of them round, or so that he might have the means to gather them all in one place, the more conveniently to carry out what he had planned. This was that he ordered all children under fourteen to be torn from the hands of their fathers and mothers, to be carried out of their sight and company to a place where they would be instructed in our religion.

He says that this measure produced a horrible spectacle, the natural affection between parents and children, and their zeal for their ancient faith besides, fighting against this violent decree. Fathers and mothers were commonly seen doing away with themselves, and, as a still harsher example, throwing their young children down wells out of love and compassion, to escape the law. For the rest, when the term he had fixed for them expired, lacking the means to leave, they returned to servitude.

Some became Christians; and even today, a hundred years later, few Portuguese feel sure of their faith or of their descendants'—although custom and length of time are far stronger counselors for such changes than any other constraint. In the town of Castelnaudary, fifty Albigensian heretics suffered at one time, with determined courage, to be burned alive in one fire rather than disavow their opinions. *How often,* says Cicero, *have not*

9 Manuel I, king of Portugal (1495–1521); Jerónimo Osório (1506–1580), bishop of Silves, wrote a Latin history of his reign.

FRENCH	ENGLISH
Quoties non modò ductores nostri, dit Cicero, *sed vniuersi etiam exercitus, ad non dubiam mortem concurrerunt?*	*only our leaders but whole armies rushed to certain death?*[10]
1.14.8 I'ay veu quelqu'vn de mes intimes amis courre la mort à force, d'vne vraye affection, et enracinee en son cœur par diuers visages de discours, que ie ne luy sçeu rabatre: et à la premiere qui s'offrit coiffee d'vn lustre d'honneur, s'y precipiter hors de toute apparence, d'vne fin aspre et ardente. Nous auons plusieurs exemples en nostre temps de ceux, iusques aux enfans, qui de craincte de quelque legere incommodité, se sont donnez à la mort. Et à ce propos, que ne craindrons nous, dit vn ancien, si nous craignons ce que la couardise mesme a choisi pour sa retraitte?	I have seen one of my intimate friends hunt death down with all his might, out of a genuine longing, rooted in his heart by various forms of reasoning that I could not talk him out of; and at the first death that offered itself crowned with a luster of honor, throw himself into it beyond all likelihood, in a harsh and burning end. We have several examples in our time of people, even children, who for fear of some slight discomfort have put themselves to death. And on this point, what shall we not fear, says one of the ancients, if we fear what cowardice itself has chosen as its refuge?
1.14.9 D'enfiler icy vn grand rolle de ceux de tous sexes et conditions, et de toutes sectes, és siecles plus heureux, qui ont ou attendu la mort constamment, ou recerchee volontairement: et recherchee non seulement pour fuir les maux de cette vie, mais aucuns pour fuir simplement la satieté de viure: et d'autres pour l'esperance d'vne meilleure condition ailleurs, ie n'auroy iamais fait. Et en est le nombre si infini, qu'à la verité i'auroy meilleur marché de mettre en compte ceux qui l'ont crainte. Cecy seulement. Pyrrho le Philosophe se trouuant vn iour de grande tourmente dans vn batteau, montroit à ceux qu'il voyoit les plus effrayez autour de luy, et les encourageoit par l'exemple d'vn pourceau, qui y estoit, nullement soucieux de cet orage.	If I were to string out here a long list of those of every sex and condition and of every sect, in happier ages, who have either awaited death steadfastly or sought it voluntarily—and sought it not only to escape the evils of this life, but some simply to escape the satiety of living, and others in the hope of a better condition elsewhere—I would never be done. And their number is so infinite that in truth I would have an easier time counting those who have feared it. This one only. Pyrrho the philosopher, finding himself one day in a boat during a great storm, pointed out to those he saw most frightened around him a pig that was aboard, not in the least bothered by the storm, and encouraged them by its example.[11]
Oserons nous donc dire que cet aduantage de la raison, dequoy nous faisons tant de feste, et pour le respect duquel nous nous tenons maistre et Empereurs du reste des creatures, ait esté mis en nous, pour nostre tourment? A quoy faire la cognoissance des choses, si nous en deuenons plus lasches? si nous en perdons le repos et la tranquilité, où nous serions sans cela? et si elle nous rend de pire condition que le pourceau de Pyrrho? L'intelligence qui nous a esté donnée pour nostre plus grand bien, l'employerons nous à nostre ruine; combatans le dessein de nature, et l'vniuersel ordre des choses, qui porte que chacun vse de ses vtils et moyens pour sa commodité?	Shall we dare say, then, that this advantage of reason, which we make so much of, and on account of which we consider ourselves masters and emperors of the rest of creation, was put into us for our torment? What is the use of knowing things if we become more cowardly for it? if we lose the repose and tranquility we would have without it? and if it makes our condition worse than that of Pyrrho's pig? Shall we use the intelligence that was given us for our greatest good to our ruin, fighting the design of nature and the universal order of things, which requires that each use its tools and means for its own benefit?

10 The Albigensians were the Cathars of southern France, persecuted in the 13th century.
11 Pyrrho of Elis (c. 360–270 BC), founder of the skeptical school later called Pyrrhonism.

THE OBJECTION FROM PAIN

Pain seems the hardest case, yet even pain takes up only as much room as we give it.

FRENCH	ENGLISH
1.14.10 Bien, me dira lon, vostre regle serue à la mort; mais que direz vous de l'indigence? que direz vous encor de la douleur, qu'Aristippus, Hieronymus et la pluspart des sages, ont estimé le dernier mal: et ceux qui le nioient de parole, le confessoient par effect? Possidonius estant extremement tourmenté d'vne maladie aigüe et douloureuse, Pompeius le fut voir, et s'excusa d'auoir prins heure si importune pour l'ouyr deuiser de la Philosophie: Ia à Dieu ne plaise, luy dit Possidonius, que la douleur gaigne tant sur moy, qu'elle m'empesche d'en discourir: et se ietta sur ce mesme propos du mespris de la douleur. Mais ce pendant elle ioüoit son rolle, et le pressoit incessamment.	"Fine," someone will tell me, "let your rule serve for death; but what will you say of poverty? And what will you say of pain, which Aristippus, Hieronymus and most of the wise considered the ultimate evil—and those who denied it in words confessed it in deeds?" When Posidonius was extremely tormented by an acute and painful illness, Pompey went to see him and apologized for having chosen so inconvenient a time to hear him discourse on philosophy. "God forbid," Posidonius said to him, "that pain should get such a hold on me as to prevent me from discussing it"; and he launched into that very subject, the contempt of pain. But meanwhile pain was playing its part and pressing him relentlessly.[12]
A quoy il s'escrioit: Tu as beau faire douleur, si ne diray-ie pas, que tu sois mal. Ce comte qu'ils font tant valoir, que porte-il pour le mespris de la douleur? il ne debat que du mot. Et ce pendant si ces pointures ne l'esmeuuent, pourquoy en rompt-il son propos? pourquoy pense-il faire beaucoup de ne l'appeller pas mal? Icy tout ne consiste pas en l'imagination. Nous opinons du reste; c'est icy la certaine science, qui iouë son rolle, nos sens mesmes en sont iuges: *Qui nisi sunt veri, ratio quoque falsa sit omnis.* Ferons nous accroire à nostre peau, que les coups d'estriuiere la chatoüillent? et à nostre goust que l'aloé soit du vin de Graues?	At which he cried out: "Do what you will, pain, I still will not say that you are an evil." This story that they make so much of—what does it contribute to the contempt of pain? He is only arguing about the word. And meanwhile, if these stabs do not move him, why does he break off his discourse for them? Why does he think he is doing much by not calling it an evil? Here not everything consists in imagination. On other things we hold opinions; here it is certain knowledge that plays its part; our very senses are the judges of it: *For unless they are true, all reason too is false.* Shall we make our skin believe that the lashes of a strap tickle it? And our palate that aloes is Graves wine?[13]
Le pourceau de Pyrrho est icy de nostre escot. Il est bien sans effroy à la mort: mais si on le bat, il crie et se tourmente. Forcerons nous la generale loy de nature, qui se voit en tout ce qui est viuant sous le ciel, de trembler sous la douleur? Les arbres mesmes semblent gemir aux offences.	Pyrrho's pig is on our side here. He is unafraid of death, to be sure; but if you beat him, he squeals and writhes. Shall we override the general law of nature, seen in everything that lives under heaven, which is to tremble under pain? Trees themselves seem to groan when they are injured.
1.14.11 La mort ne se sent que par le discours, d'autant que c'est le mouuement d'vn instant. *Aut fuit, aut veniet; nihil est præsentis in illa. / Morsque minus pœnæ, quàm mora mortis habet.* Mille bestes, mille hommes sont plustost morts, que menassés. Aussi ce que nous disons craindre principalement en la mort, c'est la douleur son auant-	Death is felt only through reasoning, since it is the motion of an instant. *Either it has been or it is still to come; there is nothing of the present in it. / And death holds less pain than the waiting for death.* A thousand beasts, a thousand men are dead before they are threatened. So too what we say we chiefly fear in

12 Aristippus of Cyrene and Hieronymus of Rhodes were Greek philosophers; Posidonius was a Stoic whom Pompey visited at Rhodes.

13 Lucretius, On the Nature of Things IV. Graves is the wine country near Bordeaux.

FRENCH

coureuse coustumiere. Toutesfois, s'il en faut croire vn saint pere, *malam mortem non facit, nisi quod sequitur mortem*. Et ie diroy encore plus vraysemblablement, que ny ce qui va deuant, ny ce qui vient apres, n'est des appartenances de la mort. Nous nous excusons faussement.

Et ie trouue par experience, que c'est plustost l'impatience de l'imagination de la mort, qui nous rend impatiens de la douleur: et que nous la sentons doublement grieue, de ce qu'elle nous menace de mourir. Mais la raison accusant nostre lascheté, de craindre chose si soudaine, si ineuitable, si insensible, nous prenons cet autre pretexte plus excusable. Tous les maux qui n'ont autre danger que du mal, nous les disons sans danger. Celuy des dents, ou de la goutte, pour grief qu'il soit, d'autant qu'il n'est pas homicide, qui le met en conte de maladie?

1.14.12 Or bien presupposons le, qu'en la mort nous regardons principalement la douleur. Comme aussi la pauureté n'a rien à craindre, que cela, qu'elle nous iette entre ses bras par la soif, la faim, le froid, le chaud, les veilles, qu'elle nous fait souffrir. Ainsi n'ayons affaire qu'à la douleur. Ie leur donne que ce soit le pire accident de nostre estre: et volontiers. Car ie suis l'homme du monde qui luy veux autant de mal, et qui la fuis autant, pour iusques à present n'auoir pas eu, Dieu mercy, grand commerce auec elle; mais il est en nous, sinon de l'aneantir, au moins de l'amoindrir par patience: et quand bien le corps s'en esmouueroit, de maintenir ce neant-moins l'ame et la raison en bonne trampe.

Et s'il ne l'estoit, qui auroit mis en credit, la vertu, la vaillance, la force, la magnanimité et la resolution? où iouëroyent elles leur rolle, s'il n'y a plus de douleur à deffier? *Auida est periculi virtus.* S'il ne faut coucher sur la dure, soustenir armé de toutes pieces la chaleur du midy, se paistre d'vn cheual, et d'vn asne, se voir detailler en pieces, et arracher vne balle d'entre les os, se souffrir recoudre, cauterizer et sonder, par où s'acquerra l'aduantage que nous voulons auoir sur le vulgaire? C'est bien loing de fuir le mal et la douleur, ce que disent les Sages, que des actions égallement bonnes, celle-là est plus souhaitable à faire, où il y a plus de peine.

Non enim hilaritate, nec lasciuia, nec risu aut ioco comite leuitatis, sed sæpe etiam tristes firmitate et constantia sunt

ENGLISH

death is pain, its usual forerunner. Yet, if we are to believe a holy father, *What makes death evil is only what follows death.* And I would say, still more plausibly, that neither what goes before nor what comes after belongs to death. We make false excuses for ourselves.[14]

And I find by experience that it is rather our impatience at the thought of death that makes us impatient of pain, and that we feel pain doubly grievous because it threatens us with death. But since reason accuses our cowardice of fearing something so sudden, so inevitable, so imperceptible, we seize on this other, more excusable pretext. All ills that carry no danger beyond the ill itself we call without danger. Toothache or gout, however grievous, since it does not kill—who counts it as an illness?

Well then, let us suppose that in death we chiefly regard pain. Likewise poverty has nothing to fear but this: that it throws us into pain's arms through the thirst, hunger, cold, heat and sleepless nights it makes us suffer. So let us deal only with pain. I grant them that it is the worst accident of our being, and willingly. For I am the man in the world who most bears it ill will and most avoids it, since, thank God, I have not so far had much dealing with it. But it is in our power, if not to annihilate it, at least to lessen it by patience; and even if the body is shaken by it, to keep the soul and reason nevertheless in good temper.

And if it were not so, who would have brought into esteem virtue, valor, strength, magnanimity and resolution? Where would they play their part if there were no more pain to defy? *Virtue is eager for danger.* If we need not sleep on the hard ground, endure the noonday heat in full armor, feed on horse and donkey, see ourselves cut to pieces and a bullet pulled from between our bones, submit to being sewn up, cauterized and probed, how shall we gain the advantage we want to have over the common people? What the sages say is a long way from fleeing evil and pain: that of actions equally good, the more desirable to perform is the one that involves more pain.[15]

For it is not in gaiety, or wantonness, or laughter, or jest, the companion of frivolity, that men are happy;

14 The holy father is Saint Augustine, City of God I.11.

FRENCH

beati. Et à cette cause il a esté impossible de persuader à nos peres, que les conquestes faites par viue force, au hazard de la guerre, ne fussent plus aduantageuses, que celles qu'on fait en toute seureté par pratiques et menees. *Lætius est, quoties magno sibi constat honestum.*

1.14.13 D'auantage cela nous doit consoler, que naturellement, si la douleur est violente, elle est courte: si elle est longue, elle est legere: *si grauis, breuis: si longus, leuis*. Tu ne la sentiras guere long temps, si tu la sens trop: elle mettra fin à soy, ou à toy: l'vn et l'autre reuient à vn. Si tu ne la portes, elle t'emportera. *Memineris maximos morte finiri; paruos multa habere interualla requietis, mediocrium nos esse dominos: vt si tolerabiles sint, feramus: sin minus, è vita, quum ea non placeat, tanquàm è theatro exeamus.*

1.14.14 Ce qui nous fait souffrir auec tant d'impatience la douleur, c'est de n'estre pas accoustumez de prendre nostre principal contentement en l'ame, de ne nous attendre point assez à elle, qui est seule et souueraine maistresse de nostre condition. Le corps n'a, sauf le plus et le moins, qu'vn train et qu'vn pli. Elle est variable en toute sorte de formes, et renge à soy, et à son estat, quel qu'il soit, les sentiments du corps, et tous autres accidents. Pourtant la faut il estudier, et enquerir; et esueiller en elle ses ressorts tout-puissants. Il n'y a raison, ny prescription, ny force, qui vaille contre son inclination et son chois.

De tant de milliers de biais, qu'elle a en sa disposition, donnons luy en vn, propre à nostre repos et conseruation: nous voyla non couuerts seulement de toute offense, mais gratifiez mesmes et flattez, si bon luy semble, des offenses et des maux. Elle faict son profit indifferemment de tout. L'erreur, les songes, luy seruent vtilement, comme vne loyale matiere, à nous mettre à garant, et en contentement. Il est aisé à voir, que ce qui aiguise en nous la douleur et la volupté, c'est la pointe de nostre esprit. Les bestes, qui le tiennent sous boucle, laissent aux corps leurs sentiments libres et naifs: et par consequent vns, à peu pres, en chasque espece, ainsi qu'elles montrent par la semblable application de leurs mouuements.

ENGLISH

often, even in sadness, they are happy through firmness and constancy. And for this reason it was impossible to persuade our fathers that conquests made by sheer force, at the hazard of war, were not more advantageous than those made in complete safety by intrigues and schemes. *Honor is the more gladdening the more it costs.*[16]

Moreover, this should console us: that by nature, if pain is violent, it is short; if it is long, it is light: *if severe, short; if long, light.* You will not feel it very long if you feel it too much: it will put an end to itself or to you; the one and the other come to the same. If you do not carry it, it will carry you off. *Remember that the greatest pains are ended by death, that small ones have many intervals of rest, and that we are masters of moderate ones; so that if they are bearable we may bear them, and if not, we may leave life, since it does not please us, as we leave a theater.*[17]

What makes us endure pain so impatiently is that we are not accustomed to taking our chief contentment in the soul, and do not rely enough on it, though it is the sole and sovereign mistress of our condition. The body has, apart from more or less, only one gait and one bent. The soul can vary into every sort of form, and brings into line with itself and its state, whatever that may be, the sensations of the body and all other accidents. Therefore we must study it and inquire into it, and awaken in it its all-powerful springs. There is no reason, no prescription, no force that can prevail against its inclination and its choice.

Of the many thousands of turns it has at its disposal, let us give it one suited to our repose and preservation, and there we are, not only sheltered from all injury, but even gratified and flattered, if it so pleases, by injuries and ills. It turns everything to profit without distinction. Error and dreams serve it usefully, as legitimate material for putting us in safety and contentment. It is easy to see that what sharpens pain and pleasure in us is the keen edge of our mind. The beasts, which keep it buckled down, leave their bodies their sensations free and natural, and consequently much the

15 Seneca, On Providence.
16 Cicero, On Ends II; the last line is from Lucan, Pharsalia IX.
17 Cicero, On Ends I and II.

FRENCH

ENGLISH

same in each species, as they show by the similar use of their movements.

Si nous ne troublions en noz membres, la iurisdiction qui leur appartient en cela: il est à croire, que nous en serions mieux, et que nature leur a donné vn iuste et moderé temperament, enuers la volupté et enuers la douleur. Et ne peut faillir d'estre iuste, estant egal et commun. Mais puis que nous nous sommes emancipez de ses regles, pour nous abandonner à la vagabonde liberté de noz fantasies: au moins aydons nous à les plier du costé le plus aggreable. Platon craint nostre engagement aspre à la douleur et à la volupté, d'autant qu'il oblige et attache par trop l'ame au corps: moy plustost au rebours, d'autant qu'il l'en desprent et desclouë.

If we did not disturb the jurisdiction that belongs to our limbs in this matter, it is likely that we would be better off, and that nature has given them a just and moderate disposition toward pleasure and toward pain. And it cannot fail to be just, being equal and common. But since we have freed ourselves from its rules to abandon ourselves to the vagrant liberty of our fancies, let us at least help ourselves by bending them in the most agreeable direction. Plato fears our being too harshly committed to pain and pleasure, because it binds and attaches the soul too much to the body; I fear it rather for the opposite reason, because it detaches and unnails the soul from it.[18]

Tout ainsi que l'ennemy se rend plus aspre à nostre fuite, aussi s'enorgueillit la douleur, à nous voir trembler soubs elle. Elle se rendra de bien meilleure composition, à qui luy fera teste: il se faut opposer et bander contre. En nous acculant et tirant arriere, nous appellons à nous et attirons la ruyne, qui nous menasse. Comme le corps est plus ferme à la charge en le roidissant: ainsin est l'ame.

Just as the enemy grows fiercer at our flight, so pain grows proud at seeing us tremble under it. It will come to much better terms with anyone who stands up to it: we must set ourselves against it and brace ourselves. By backing away and retreating, we call down on ourselves and draw on the ruin that threatens us. As the body is steadier under a charge when it is stiffened, so is the soul.

1.14.15 Mais venons aux exemples, qui sont proprement du gibier des gens foibles de reins, comme moy: où nous trouuerons qu'il va de la douleur, comme des pierres qui prennent couleur, ou plus haute, ou plus morne, selon la feuille où lon les couche, et qu'elle ne tient qu'autant de place en nous, que nous luy en faisons. *Tantum doluerunt, quantum doloribus se inseruerunt.* Nous sentons plus vn coup de rasoir du Chirurgien, que dix coups d'espee en la chaleur du combat. Les douleurs de l'enfantement, par les Medecins, et par Dieu mesme estimees grandes, et que nous passons auec tant de ceremonies, il y a des nations entieres, qui n'en font nul compte.

But let us come to examples, which are properly the game of weak-backed people like me. There we shall find that pain is like gems, which take on a brighter or duller color according to the foil they are set on, and that it takes up only as much room in us as we make for it. *They suffered as much as they gave themselves up to suffering.* We feel a stroke of the surgeon's razor more than ten sword blows in the heat of battle. The pains of childbirth, judged great by doctors and by God himself, and which we go through with so many ceremonies—there are whole nations that make nothing of them.[19]

Ie laisse à part les femmes Lacedemoniennes: mais aux Souisses parmi nos gens de pied, quel changement y trouuez vous? sinon que trottans apres leurs maris, vous leur voyez auiourd'huy porter au col l'enfant, qu'elles auoient hyer au ventre: et ces Ægyptiennes contre-faictes ramassées d'entre nous, vont elles mesmes lauer les leurs, qui viennent de naistre, et prennent leur baing en la plus prochaine riuiere. Outre tant de garces qui desrobent tous les iours leurs enfants en la generation comme en la conception, cette belle et noble femme de

I leave aside the Spartan women; but among the Swiss in our infantry, what change do you find? Only that, trotting after their husbands, you see them today carrying on their necks the child they had in their bellies yesterday. And those counterfeit Egyptians, gathered up from among our own people, go themselves to wash their newborn babies and take their bath in the nearest river. Besides so many girls who every day conceal their

18 Plato, Phaedo 83d, where every pleasure and pain nails the soul to the body.
19 Saint Augustine, City of God I.10.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
	Sabinus Patricien Romain, pour l'interest d'autruy porta seule et sans secours et sans voix et gemissemens l'enfantement de deux iumeaux.	children's birth as they concealed their conception, that fine and noble wife of Sabinus, a Roman patrician, for the sake of others bore alone, without help, without a sound or a groan, the birth of twins.[20]
	Vn simple garçonnet de Lacedemone, ayant derobé vn renard (car ils craignoient encore plus la honte de leur sottise au larecin, que nous ne craignons la peine de nostre malice) et l'ayant mis souz sa cappe, endura plustost qu'il luy eust rongé le ventre, que de se descouurir. Et vn autre, donnant de l'encens à vn sacrifice, se laissa brusler iusques à l'os, par vn charbon tombé dans sa manche, pour ne troubler le mystere. Et s'en est veu vn grand nombre pour le seul essay de vertu, suiuant leur institution, qui ont souffert en l'aage de sept ans, d'estre foüettez iusques à la mort, sans alterer leur visage.	A mere Spartan boy, having stolen a fox (for they feared the shame of being clumsy at theft even more than we fear the penalty for our wickedness) and having hidden it under his cloak, endured having his belly gnawed by it rather than give himself away. And another, offering incense at a sacrifice, let himself be burned to the bone by a coal that had fallen into his sleeve, so as not to disturb the rite. And a great number have been seen who, purely as a test of virtue, according to their upbringing, endured at the age of seven being whipped to death without changing their expression.
	Et Cicero les a veuz se battre à trouppes: de poings, de pieds, et de dents, iusques à s'euanouir auant que d'aduoüer estre vaincus. *Nunquam naturam mos vinceret: est enim ea semper inuicta; sed nos vmbris, deliciis, otio, languore, desidia, animum infecimus; opinionibus malóque more delinitum molliuimus.*	And Cicero saw them fight in bands, with fists, feet and teeth, until they fainted rather than admit they were beaten. *Custom would never conquer nature, for she is always unconquered; but we have infected our minds with shade, delights, idleness, languor and sloth; we have softened them with false opinions and bad habits.*[21]
1.14.16	Chacun sçait l'histoire de Sceuola, qui s'estant coulé dans le camp ennemy, pour en tuer le chef, et ayant failly d'attaincte, pour reprendre son effect d'vne plus estrange inuention, et descharger sa patrie, confessa à Porsenna, qui estoit le Roy qu'il vouloit tuer, non seulement son desseing, mais adiousta qu'il auoit en son camp vn grand nombre de Romains complices de son entreprise tels que luy. Et pour montrer quel il estoit, s'estant faict apporter vn brasier, veit et souffrit griller et rostir son bras, iusques à ce que l'ennemy mesme en ayant horreur, commanda oster le brasier. Quoy, celuy qui ne daigna interrompre la lecture de son liure pendant qu'on l'incisoit?	Everyone knows the story of Scaevola, who slipped into the enemy camp to kill its leader and missed his stroke. To retrieve his purpose by a stranger device and to deliver his country, he confessed to Porsenna, the king he had meant to kill, not only his plan, but added that there were in his camp a great many Romans like himself, accomplices in his enterprise. And to show what kind of man he was, he had a brazier brought, and watched and endured his arm being grilled and roasted, until the enemy himself, horrified, ordered the brazier taken away. And what of the man who did not deign to interrupt the reading of his book while he was being cut open?[22]
	Et celuy, qui s'obstina à se mocquer et à rire à l'enuy des maux, qu'on luy faisoit: de façon que la cruauté irritée des bourreaux qui le tenoyent, et toutes les inuentions des tourmens redoublez les vns sur les autres luy	And the one who persisted in mocking and laughing in defiance of the ills they were doing him, so that the provoked cruelty of the torturers who held him, and all their inventions of torments

20 The wandering "Egyptians" were the Romani, then thought to come from Egypt. The wife of Julius Sabinus, Eponina, hid with her husband after his revolt against Vespasian (Plutarch).
21 Cicero, Tusculan Disputations V.
22 Gaius Mucius Scaevola, legendary Roman hero who tried to kill Lars Porsenna, king of Clusium, during his siege of Rome around 508 BC.

FRENCH

donnerent gaigné? Mais c'estoit vn Philosophe. Quoy? vn gladiateur de Cæsar, endura tousiours riant qu'on luy sondast et detaillast ses playes. *Quis mediocris gladiator ingemuit? quis vultum mutauit vnquam? Quis non modò stetit, verùm etiam decubuit turpiter? Quis cùm decubuisset, ferrum recipere iussus, collum contraxit?*

ENGLISH

heaped one upon another, conceded him the victory? But he was a philosopher. What then? One of Caesar's gladiators endured, laughing all the while, having his wounds probed and cut open. *What ordinary gladiator has ever groaned? Which has ever changed countenance? Which has disgraced himself not only standing but even in falling? Which, when he had fallen and was ordered to receive the blade, drew back his neck?*[23]

1.14.17 Meslons y les femmes. Qui n'a ouy parler à Paris de celle, qui se fit escorcher pour seulement en acquerir le teint plus frais d'vne nouuelle peau? y en a qui se sont fait arracher des dents viues et saines, pour en former la voix plus molle, et plus grasse, ou pour les ranger en meilleur ordre. Combien d'exemples du mespris de la douleur auons nous en ce genre? Que ne peuuent elles? Que craignent elles, pour peu qu'il y ait d'agencement à esperer en leur beauté?

Let us bring the women in too. Who in Paris has not heard of the woman who had herself flayed solely to gain the fresher complexion of a new skin? There are some who have had sound, living teeth pulled out to make their voices softer and fuller, or to set the rest in better order. How many examples of contempt for pain do we have of this kind? What can they not do? What do they fear, if there is the least improvement to be hoped for in their beauty?

Vellere queis cura est albos à stirpe capillos, / Et faciem dempta pelle referre nouam. J'en ay veu engloutir du sable, de la cendre, et se trauailler à point nommé de ruiner leur estomac, pour acquerir les pasles couleurs. Pour faire vn corps bien espagnolé, quelle gehenne ne souffrent elles guindées et sanglées, auec de grosses coches sur les costez, iusques à la chair viue? ouy quelques fois à en mourir.

Women who take pains to pluck out their white hairs by the root, / and to peel off their skin and bring back a fresh face. I have seen some of them swallow sand and ashes, and deliberately set about ruining their stomachs to acquire a pale complexion. To get a body slim in the Spanish fashion, what torture do they not endure, braced and strapped, with great notches cut into their sides down to the living flesh? Yes, sometimes even to the point of dying of it.[24]

1.14.18 Il est ordinaire à beaucoup de nations de nostre temps, de se blesser à escient, pour donner foy à leur parole: et nostre Roy en recite des notables exemples, de ce qu'il en a veu en Poloigne, et en l'endroit de luy mesme. Mais outre ce que ie sçay en auoir esté imité en France par aucuns, quand ie veins de ces fameux Estats de Blois, i'auois veu peu auparauant vne fille en Picardie, pour tesmoigner l'ardeur de ses promesses, et aussi sa constance, se donner du poinçon, qu'elle portoit en son poil, quatre ou cinq bons coups dans le bras, qui luy faisoient craquetter la peau, et la saignoient bien en bon escient.

It is common among many nations of our time to wound themselves deliberately to make their word believed. Our King tells of some remarkable examples of this that he saw in Poland, some of them even done in his honor. But besides the fact that I know some people in France have imitated it, when I came from those famous Estates of Blois I had seen, shortly before, a girl in Picardy who, to show the ardor of her promises and her constancy as well, gave herself four or five good stabs in the arm with the bodkin she wore in her hair. They made her skin crackle and bled her in good earnest.[25]

Les Turcs se font de grandes escarres pour leurs dames: et afin que la merque y demeure, ils portent soudain du

The Turks make great gashes in themselves for their ladies; and so that the mark will stay, they

23 Cicero, Tusculan Disputations II.
24 Tibullus, Elegies (a poem from the collection attributed to him).
25 Henry III had been king of Poland in 1573–1574; Montaigne attended the Estates-General at Blois in 1588.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
	feu sur la playe, et l'y tiennent vn temps incroyable, pour arrester le sang, et former la cicatrice. Gents qui l'ont veu, l'ont escrit, et me l'ont iuré. Mais pour dix aspres, il se trouue tous les iours entre eux qui se donnera vne bien profonde taillade dans le bras, ou dans les cuisses. Ie suis bien ayse que les tesmoins nous sont plus à main, où nous en auons plus affaire. Car la chrestienté nous en fournit à suffisance. Et apres l'exemple de nostre sainct guide, il y en a eu force, qui par deuotion ont voulu porter la croix.	immediately put fire to the wound and hold it there an incredibly long time, to stop the blood and form the scar. People who have seen it have written it down and sworn it to me. But for ten aspers you will find among them, any day, someone who will give himself a very deep slash in the arm or the thighs. I am very glad that the witnesses are closer at hand where we have most need of them, for Christendom supplies us with plenty. And after the example of our holy guide, there have been many who out of devotion chose to bear the cross.[26]
	Nous apprenons par tesmoing tres-digne de foy, que le Roy S. Loys porta la here iusques à ce que sur sa vieillesse, son confesseur l'en dispensa; et que tous les Vendredis, il se faisoit battre les espaules par son prestre, de cinq chainettes de fer, que pour cet effet on portoit emmy ses besongnes de nuict.	We learn from a most trustworthy witness that King Saint Louis wore a hair shirt until, in his old age, his confessor released him from it; and that every Friday he had his shoulders beaten by his priest with five small iron chains, which were carried for that purpose among his nightclothes.[27]
1.14.19	Guillaume nostre dernier Duc de Guyenne, pere de cette Alienor, qui transmit ce Duché aux maisons de France et d'Angleterre, porta les dix ou douze derniers ans de sa vie, continuellement vn corps de cuirasse, sous vn habit de religieux, par penitence. Foulques Comte d'Anjou alla iusques en Ierusalem, pour là se faire foëter à deux de ses valets, la corde au col, deuant le sepulchre de nostre Seigneur. Mais ne voit-on encore tous les iours au Vendredy S. en diuers lieux vn grand nombre d'hommes et femmes se battre iusques à se déchirer la chair et percer iusques aux os? Cela ay-ie veu souuent et sans enchantement.	William, our last Duke of Guyenne, father of that Eleanor who passed the duchy on to the houses of France and England, wore a breastplate continually for the last ten or twelve years of his life, under a monk's habit, as a penance. Fulk, Count of Anjou, went all the way to Jerusalem to have himself whipped there by two of his servants, with a rope around his neck, before the tomb of our Lord. But do we not still see nowadays, on Good Friday, in various places, a great number of men and women beating themselves until they tear their flesh and lay it open to the bone? That I have often seen, and it was no illusion.[28]
	Et disoit-on, car ils vont masquez, qu'il y en auoit, qui pour de l'argent entreprenoient en cela de garantir la religion d'autruy; par vn mespris de la douleur, d'autant plus grand, que plus peuuent les éguillons de la deuotion, que de l'auarice.	And it was said—for they go masked—that there were some who for money undertook in this way to make good other people's religion, with a contempt for pain all the greater in that the spurs of devotion are more powerful than those of avarice.
1.14.20	Q. Maximus enterra son fils Consulaire: M. Cato le sien Preteur designé: et L. Paulus les siens deux en peu de iours, d'vn visage rassis, et ne portant nul tesmoignage de deuil. Ie disois en mes iours, de quelqu'vn en gossant, qu'il auoit choué la diuine iustice. Car la mort violente de trois grands enfants, luy ayant esté enuoyée en vn iour, pour vn aspre coup de verge, comme il est à croire: peu s'en fallut qu'il ne la print à faueur et gratification	Quintus Maximus buried his son, a former consul; Marcus Cato his, who was praetor-elect; and Lucius Paulus his two within a few days—all with a composed face and showing no sign of mourning. In my day I said jokingly of someone that he had cheated divine justice. For when the violent death of three grown sons had been sent to him in a single day, as a harsh stroke of the rod, as we must

26 The asper was a small Turkish silver coin.
27 Louis IX of France (1214–1270); the witness is his biographer Jean de Joinville.
28 William X, Duke of Aquitaine (d. 1137), father of Eleanor of Aquitaine; Fulk III Nerra, Count of Anjou (d. 1040).

FRENCH

ENGLISH

singuliere du ciel. Ie n'ensuis pas ces humeurs monstrueuses: mais i'en ay perdu en nourrice, deux ou trois, sinon sans regret, au moins sans fascherie. Si n'est-il guere accident, qui touche plus au vif les hommes.

suppose, he very nearly took it as a singular favor and kindness from heaven. I do not follow these monstrous temperaments; but I have lost two or three children at nurse, if not without regret, at least without great distress. And yet there is hardly any misfortune that touches men more to the quick.[29]

Ie voy assez d'autres communes occasions d'affliction, qu'à peine sentiroy-ie, si elles me venoyent. Et en ay mesprisé quand elles me sont venues, de celles ausquelles le monde donne vne si atroce figure, que ie n'oserois m'en vanter au peuple sans rougir. *Ex quo intelligitur, non in natura, sed in opinione esse ægritudinem.*

I see plenty of other common occasions of affliction that I would hardly feel if they came to me. And some of those to which the world gives so atrocious a face I have scorned when they did come to me—so much so that I would not dare boast of it in public without blushing. *From which it is understood that distress lies not in nature but in opinion.*[30]

1.14.21 L'opinion est vne puissante partie, hardie, et sans mesure. Qui rechercha iamais de telle faim la seurté et le repos, qu'Alexandre et Cæsar ont faict l'inquietude et les difficultez? Terez le pere de Sitalcez souloit dire que quand il ne faisoit point la guerre, il luy estoit aduis qu'il n'y auoit point difference entre luy et son pallefrenier. Caton Consul, pour s'asseurer d'aucunes villes en Espaigne, ayant seulement interdict aux habitants d'icelles, de porter les armes: grand nombre se tuerent: *Ferox gens, nullam vitam rati sine armis esse*.

Opinion is a powerful party, bold and without measure. Who ever sought security and rest as hungrily as Alexander and Caesar sought restlessness and difficulties? Teres, the father of Sitalces, used to say that when he was not making war, he felt there was no difference between himself and his groom. When Cato, as consul, to make sure of certain towns in Spain, had merely forbidden their inhabitants to bear arms, a great number of them killed themselves: *A fierce people, who thought there was no life without arms.*[31]

Combien en sçauons nous qui ont fuy la douceur d'vne vie tranquille, en leurs maisons parmy leurs cognoissans, pour suiure l'horreur des desers inhabitables; et qui se sont iettez à l'abiection, vilité, et mespris du monde, et s'y sont pleuz iusques à l'affectation?

How many do we know who have fled the sweetness of a quiet life in their homes, among people they know, to pursue the horror of uninhabitable deserts; who have thrown themselves into abasement, lowliness and the contempt of the world, and have delighted in it to the point of affectation?

Le Cardinal Borrome, qui mourut dernierement à Milan, au milieu de la desbauche, à quoy le conuioyt et sa noblesse, et ses grandes richesses, et l'air de l'Italie, et sa ieunesse, se maintint en vne forme de vie si austere, que la mesme robbe qui luy seruoit en esté, luy seruoit en hyuer: n'auoit pour son coucher que la paille: et les heures qui luy restoyent des occupations de sa charge, il les passoit estudiant continuellement, planté sur ses genoux, ayant vn peu d'eau et de pain à costé de son liure: qui estoit toute la prouision de ses repas, et tout le temps qu'il y employoit.

Cardinal Borromeo, who died recently in Milan, in the midst of the debauchery to which his noble birth, his great wealth, the air of Italy and his youth all invited him, kept to a way of life so austere that the same robe that served him in summer served him in winter. He had only straw for his bed; and the hours left over from the duties of his office he spent in continual study, planted on his knees, with a little water and bread beside his book—which was the whole provision for his meals and all the time he spent on them.[32]

1.14.22

29 Quintus Fabius Maximus, Cato the Elder and Lucius Aemilius Paulus, examples taken from Cicero.
30 Cicero, Tusculan Disputations.
31 Teres was a king of the Thracian Odrysians in the 5th century BC; the quotation is from Livy.
32 Charles Borromeo, Archbishop of Milan, died in 1584.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
	I'en sçay qui à leur escient ont tiré et proffit et auancement du cocuage, dequoy le seul nom effraye tant de gens.	I know some who have knowingly drawn both profit and advancement from cuckoldry, whose very name frightens so many people.
1.14.23	Si la veuë n'est le plus necessaire de nos sens, il est au moins le plus plaisant: mais les plus plaisans et vtiles de noz membres, semblent estre ceux qui seruent à nous engendrer: toutesfois assez de gens les ont pris en hayne mortelle, pour cella seulement, qu'ils estoient trop aymables; et les ont reiettez à cause de leur prix. Autant en opina des yeux, celuy qui se les creua.	If sight is not the most necessary of our senses, it is at least the most pleasant; and the most pleasant and useful of our members seem to be those that serve to beget us. Yet a good many people have conceived a mortal hatred for them for the sole reason that they were too lovable, and have rejected them because of their value. The man who put out his own eyes held the same opinion of eyes.[33]
1.14.24	La plus commune et plus saine part des hommes, tient à grand heur l'abondance des enfants: moy et quelques autres, à pareil heur le defaut. Et quand on demande à Thales pourquoy il ne se marie point: il respond, qu'il n'ayme point à laisser lignée de soy.	The commonest and soundest part of mankind holds an abundance of children to be a great happiness; I and a few others hold the lack of them to be an equal happiness. And when Thales is asked why he does not marry, he answers that he does not like to leave any offspring of himself.
1.14.25	Que nostre opinion donne prix aux choses; il se void par celles en grand nombre, ausquelles nous ne regardons pas seulement, pour les estimer: ains à nous. Et ne considerons ny leurs qualitez, ny leurs vtilitez, mais seulement nostre coust à les recouurer: comme si c'estoit quelque piece de leur substance: et appellons valeur en elles, non ce qu'elles apportent, mais ce que nous y apportons. Sur quoy ie m'aduise, que nous sommes grands mesnagers de nostre mise. Selon qu'elle poise, elle sert, de ce mesmes qu'elle poise. Nostre opinion ne la laisse iamais courir à faux fret. L'achat donne tiltre au diamant, et la difficulté à la vertu, et la douleur à la deuotion, et l'aspreté à la medecine.	That our opinion gives things their value is seen from the great many things which, in appraising them, we do not even look at, but look at ourselves instead. We consider neither their qualities nor their usefulness, but only what it cost us to get them, as if that were some part of their substance; and we call value in them not what they bring but what we bring to them. On which I note that we are great managers of our outlay. It serves according to what it weighs, by the very fact that it weighs. Our opinion never lets it run on a voyage for nothing. The purchase gives the diamond its title, difficulty gives it to virtue, pain to devotion, and bitterness to medicine.
	Tel pour arriuer à la pauureté ietta ses escus en cette mesme mer, que tant d'autres fouillent de toutes pars pour y pescher des richesses. Epicurus dit que l'estre riche n'est pas soulagement, mais changement d'affaires. De vray, ce n'est pas la disette, c'est plustost l'abondance qui produict l'auarice. Ie veux dire mon experience autour de ce subiect.	One man, to attain poverty, threw his crowns into the very sea that so many others ransack on every side to fish up riches. Epicurus says that being rich is not a relief but a change of business. Indeed, it is not want but rather abundance that produces avarice. I want to tell my own experience on this subject.[34]

THREE WAYS OF LIVING WITH MONEY

Montaigne lived first on credit, then by hoarding, and now spends as his income comes in.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
1.14.26	I'ay vescu en trois sortes de condition, depuis estre sorty de l'enfance. Le premier temps, qui a duré pres de vingt	I have lived in three kinds of condition since leaving childhood. The first period, which lasted

33 An allusion to the philosopher Democritus, who was said to have blinded himself.

FRENCH

années, ie le passay, n'aiant autres moyens, que fortuites, et despendant de l'ordonnance et secours d'autruy, sans estat certain et sans prescription. Ma despence se faisoit d'autant plus allegrement et auec moins de soing, qu'elle estoit toute en la temerité de la fortune. Ie ne fu iamais mieux.

Il ne m'est oncques auenu de trouuer la bource de mes amis close: m'estant enioint au delà de toute autre necessité, la necessité de ne faillir au terme que i'auoy prins à m'acquiter, lequel ils m'ont mille fois alongé, voyant l'effort que ie me faisoy pour leur satisfaire: en maniere que i'en rendoy vne loyauté mesnagere, et aucunement piperesse. Ie sens naturellement quelque volupté à payer; comme si ie deschargeois mes espaules d'vn ennuyeux poix, et de cette image de seruitude. Aussi qu'il y a quelque contentement qui me chatouille à faire vne action iuste, et contenter autruy.

I'excepte les payements où il faut venir à marchander et conter: car si ie ne trouue à qui en commettre la charge, ie les esloigne honteusement et iniurieusement tant que ie puis, de peur de cette altercation, à laquelle et mon humeur et ma forme de parler est du tout incompatible. Il n'est rien que ie haysse comme à marchander: c'est vn pur commerce de trichoterie et d'impudence. Apres vne heure de debat et de barguignage, l'vn et l'autre abandonne sa parolle et ses sermens pour cinq sous d'amendement. Et si empruntons auec desaduantage. Car n'ayant point le cœur de requerir en presence, i'en renuoyois le hazard sur le papier, qui ne fait guere d'effort, et qui preste grandement la main au refuser.

Ie me remettois de la conduite de mon besoing plus gayement aux astres, et plus librement que ie n'ay faict depuis à ma prouidence et à mon sens. La plus part des mesnagers estiment horrible de viure ainsin en incertitude; et ne s'aduisent pas, premierement, que la plus part du monde vit ainsi. Combien d'honnestes hommes ont reietté tout leur certain à l'abandon, et le font tous les iours, pour cercher le vent de la faueur des Roys et de la fortune? Cæsar s'endebta d'vn million d'or outre son vaillant, pour deuenir Cæsar. Et combien de marchans commencent leur trafique par la vente de leur metairie, qu'ils enuoyent aux Indes.

Tot per impotentia freta! En vne si grande siccité de deuotion, nous auons mille et mille Colleges, qui la

ENGLISH

nearly twenty years, I spent with no means but chance ones, depending on other people's arrangements and help, without fixed status or settled allowance. My spending was all the more cheerful and carefree because it rested entirely on the rashness of Fortune. I was never better off.

It never happened to me to find my friends' purses closed, since I had laid on myself, above every other necessity, the necessity of not missing the date I had set for repaying. They extended it for me a thousand times, seeing the effort I made to satisfy them; so that I paid them back with a thrifty and somewhat crafty loyalty. I naturally feel a certain pleasure in paying, as if I were unloading an irksome weight from my shoulders, and that image of servitude. Also there is a certain satisfaction that tickles me in doing a just action and satisfying someone else.

I except payments where one has to get down to bargaining and counting: for if I find no one to whom I can hand over the task, I put them off as long as I can, shamefully and unfairly, for fear of that wrangling, with which both my temperament and my way of speaking are utterly incompatible. There is nothing I hate so much as haggling: it is sheer dealing in cheating and impudence. After an hour of debate and chaffering, both parties abandon their word and their oaths for five sous' improvement. And I borrowed at a disadvantage too. For having no heart to ask face to face, I left the chance of it to paper, which makes hardly any effort and lends a great hand to refusing.

I left the management of my needs to the stars, more cheerfully and freely than I have since left it to my own foresight and sense. Most good managers think it horrible to live in such uncertainty; and they do not consider, first, that most of the world lives that way. How many decent men have thrown all their sure possessions to the winds, and do so every day, to chase the breeze of the favor of kings and of Fortune? Caesar went a million in gold into debt beyond what he was worth, to become Caesar. And how many merchants begin their trade by selling their farm, which they send off to the Indies!

Across so many raging seas! In so great a drought of devotion, we have thousands upon thousands of

34 Crates the Cynic, according to Diogenes Laertius.

FRENCH

passent commodément, attendans tous les iours de la liberalité du Ciel, ce qu'il faut à eux disner.

1.14.27 Secondement, ils ne s'aduisent pas, que cette certitude, sur laquelle ils se fondent, n'est guere moins incertaine et hazardeuse que le hazard mesme. Ie voy d'aussi pres la misere au delà de deux mille escus de rente, que si elle estoit tout contre moy.

Car outre ce que le sort a dequoy ouurir cent breches à la pauureté au trauers de nos richesses, n'y ayant souuent nul moyen entre la supreme et infime fortune, *Fortuna vitrea est: tum, quum splendet, frangitur;* et enuoyer cul sur pointe toutes nos deffences et leuées; ie trouue que par diuerses causes, l'indigence se voit autant ordinairement logée chez ceux qui ont des biens, que chez ceux qui n'en ont point: et qu'à l'auanture est elle aucunement moins incommode, quand elle est seule, que quand elle se rencontre en compagnie des richesses. Elles viennent plus de l'ordre, que de la recepte: *Faber est suæ quisque fortunæ*. Et me semble plus miserable vn riche malaisé, necessiteux, affaireux, que celuy qui est simplement pauure.

In diuitiis inopes, quod genus egestatis grauissimum est. Les plus grands Princes et plus riches, sont par pauureté et disette poussez ordinairement à l'extreme necessité. Car en est-il de plus extreme, que d'en deuenir tyrans, et iniustes vsurpateurs des biens de leurs subiets?

1.14.28 Ma seconde forme, ç'a esté d'auoir de l'argent. A quoy m'estant prins, i'en fis bien tost des reserues notables selon ma condition: n'estimant pas que ce fust auoir, sinon autant qu'on possede outre sa despence ordinaire: ny qu'on se puisse fier du bien, qui est encore en esperance de recepte, pour claire qu'elle soit. Car quoy, disoy-ie, si i'estois surpris d'vn tel, ou d'vn tel accident? Et à la suitte de ces vaines et vitieuses imaginations, i'allois faisant l'ingenieux à prouuoir par cette superflue reserue à tous inconueniens. Et sçauois encore respondre à celuy qui m'alleguoit que le nombre des inconueniens estoit trop infiny; que si ce n'estoit à tous, c'estoit à aucuns et plusieurs. Cela ne se passoit pas sans penible sollicitude.

ENGLISH

religious communities that get along comfortably, expecting every day from the liberality of heaven what they need for their dinner.[35]

Secondly, they do not consider that this certainty on which they rely is hardly less uncertain and hazardous than hazard itself. I see poverty as close to me beyond an income of two thousand crowns as if it were right next to me.

For besides the fact that fate has the means to open a hundred breaches for poverty through our riches—there often being no middle ground between the highest and the lowest fortune: *Fortune is glass: just when it shines, it breaks*—and to send all our defenses and ramparts tumbling head over heels, I find that for various reasons want is seen lodged as commonly with those who have property as with those who have none; and that it is perhaps somewhat less troublesome when it is alone than when it meets with riches for company. Riches come more from good order than from income: *Every man is the maker of his own fortune.* And a rich man who is hard up, needy and harried by business seems to me more wretched than one who is simply poor.[36]

Needy in the midst of riches, which is the most grievous kind of poverty. The greatest and richest princes are usually driven by poverty and want to extreme necessity. For is there any more extreme than to become tyrants because of it, and unjust usurpers of their subjects' property?[37]

My second form was having money. Having taken to it, I soon laid up reserves that were considerable for my station, not thinking that one has anything except what one possesses beyond one's ordinary expenses, nor that one can rely on wealth that is still only hoped-for income, however certain it may look. For what, I said, if I were caught by this accident or that? And in pursuit of these vain and vicious imaginings, I went about playing the clever man, providing against every mishap with this superfluous reserve. And I even knew how to answer anyone who argued that the number of mishaps was too infinite: if it was not

35 Catullus.
36 Publilius Syrus; the second quotation is attributed to Sallust.
37 Seneca, Letters.

FRENCH

I'en faisoy vn secret: et moy, qui ose tant dire de moy, ne parloy de mon argent, qu'en mensonge: comme font les autres, qui s'appauurissent riches, s'enrichissent pauures: et dispensent leur conscience de tesmoigner iamais sincerement de ce qu'ils ont. Ridicule et honteuse prudence. Allois-ie en voyage? il ne me sembloit estre iamais suffisamment pourueu: et plus ie m'estois chargé de monnoye, plus aussi ie m'estois chargé de crainte: tantost de la seurté des chemins, tantost de la fidelité de ceux qui conduisoyent mon bagage: duquel, comme d'autres que ie cognois, ie ne m'asseurois iamais assez, si ie ne l'auois deuant mes yeux. Laissoy-ie ma boyte chez moy? combien de soupçons et pensements espineux, et qui pis est incommunicables? I'auois tousiours l'esprit de ce costé.

Tout compté, il y a plus de peine à garder l'argent qu'à l'acquerir. Si ie n'en faisois du tout tant que i'en dis, au moins il me coustoit à m'empescher de le faire. De commodité, i'en tirois peu ou rien. Pour auoir plus de moyen de despense, elle ne m'en poisoit pas moins. Car, comme disoit Bion, autant se fache le cheuelu comme le chauue, qu'on luy arrache le poil. Et depuis que vous estes accoustumé, et auez planté vostre fantasie sur certain monceau, il n'est plus à vostre seruice: vous n'oseriez l'escorner. C'est vn bastiment qui, comme il vous semble, croullera tout, si vous y touchez: il faut que la necessité vous prenne à la gorge pour l'entamer.

Et au parauant i'engageois mes hardes, et vendois vn cheual, auec bien moins de contrainte et moins enuis, que lors ie ne faisois bresche à cette bource fauorie, que ie tenois à part. Mais le danger estoit, que mal aysément peut-on establir bornes certaines à ce desir (elles sont difficiles à trouuer, és choses qu'on croit bonnes) et arrester vn poinct à l'espargne: on va tousiours grossissant cet amas, et l'augmentant d'vn nombre à autre, iusques à se priuer vilainement de la iouyssance de ses propres biens: et l'establir toute en la garde, et n'en vser point. Selon cette espece d'vsage, ce sont les plus riches gents du monde, ceux qui ont charge de la garde des portes et murs d'vne bonne ville.

Tout homme pecunieux est auaricieux à mon gré. Platon renge ainsi les biens corporels ou humains: la santé, la

ENGLISH

against all, it was against some, and many. This did not go on without painful anxiety.

I made a secret of it; and I, who dare say so much about myself, never spoke of my money except with lies, like others who make themselves out poor when they are rich and rich when they are poor, and excuse their conscience from ever testifying honestly about what they have. A ridiculous and shameful prudence. Was I going on a journey? I never seemed to myself sufficiently provided; and the more I had loaded myself with money, the more I had loaded myself with fear: now about the safety of the roads, now about the trustworthiness of those in charge of my baggage, which, like some others I know, I never felt sure enough of unless I had it before my eyes. Did I leave my strongbox at home? How many suspicions and thorny thoughts —and, what is worse, ones I could tell no one! My mind was always turned that way.

All things considered, there is more trouble in keeping money than in getting it. If I did not do quite all I say, at least it cost me something to keep myself from doing it. Of comfort I drew little or none from it. Having more means of spending, I found spending weighed on me no less. For, as Bion said, the hairy man is as angry as the bald one at having his hair pulled out. And once you have grown used to it and have set your fancy on a certain heap, it is no longer at your service: you would not dare make a dent in it. It is a building that, as it seems to you, will all come crashing down if you touch it; necessity has to take you by the throat before you will cut into it.

And before then I would pawn my clothes and sell a horse with much less constraint and reluctance than I then felt in making a breach in that favorite purse I kept apart. But the danger was that one can hardly set fixed limits to this desire (they are hard to find in things we believe good) and fix a stopping point to saving. One goes on fattening this hoard and swelling it from one sum to another, until one meanly deprives oneself of the enjoyment of one's own goods, makes it consist entirely in guarding them, and never uses them at all. By this sort of use, the richest people in the world are the ones charged with guarding the gates and walls of a good town.

Every moneyed man is avaricious, to my mind. Plato ranks bodily or human goods thus: health,

FRENCH

beauté, la force, la richesse: Et la richesse, dit-il, n'est pas aueugle, mais tresclair-voyante, quand elle est illuminée par la prudence. Dionysius le fils, eut bonne grace. On l'aduertit que l'vn de ses Syracusains auoit caché dans terre vn thresor; il luy manda de le luy apporter; ce qu'il fit, s'en reseruant à la desrobbée quelque partie; auec laquelle il s'en alla en vne autre ville, où ayant perdu cet appetit de thesaurizer, il se mit à viure plus liberalement. Ce qu'entendant Dionysius, luy fit rendre le demeurant de son thresor; disant que puis qu'il auoit appris à en sçauoir vser, il le luy rendoit volontiers.

1.14.29 Ie fus quelques années en ce point. Ie ne sçay quel bon dæmon m'en ietta hors tres-vtilement, comme le Syracusain; et m'enuoya toute cette conserue à l'abandon: le plaisir de certain voyage de grande despence, ayant mis au pied cette sotte imagination. Par où ie suis retombé à vne tierce sorte de vie, ie dis ce que i'en sens, certes plus plaisante beaucoup et plus reglée. C'est que ie fais courir ma despence quand et quand ma recepte; tantost l'vne deuance, tantost l'autre: mais c'est de peu qu'elles s'abandonnent. Ie vis du iour à la iournée, et me contente d'auoir dequoy suffire aux besoings presens et ordinaires: aux extraordinaires toutes les prouisions du monde n'y sçauroyent suffire.

Et est follie de s'attendre que fortune elle mesmes nous arme iamais suffisamment contre soy. C'est de noz armes qu'il la faut combattre. Les fortuites nous trahiront au bon du faict. Si i'amasse, ce n'est que pour l'esperance de quelque voisine emploite; et non pour acheter des terres, dequoy ie n'ay que faire, mais pour acheter du plaisir. *Non esse cupidum, pecunia est; non esse emacem, vectigal est.* Ie n'ay ny guere peur que bien me faille, ny nul desir qu'il m'augmente.

Diuitiarum fructus est in copia; copiam declarat satietas. Et me gratifie singulierement que cette correction me soit arriuée en vn aage naturellement enclin à l'auarice, et que ie me vois desfaict de cette folie si commune aux vieux, et la plus ridicule de toutes les humaines folies.

1.14.30 Feraulez, qui auoit passé par les deux fortunes, et trouué que l'accroist de cheuance, n'estoit pas accroist d'appetit,

ENGLISH

beauty, strength, wealth. And wealth, he says, is not blind but very clear-sighted when it is lit by prudence. Dionysius the Younger behaved handsomely. He was told that one of his Syracusans had hidden a treasure in the ground; he sent word to him to bring it to him. The man did so, secretly keeping back part of it, and with that he went off to another city, where, having lost this appetite for hoarding, he began to live more liberally. Hearing of this, Dionysius had the rest of his treasure given back to him, saying that since he had learned how to use it, he gladly returned it to him.[38]

I was in this state for some years. Some good daemon or other threw me out of it, very usefully, like the Syracusan, and scattered all that hoard to the winds: the pleasure of a certain very expensive journey trampled that foolish notion underfoot. By which I have fallen back into a third kind of life —I say what I feel about it—certainly much more pleasant and better ordered. It is that I make my spending keep pace with my income; sometimes one gets ahead, sometimes the other, but they never drift far apart. I live from day to day, and am content to have enough for present and ordinary needs; for extraordinary ones, all the provisions in the world could not suffice.[39]

And it is folly to expect that Fortune herself will ever arm us sufficiently against herself. It is with our own arms that we must fight her. Chance ones will betray us at the crucial moment. If I save, it is only in hope of spending it on something soon; and not to buy land, which I have no use for, but to buy pleasure. *Not to be covetous is money; not to be fond of buying is an income.* I have hardly any fear that my means will fail me, and no desire for them to grow.[40]

The fruit of riches lies in plenty; and plenty is shown by having enough. And I am singularly pleased that this correction came to me at an age naturally inclined to avarice, and that I find myself rid of this folly so common among the old, and the most ridiculous of all human follies.

Pheraulas had passed through both fortunes and found that an increase in wealth was no increase

38 Plato, Laws; Dionysius the Younger was tyrant of Syracuse in the 4th century BC.
39 Probably his journey to Italy, Switzerland and Germany in 1580–1581.
40 Cicero, Paradoxes of the Stoics.

FRENCH

ENGLISH

au boire, manger, dormir, et embrasser sa femme: et qui d'autre part, sentoit poiser sur ses espaules l'importunité de l'œconomie, ainsi qu'elle faict à moy; delibera de contenter vn ieune homme pauure, son fidele amy, abboyant apres les richesses; et luy feit present de toutes les siennes, grandes et excessiues, et de celles encor qu'il estoit en train d'accumuler tous les iours par la liberalité de Cyrus son bon maistre, et par la guerre: moyennant qu'il prinst la charge de l'entretenir et nourrir honnestement, comme son hoste et son amy. Ils vescurent ainsi depuis tres-heureusement: et esgalement contents du changement de leur condition.

in appetite for drinking, eating, sleeping and embracing his wife; and on the other hand he felt the burden of managing it weighing on his shoulders, as it does on mine. So he resolved to make happy a poor young man, his faithful friend, who was hungering after riches. He made him a present of all his own, which were great and excessive, including those he was accumulating every day through the liberality of Cyrus, his good master, and through war—on condition that the young man take on the charge of keeping and feeding him decently, as his guest and friend. They lived thus very happily ever after, both equally content with the change in their condition.[41]

1.14.31 Voyla vn tour que i'imiterois de grand courage. Et louë grandement la fortune d'vn vieil Prelat, que ie voy s'estre si purement demis de sa bourse, et de sa recepte, et de sa mise, tantost à vn seruiteur choisi, tantost à vn autre, qu'il a coulé vn long espace d'années, autant ignorant cette sorte d'affaires de son mesnage, comme vn estranger. La fiance de la bonté d'autruy, est un non leger tesmoignage de la bonté propre: partant la fauorise Dieu volontiers. Et pour son regard, ie ne voy point d'ordre de maison, ny plus dignement ny plus constamment conduit que le sien.

Heureux, qui ait reglé à si iuste mesure son besoin, que ses richesses y puissent suffire sans son soing et empeschement: et sans que leur dispensation ou assemblage, interrompe d'autres occupations, qu'il suit, plus conuenables, plus tranquilles, et selon son cœur.

There is a trick I would gladly imitate. And I greatly praise the good fortune of an old prelate whom I see to have handed over his purse, his income and his spending so completely—now to one chosen servant, now to another—that he has let a long stretch of years slip by as ignorant of this side of his household affairs as a stranger. Trust in another's goodness is no slight testimony to one's own goodness; so God readily favors it. And as for him, I see no household run more worthily or more steadily than his.

Happy the man who has regulated his needs to so exact a measure that his riches can meet them without his care and trouble, and without their spending or gathering interrupting other occupations that he pursues, more fitting, more tranquil, and more after his own heart.

FORTUNE SUPPLIES ONLY THE MATTER

Ease, want and all things take their value from our opinion; the soul is master of its condition.

FRENCH

ENGLISH

1.14.32 L'aisance donc et l'indigence despendent de l'opinion d'vn chacun, et non plus la richesse, que la gloire, que la santé, n'ont qu'autant de beauté et de plaisir, que leur en preste celuy qui les possede. Chascun est bien ou mal, selon qu'il s'en trouue. Non de qui on le croid, mais qui le croid de soy, est content: et en cella seul la creance se donne essence et verité. La fortune ne nous fait ny bien ny mal: elle nous en offre seulement la matiere et la semence: laquelle nostre ame, plus puissante qu'elle, tourne et applique comme il luy plaist: seule cause et maistresse de sa condition heureuse ou malheureuse.

Ease and want, then, depend on each man's opinion; and riches, no more than glory or health, have only as much beauty and pleasure as their possessor lends them. Each man is well or ill off according to how he finds himself. Not the man whom others believe content, but the man who believes it of himself, is content; and in this alone belief gives itself essence and truth. Fortune does us neither good nor harm; she only offers us the matter and the seed of it, which our soul, more

41 The story is from Xenophon's Education of Cyrus (Cyropaedia).

FRENCH

ENGLISH

powerful than she, turns and applies as it pleases —the sole cause and mistress of its own happy or unhappy condition.

Les accessions externes prennent saueur et couleur de l'interne constitution: comme les accoustrements nous eschauffent non de leur chaleur, mais de la nostre, laquelle ils sont propres à couuer et nourrir: qui en abrieroit vn corps froid, il en tireroit mesme seruice pour la froideur? ainsi se conserue la neige et la glace. Certes tout en la maniere qu'à vn faineant l'estude sert de tourment, à vn yurongne l'abstinence du vin, la frugalité est supplice au luxurieux, et l'exercice gehenne à vn homme delicat et oisif: ainsin en est-il du reste. Les choses ne sont pas si douloureuses, ny difficiles d'elles mesmes: mais nostre foiblesse et lascheté les fait telles.

External additions take their flavor and color from the internal constitution, just as clothes warm us not with their own heat but with ours, which they are fit to brood over and nourish. If someone wrapped a cold body in them, would he not get the same service from them for keeping the cold? That is how snow and ice are preserved. Indeed, just as study is a torment to an idler and abstinence from wine to a drunkard, so frugality is torture to the sensualist and exercise to a soft and idle man; and so it is with the rest. Things are not so painful or difficult in themselves; it is our weakness and faintheartedness that make them so.

Pour iuger des choses grandes et haultes, il faut un' ame de mesme, autrement nous leur attribuons le vice, qui est le nostre. Vn auiron droit semble courbe en l'eau. Il n'importe pas seulement qu'on voye la chose, mais comment on la voye.

To judge great and lofty things, one needs a soul of the same kind; otherwise we attribute to them the vice that is ours. A straight oar looks bent in the water. It matters not only that we see the thing, but how we see it.

1.14.33 Or sus, pourquoy de tant de discours, qui persuadent diuersement les hommes de mespriser la mort, et de porter la douleur, n'en trouuons nous quelcun qui face pour nous? Et de tant d'especes d'imaginations qui l'ont persuadé à autruy, que chacun n'en applique il à soy vn le plus selon son humeur? S'il ne peut digerer la drogue forte et abstersiue, pour desraciner le mal, au moins qu'il la prenne lenitiue pour le soulager. Opinio est quædam effeminata ac leuis: nec in dolore magis, quàm eadem in voluptate: qua, quum liquescimus fluimusque mollitia, apis aculeum sine clamore ferre non possumus…

Come now: of so many arguments that persuade men in various ways to despise death and endure pain, why do we not find some one that works for us? And of so many kinds of notions that have persuaded others of it, why does each man not apply to himself the one that best suits his temperament? If he cannot digest the strong, purging drug that uproots the ill, let him at least take a soothing one to relieve it. There is a certain spineless and frivolous opinion, as much in pain as in pleasure; when we melt and flow with softness under its sway, we cannot bear a bee's sting without crying out…[42]

Totum in eo est, vt tibi imperes. Au demeurant on n'eschappe pas à la philosophie, pour faire valoir outre mesure l'aspreté des douleurs, et humaine foiblesse. Car on la contraint de se reietter à ces inuincibles repliques: S'il est mauuais de viure en necessité, au moins de viure en necessité, il n'est aucune necessité. Nul n'est mal long temps qu'à sa faute. Qui n'a le cœur de souffrir ny la mort ny la vie; qui ne veut ny resister ni fuir, que luy feroit-on?

The whole matter lies in commanding yourself. For the rest, we do not escape philosophy by exaggerating beyond measure the harshness of pain and human weakness. For we force her to fall back on these unanswerable replies: If it is bad to live in necessity, at least there is no necessity to live in necessity. No one is unhappy for long except by his own fault. He who has not the heart to endure either death or life, who will neither resist nor flee —what can be done for him?[43]

42 Cicero, Tusculan Disputations.
43 The maxim on necessity is Epicurus', quoted by Seneca, Letters.

I.15 One Is Punished for Holding a Place Obstinately Without Reason

On est puny pour s'opiniastrer en vne place sans raison
Commanders who stubbornly defend an indefensible place are rightly punished, though judging what is defensible is risky.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
1.15.1	LA vaillance a ses limites, comme les autres vertus: lesquels franchis, on se trouue dans le train du vice: en maniere que par chez elle on se peut rendre à la temerité, obstination et folie, qui n'en sçait bien les bornes, malaisez en verité à choisir sur leurs confins. De cette consideration est nee la coustume que nous auons aux guerres, de punir, voire de mort, ceux qui s'opiniastrent à defendre vne place, qui par les regles militaires ne peut estre soustenue. Autrement soubs l'esperance de l'impunité il n'y auroit poullier qui n'arrestast vne armee.	Valor has its limits, like the other virtues; and once these are crossed, we find ourselves on the road of vice. So that through her territory one can end up in rashness, obstinacy and folly, if one does not know her boundaries well—and they are truly hard to make out where they meet. From this consideration was born the custom we have in war of punishing, even with death, those who obstinately defend a place that by the rules of war cannot be held. Otherwise, in the hope of impunity, there would be no henhouse that would not hold up an army.
1.15.2	Monsieur le Connestable de Mommorency au siege de Pauie, ayant esté commis pour passer le Tesin, et se loger aux fauxbourgs S. Antoine, estant empesché d'vne tour au bout du pont, qui s'opiniastra iusques à se faire batre, feit pendre tout ce qui estoit dedans: et encore depuis accompagnant Monsieur le Dauphin au voyage delà les monts, ayant prins par force le Chasteau de Villane, et tout ce qui estoit dedans ayant esté mis en pieces par la furie des soldats, horsmis le Capitaine et l'enseigne, il les fit pendre et estrangler pour cette mesme raison: comme fit aussi le Capitaine Martin du Bellay lors Gouuerneur de Turin, en cette mesme contree, le Capitaine de S.	The Constable de Montmorency, at the siege of Pavia, had been ordered to cross the Ticino and take up quarters in the suburb of Saint-Antoine. Being held up by a tower at the end of the bridge, which held out obstinately until it had to be battered, he had everyone inside hanged. And again later, accompanying the Dauphin on the expedition beyond the mountains, having taken the castle of Villane by storm, and everyone inside having been cut to pieces by the fury of the soldiers except the captain and the ensign, he had those two hanged and strangled for this same reason. So too did Captain Martin du Bellay, then governor of Turin, in that same region, with the captain of Saint-[1]
	Bony: le reste de ses gens ayant esté massacré à la prinse de la place.	Bony, the rest of whose men had been massacred when the place was taken.
1.15.3	Mais d'autant que le iugement de la valeur et foiblesse du lieu, se prend par l'estimation et contrepois des forces qui l'assaillent (car tel s'opiniastreroit iustement contre deux couleurines, qui feroit l'enragé d'attendre trente	But since the judgment of a place's strength or weakness is made by estimating and weighing the forces attacking it (for a man may rightly hold out against two culverins who would be raving mad to

1 Anne de Montmorency, later Constable of France; the siege of Pavia was in 1524–1525, the Dauphin's campaign in Piedmont in 1537.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
	canons) ou se met encore en conte la grandeur du Prince conquerant, sa reputation, le respect qu'on luy doit: il y a danger qu'on presse vn peu la balance de ce costé là.	wait for thirty cannon), and since the greatness of the conquering prince, his reputation and the respect owed him are also taken into account, there is a danger that the scales may be pressed down a little on that side.
	Et en aduient par ces mesmes termes, que tels ont si grande opinion d'eux et de leurs moyens, que ne leur semblant raisonnable qu'il y ait rien digne de leur faire teste, ilz passent le cousteau par tout où ils trouuent resistance, autant que fortune leur dure: comme il se voit par les formes de sommation et deffi, que les Princes d'Orient et leurs successeurs, qui sont encores, ont en vsage, fiere, hautaine et pleine d'vn commandement barbaresque. Et au quartier par où les Portugaiz escornerent les Indes, ils trouuerent des estats auec cette loy vniuerselle et inuiolable, que tout ennemy vaincu par le Roy en presence, ou par son Lieutenant est hors de composition de rançon et de mercy.	And by these same terms it comes about that some have so high an opinion of themselves and their means that, since it seems unreasonable to them that anything should be worthy of standing up to them, they put to the knife everyone wherever they meet resistance, for as long as their fortune lasts. This can be seen in the forms of summons and challenge used by the princes of the East and their successors who still reign—proud, haughty and full of barbarous imperiousness. And in the region where the Portuguese broke into the Indies, they found states with this universal and inviolable law: that any enemy defeated by the King in person, or by his lieutenant, is beyond the reach of ransom or mercy.
1.15.4	Ainsi sur tout il se faut garder qui peut, de tomber entre les mains d'vn Iuge ennemy, victorieux et armé.	So above all, one must beware, if one can, of falling into the hands of a judge who is an enemy, victorious and armed.

I.16 Of the Punishment of Cowardice

De la punition de la couardise

Faults of weakness differ from faults of malice, so cowardice is better punished with shame than with death.

FRENCH

1.16.1 I'OVY autrefois tenir à vn Prince, et tresgrand Capitaine, que pour lascheté de cœur vn soldat ne pouuoit estre condamné à mort: luy estant à table fait recit du proces du Seigneur de Veruins, qui fut condamné à mort pour auoir rendu Bouloigne. A la verité c'est raison qu'on face grande difference entre les fautes qui viennent de nostre foiblesse, et celles qui viennent de nostre malice. Car en celles icy nous nous sommes bandez à nostre escient contre les regles de la raison, que nature a empreintes en nous: et en celles là, il semble que nous puissions appeller à garant cette mesme nature pour nous auoir laissé en telle imperfection et deffaillance.

De maniere que prou de gens ont pensé qu'on ne se pouuoit prendre à nous, que de ce que nous faisons contre nostre conscience: et sur cette regle est en partie fondee l'opinion de ceux qui condamnent les punitions capitales aux heretiques et mescreans: et celle qui establit qu'vn Aduocat et vn Iuge ne puissent estre tenuz de ce que par ignorance ils ont failly en leur charge.

1.16.2 Mais quant à la coüardise, il est certain que la plus commune façon est de la chastier par honte et ignominie. Et tient-on que cette regle a esté premierement mise en vsage par le legislateur Charondas: et qu'auant luy les loix de Grece punissoyent de mort ceux qui s'en estoyent fuis d'vne bataille: là où il ordonna seulement qu'ils fussent par trois iours assis emmy la place publicque, vestus de robe de femme: esperant encores s'en pouuoir seruir, leur ayant fait reuenir le courage par cette honte. *Suffundere malis hominis sanguinem quàm effundere.* Il semble aussi que les loix Romaines punissoyent anciennement de mort, ceux qui auoyent fuy.

Car Ammianus Marcellinus dit que l'Empereur Iulien condemna dix de ses soldats, qui auoyent tourné le dos à vne charge contre les Parthes, à estre degradez, et apres à

ENGLISH

I once heard a prince, and a very great general, maintain that a soldier could not be condemned to death for cowardice; this was at table, when he was told about the trial of the Seigneur de Vervins, who was condemned to death for having surrendered Boulogne. In truth it is right to make a great difference between the faults that come from our weakness and those that come from our malice. For in the latter we have deliberately set ourselves against the rules of reason that nature has imprinted in us; and in the former it seems we can call that same nature to vouch for us, for having left us in such imperfection and frailty.[1]

So that many people have thought we could be blamed only for what we do against our conscience. On this rule is founded in part the opinion of those who condemn capital punishment for heretics and unbelievers, and the opinion that an advocate or a judge cannot be held liable for having failed in his office through ignorance.

But as for cowardice, it is certain that the commonest way is to punish it with shame and disgrace. It is held that this rule was first put into practice by the lawgiver Charondas, and that before him the laws of Greece punished with death those who had fled from a battle; whereas he ordained only that they should sit for three days in the public square dressed in women's clothes, hoping still to make use of them once this shame had brought back their courage. *To bring the blood to a man's cheeks rather than to shed it.* It seems also that in ancient times the Roman laws punished with death those who had fled.[2]

For Ammianus Marcellinus says that the Emperor Julian condemned ten of his soldiers, who had turned their backs in a charge against the Parthi-

1 Jacques de Coucy, Seigneur de Vervins, surrendered Boulogne to the English in 1544 and was executed in 1549.
2 Charondas was a lawgiver of the Greek cities of Sicily; the quotation is from Tertullian.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
	souffrir mort, suyuant, dit-il, les loix anciennes. Toutesfois ailleurs pour vne pareille faute il en condemne d'autres, seulement à se tenir parmy les prisonniers sous l'enseigne du bagage. L'aspre chastiement du peuple Romain contre les soldats eschapez de Cannes, et en cette mesme guerre, contre ceux qui accompaignerent Cn. Fuluius en sa deffaitte, ne vint pas à la mort. Si est-il à craindre que la honte les desespere, et les rende non froids amis seulement, mais ennemis.	ans, to be cashiered and then put to death, following, he says, the ancient laws. Yet elsewhere, for a like fault, he condemns others merely to be kept among the prisoners under the baggage standard. The harsh punishment the Roman people inflicted on the soldiers who escaped from Cannae, and, in that same war, on those who had followed Gnaeus Fulvius in his defeat, did not go as far as death. Yet it is to be feared that shame may drive men to despair and make them not merely cold friends but enemies.[3]
1.16.3	Du temps de nos Peres le Seigneur de Franget, iadis Lieutenant de la compaignie de Monsieur le Mareschal de Chastillon, ayant par Monsieur le Mareschal de Chabannes esté mis Gouuerneur de Fontarabie au lieu de Monsieur du Lude, et l'ayant rendue aux Espagnols, fut condamné à estre degradé de noblesse, et tant luy que sa posterité declaré roturier, taillable et incapable de porter armes: et fut cette rude sentence executee à Lyon. Depuis souffrirent pareille punition tous les Gentils-hommes qui se trouuerent dans Guyse, lors que le Comte de Nansau y entra: et autres encore depuis.	In our fathers' time the Seigneur de Franget, formerly lieutenant of the company of the Marshal de Châtillon, was made governor of Fuenterrabía by the Marshal de Chabannes in place of Monsieur du Lude. Having surrendered it to the Spaniards, he was condemned to be stripped of his nobility, and both he and his descendants were declared commoners, liable to the taille and incapable of bearing arms; this harsh sentence was carried out at Lyon. Later, all the gentlemen who were in Guise when the Count of Nassau entered it suffered the same punishment, and others again since then.[4]
	Toutesfois quand il y auroit vne si grossiere et apparante ou ignorance ou couardise, qu'elle surpassast toutes les ordinaires, ce seroit raison de la prendre pour suffisante preuue de meschanceté et de malice, et de la chastier pour telle.	Yet if there were an ignorance or a cowardice so gross and obvious that it surpassed all ordinary ones, it would be right to take it as sufficient proof of wickedness and malice, and to punish it as such.

3 Julian the Apostate, on his Persian campaign of AD 363; Cannae was Hannibal's great victory over Rome in 216 BC.
4 Fuenterrabía, on the Spanish border, was surrendered in 1523; Guise was taken by Henry of Nassau in 1536. The taille was a tax paid by commoners.

I.17 A Trait of Certain Ambassadors

Vn traict de quelques ambassadeurs
Montaigne asks people about their own trades, and questions why ambassadors once held back unwelcome words from their king.

FRENCH

1.17.1 I'OBSERVE en mes voyages cette practique, pour apprendre tousiours quelque chose, par la communication d'autruy, qui est vne des plus belles escholes qui puisse estre, de ramener tousiours ceux, auec qui ie confere, aux propos des choses qu'ils sçauent le mieux. *Basti al nocchiero ragionar de' venti,*
Al bifolco dei tori, et le sue piaghe
Conti 'l guerrier, conti 'l pastor gli armenti. Car il aduient le plus souuent au contraire, que chacun choisit plustost à discourir du mestier d'vn autre que du sien: estimant que c'est autant de nouuelle reputation acquise: tesmoing le reproche qu'Archidamus feit à Periander, qu'il quittoit la gloire d'vn bon Medecin, pour acquerir celle de mauuais Poëte.

Voyez combien Cesar se desploye largement à nous faire entendre ses inuentions à bastir ponts et engins: et combien au prix il va se serrant, où il parle des offices de sa profession, de sa vaillance, et conduite de sa milice. Ses exploicts le verifient assez Capitaine excellent: il se veut faire cognoistre excellent Ingenieur; qualité aucunement estrangere. Le vieil Dionysius estoit tres grand chef de guerre, comme il conuenoit à sa fortune: mais il se trauailloit à donner principale recommendation de soy, par la poësie: et si n'y sçauoit guere.

Vn homme de vacation iuridique, mené ces iours passez voir vne estude fournie de toutes sortes de liures de son mestier, et de tout autre mestier, n'y trouua nulle occasion de s'entretenir: mais il s'arresta à gloser rudement et magistralement vne barricade logee sur la vis de l'estude, que cent Capitaines et soldats recognoissent tous les iours, sans remerque et sans offense. *Optat ephippia bos piger, optat arare caballus.* Par ce train vous ne faictes iamais rien qui vaille. Ainsin, il faut trauailler de reietter tousiours l'architecte, le peintre, le cordonnier, et ainsi du reste chacun à son gibier.

ENGLISH

In my travels I follow this practice, so as always to learn something from dealing with others (which is one of the finest schools there can be): I always bring the people I talk with back to the things they know best. *Let the sailor be content to talk of winds, the ploughman of his bulls; and let the soldier count his wounds, the shepherd his flocks.* For the opposite most often happens: each man would rather discourse on someone else's trade than his own, thinking it so much new reputation gained—witness the reproach Archidamus made to Periander, that he was giving up the glory of a good physician to acquire that of a bad poet.[1]

See how expansively Caesar spreads himself to make us understand his inventions for building bridges and engines, and how tight-lipped he becomes by comparison when he speaks of the duties of his profession, his valor and the conduct of his army. His exploits prove him an excellent general well enough; he wants to be known as an excellent engineer, a quality somewhat foreign to him. The elder Dionysius was a very great war leader, as befitted his fortune; but he labored to make poetry his chief claim to esteem—and he knew hardly anything about it.

A man of the legal profession, taken the other day to see a study furnished with all sorts of books on his own profession and every other, found nothing there to occupy him; but he stopped to criticize, roughly and magisterially, a barricade set up on the spiral staircase of the study, which a hundred captains and soldiers look over every day without remark or offense. *The lazy ox longs for a saddle; the nag longs to plough.* Going this way, you will never do anything worthwhile. So we must always work

1 An Italian rendering of Propertius, Elegies II.1; Archidamus was a king of Sparta, the anecdote from Plutarch.

FRENCH

ENGLISH

to send the architect, the painter, the cobbler, and the rest, each back to his own game.[2]

1.17.2 Et à ce propos, à la lecture des histoires, qui est le subiet de toutes gens, i'ay accoustumé de considerer qui en sont les escriuains: si ce sont personnes, qui ne facent autre profession que de lettres, i'en apren principalement le stile et le langage: si ce sont Medecins, ie les croy plus volontiers en ce qu'ils nous disent de la temperature de l'air, de la santé et complexion des Princes, des blessures et maladies: si Iurisconsultes, il en faut prendre les controuerses des droicts, les loix, l'establissement des polices, et choses pareilles: si Theologiens, les affaires de l'Eglise, censures Ecclesiastiques, dispences et mariages: si courtisans, les meurs et les cerimonies: si gens de guerre, ce qui est de leur charge, et principalement les deductions des exploits où ils se sont trouuez en personne: si Ambassadeurs, les menees, intelligences, et praticques, et maniere de les conduire.

And on this subject, when reading histories, which is everyone's business, I am in the habit of considering who their writers are. If they are people who profess nothing but letters, I learn chiefly their style and language from them. If physicians, I believe them more readily in what they tell us of the temperature of the air, the health and constitution of princes, wounds and diseases. If jurists, we should take from them disputes about rights, laws, the establishment of governments, and the like. If theologians, the affairs of the Church, ecclesiastical censures, dispensations and marriages. If courtiers, manners and ceremonies. If soldiers, what belongs to their charge, and chiefly their accounts of the exploits in which they took part in person. If ambassadors, intrigues, secret understandings and negotiations, and how to conduct them.

1.17.3 A cette cause, ce que i'eusse passé à vn autre, sans m'y arrester, ie l'ay poisé et remarqué en l'histoire du Seigneur de Langey, tres entendu en telles choses. C'est qu'apres auoir conté ces belles remonstrances de l'Empereur Charles cinquiesme, faictes au consistoire à Rome, present l'Euesque de Macon, et le Seigneur du Velly nos Ambassadeurs, où il auoit meslé plusieurs parolles outrageuses contre nous; et entre autres, que si ses Capitaines et soldats n'estoient d'autre fidelité et suffisance en l'art militaire, que ceux du Roy, tout sur l'heure il s'attacheroit la corde au col, pour luy aller demander misericorde.

For this reason, what I would have passed over in another writer without pausing, I have weighed and noted in the history of the Seigneur de Langey, who was very well versed in such matters. It is this. He recounts those fine harangues of the Emperor Charles V delivered in the consistory at Rome, in the presence of the Bishop of Mâcon and the Seigneur du Velly, our ambassadors, in which he had mixed several insulting words against us; among others, that if his captains and soldiers were no more loyal or competent in the art of war than the King's, he would at once tie a rope around his neck and go and beg him for mercy.[3]

Et de cecy il semble qu'il en creust quelque chose: car deux ou trois fois en sa vie depuis il luy aduint de redire ces mesmes mots. Aussi qu'il défia le Roy de le combatre en chemise auec l'espee et le poignard, dans vn batteau. Ledit Seigneur de Langey suiuant son histoire, adiouste que lesdicts Ambassadeurs faisans vne despesche au Roy de ces choses, luy en dissimulerent la plus grande partie, mesmes luy celerent les deux articles precedens. Or i'ay trouué bien estrange, qu'il fust en la puissance d'vn Ambassadeur de dispenser sur les aduertissemens qu'il doit faire à son maistre, mesme de telle consequence, venant de telle personne, et dits en si grand'assemblee.

And it seems he believed something of this, for two or three times later in his life he happened to repeat these same words. Also, he challenged the King to fight him in his shirt, with sword and dagger, in a boat. The said Seigneur de Langey, continuing his history, adds that when these ambassadors sent the King a dispatch about these things, they concealed the greater part from him, and even hid the two points just mentioned. Now I have found it very strange that it should be in an ambassador's power to pick and choose among the reports he owes his master—especially reports of

2 Horace, Epistles.

3 Guillaume du Bellay, Seigneur de Langey, whose Memoirs Montaigne is citing; Charles V made this speech in Rome in April 1536.

FRENCH

Et m'eust semblé l'office du seruiteur estre, de fidelement representer les choses en leur entier, comme elles sont aduenuës: afin que la liberté d'ordonner, iuger, et choisir demeurast au maistre. Car de luy alterer ou cacher la verité, de peur qu'il ne la preigne autrement qu'il ne doit, et que cela ne le pousse à quelque mauuais party, et ce pendant le laisser ignorant de ses affaires, cela m'eust semblé appartenir à celuy, qui donne la loy, non à celuy qui la reçoit, au curateur et maistre d'eschole, non à celuy qui se doit penser inferieur, comme en authorité, aussi en prudence et bon conseil. Quoy qu'il en soit, ie ne voudroy pas estre seruy de cette façon en mon petit faict.

1.17.4 Nous nous soustrayons si volontiers du commandement sous quelque pretexte, et vsurpons sur la maistrise: chascun aspire si naturellement à la liberté et authorité, qu'au superieur nulle vtilité ne doibt estre si chere, venant de ceux qui le seruent, comme luy doit estre chere leur simple et naifue obeissance. On corrompt l'office du commander, quand on y obeit par discretion, non par subiection. Et P.

Crassus, celuy que les Romains estimerent cinq fois heureux, lors qu'il estoit en Asie Consul, ayant mandé à vn Ingenieur Grec, de luy faire mener le plus grand des deux mas de nauire, qu'il auoit veu à Athenes, pour quelque engin de batterie, qu'il en vouloit faire: celuy cy sous titre de sa science, se donna loy de choisir autrement, et mena le plus petit, et selon la raison de art, le plus commode. Crassus, ayant patiemment ouy ses raisons, luy feit tres-bien donner le fouet: estimant l'interest de la discipline plus que l'interest de l'ouurage.

1.17.5 D'autre part pourtant on pourroit aussi considerer, que cette obeïssance si contreinte, n'appartient qu'aux commandements precis et prefix. Les Ambassadeurs ont vne charge plus libre, qui en plusieurs parties depend souuerainement de leur disposition. Ils n'executent pas simplement, mais forment aussi, et dressent par leur conseil, la volonté du maistre. I'ay veu en mon temps des personnes de commandement, reprins d'auoir plustost obey aux paroles des lettres du Roy, qu'à l'occasion des

ENGLISH

such consequence, coming from such a person, and spoken before so great an assembly.

It would have seemed to me the servant's duty to represent things faithfully and in their entirety, as they happened, so that the freedom to order, judge and choose might remain with the master. For to alter or hide the truth from him, for fear he might take it otherwise than he should and that it might drive him to some bad course, and meanwhile to leave him ignorant of his own affairs—that would have seemed to me to belong to the one who gives the law, not to the one who receives it; to the guardian and the schoolmaster, not to one who must consider himself inferior in prudence and good counsel as well as in authority. However that may be, I would not want to be served that way in my own small affairs.

We so readily slip out from under command on some pretext or other, and encroach on mastery; each man aspires so naturally to liberty and authority, that to a superior no usefulness coming from those who serve him should be as dear as their simple and natural obedience. The office of commanding is corrupted when it is obeyed out of discretion and not out of subjection. And Publius

Crassus—the man the Romans esteemed five times fortunate—when he was consul in Asia, ordered a Greek engineer to bring him the larger of two ship's masts he had seen at Athens, for some battering engine he wanted to make from it. The engineer, on the strength of his expertise, took it upon himself to choose otherwise and brought the smaller one, which by the reasoning of his art was the more suitable. Crassus, having patiently heard his reasons, had him soundly flogged, valuing the interest of discipline above the interest of the work.[4]

On the other hand, however, one might also consider that such strict obedience applies only to precise and definite commands. Ambassadors have a freer charge, which in many respects depends entirely on their own judgment. They do not simply carry out the master's will; they also shape and direct it by their counsel. I have seen in my time persons in command reproached for having obeyed the words of the King's letters rather

4 Publius Licinius Crassus Mucianus, consul in 131 BC; the story is told by Aulus Gellius.

FRENCH

affaires qui estoient pres d'eux. Les hommes d'entendement accusent encore auiourd'huy, l'vsage des Roys de Perse, de tailler les morceaux si courts à leurs agents et lieutenans, qu'aux moindres choses ils eussent à recourir à leur ordonnance.

Ce delay, en vne si longue estendue de domination, ayant souuent apporté des notables dommages à leurs affaires. Et Crassus, escriuant à vn homme du mestier, et luy donnant aduis de l'vsage auquel il destinoit ce mas, sembloit-il pas entrer en conference de sa deliberation, et le conuier à interposer son decret?

ENGLISH

than the circumstances of the affairs at hand. Men of understanding still blame today the practice of the kings of Persia of cutting their agents' and lieutenants' portions so small that in the least matters they had to have recourse to their orders.

This delay, over so vast an extent of dominion, often did their affairs notable harm. And Crassus, writing to a man of the trade and telling him the use for which he intended this mast—did he not seem to be entering into consultation with him about his decision, and inviting him to put in his own judgment?

I.18 Of Fear

De la peur

Fear, the strangest of passions, breeds delusions, stampedes armies, and can even produce reckless courage; Montaigne fears fear most.

FRENCH

ENGLISH

1.18.1 OBSTVPVI, *steterúntque comæ, et vox faucibus hæsit.* Ie ne suis pas bon naturaliste (qu'ils disent) et ne sçai guiere par quels ressors la peur agit en nous, mais tant y a que c'est vne estrange passion: et disent les Medecins qu'il n'en est aucune, qui emporte plustost nostre iugement hors de sa deuë assiete. De vray, i'ay veu beaucoup de gens deuenus insensez de peur: et au plus rassis il est certain pendant que son accés dure, qu'elle engendre de terribles esblouissemens.

I stood aghast; my hair stood on end, and my voice stuck in my throat. I am not a good naturalist (as they call it), and I hardly know by what springs fear works in us; but at any rate it is a strange passion, and the physicians say there is none that more quickly carries our judgment out of its proper seat. Indeed, I have seen many people driven out of their minds by fear; and even in the most level-headed, it is certain that while the fit lasts it produces terrible delusions.[1]

1.18.2 Ie laisse à part le vulgaire, à qui elle represente tantost les bisayeulx sortis du tombeau enueloppez en leur suaire, tantost des Loups-garoups, des Lutins, et des Chimeres. Mais parmy les soldats mesme, où elle deuroit trouuer moins de place, combien de fois a elle changé vn troupeau de brebis en esquadron de corselets? des roseaux et des cannes en gens-darmes et lanciers? nos amis en nos ennemis? et la croix blanche à la rouge?

I leave aside the common people, to whom it shows now their great-grandfathers risen from the tomb wrapped in their shrouds, now werewolves, goblins and chimeras. But even among soldiers, where it ought to find less room, how many times has it turned a flock of sheep into a squadron of armored men? Reeds and canes into men-at-arms and lancers? Our friends into our enemies? The white cross into the red?[2]

Lors que Monsieur de Bourbon print Rome, vn port'enseigne, qui estoit à la garde du bourg sainct Pierre, fut saisi de tel effroy à la premiere alarme, que par le trou d'vne ruine il se ietta, l'enseigne au poing, hors la ville droit aux ennemis, pensant tirer vers le dedans de la ville; et à peine en fin voyant la troupe de Monsieur de Bourbon se renger pour le soustenir, estimant que ce fust vne sortie que ceux de la ville fissent, il se recogneut, et tournant teste r'entra par ce mesme trou, par lequel il estoit sorty, plus de trois cens pas auant en la campaigne.

When Monsieur de Bourbon took Rome, a standard-bearer who was on guard at the Borgo San Pietro was seized with such terror at the first alarm that he threw himself out of the city, flag in hand, through a gap in a ruin, straight toward the enemy, thinking he was heading into the city. Only at last, seeing Monsieur de Bourbon's troops forming up to meet him, and thinking it was a sally from the city, did he come to his senses; and turning about, he went back in through the same hole by which he had gone out, having advanced more than three hundred paces into the open field.[3]

Il n'en aduint pas du tout si heureusement à l'enseigne du Capitaine Iulle, lors que Sainct Paul fut pris sur nous par le Comte de Bures et Monsieur du Reu. Car estant si fort

Things did not turn out nearly so happily for Captain Julle's standard-bearer when Saint-Pol was taken from us by the Count of Bures and Monsieur

1 Virgil, Aeneid.
2 The white cross was the badge of French troops, the red cross that of the Emperor's.
3 Charles, Duke of Bourbon, led the imperial army that sacked Rome in 1527.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
	esperdu de frayeur, que de se ietter à tout son enseigne hors de la ville, par vne canonniere, il fut mis en pieces par les assaillans. Et au mesme siege, fut memorable la peur qui serra, saisit, et glaça si fort le cœur d'vn Gentilhomme, qu'il en tomba roide mort par terre à la bresche, sans aucune blessure. Pareille rage pousse par fois toute vne multitude. En l'vne des rencontres de Germanicus contre les Allemans, deux grosses trouppes prindrent d'effroy deux routes opposites, l'vne fuyoit d'où l'autre partoit.	du Reu. He was so beside himself with fright that he threw himself, flag and all, out of the town through a gunport, and was cut to pieces by the attackers. And at the same siege, memorable was the fear that so gripped, seized and froze the heart of a gentleman that he fell stone dead on the ground at the breach, without a single wound. A like frenzy sometimes drives a whole multitude. In one of Germanicus' encounters with the Germans, two large bodies of troops in their terror took two opposite routes: one fled toward the place the other was leaving.[4]
1.18.3	Tantost elle nous donne des aisles aux talons, comme aux deux premiers: tantost elle nous cloüe les pieds, et les entraue: comme on lit de l'Empereur Theophile, lequel en vne bataille qu'il perdit contre les Agarenes, deuint si estonné et si transi, qu'il ne pouuoit prendre party de s'enfuyr: *adeò pauor etiam auxilia formidat*: iusques à ce que Manuel l'vn des principaux chefs de son armee, l'ayant tirassé et secoüé, comme pour l'esueiller d'vn profond somme, luy dit: Si vous ne me suiuez ie vous tueray: car il vaut mieux que vous perdiez la vie, que si estant prisonnier vous veniez à perdre l'Empire.	Sometimes fear puts wings on our heels, as it did for the first two. Sometimes it nails our feet to the ground and shackles them. So we read of the Emperor Theophilus: in a battle he lost against the Agarenes, he was so stunned and so paralyzed that he could not bring himself to flee. *So much does fear dread even help.* At last Manuel, one of the chief commanders of his army, tugged at him and shook him as if to wake him from a deep sleep, and said: "If you do not follow me, I will kill you. It is better for you to lose your life than to be taken prisoner and lose the Empire."[5]
1.18.4	Lors exprime elle sa derniere force, quand pour son seruice elle nous reiette à la vaillance, qu'elle a soustraitte à nostre deuoir et à nostre honneur. En la premiere iuste bataille que les Romains perdirent contre Hannibal, sous le Consul Sempronius, vne troupe de bien dix mille hommes de pied, qui print l'espouuante, ne voyant ailleurs par où faire passage à sa lascheté, s'alla ietter au trauers le gros des ennemis: lequel elle perça d'un merueilleux effort, auec grand meurtre de Carthaginois: achetant vne honteuse fuite, au mesme prix qu'elle eust eu vne glorieuse victoire.	Fear shows its utmost strength when, for its own purposes, it throws us back on the valor it has stolen from our duty and our honor. In the first pitched battle the Romans lost to Hannibal, under the consul Sempronius, a body of a good ten thousand foot soldiers was seized with panic. Seeing no other way out for its cowardice, it hurled itself straight through the thick of the enemy and broke through with marvelous effort, with a great slaughter of Carthaginians. It bought a shameful flight at the same price it would have paid for a glorious victory.[6]
1.18.5	C'est ce dequoy i'ay le plus de peur que la peur. Aussi surmonte elle en aigreur tous autres accidents. Quelle affection peut estre plus aspre et plus iuste, que celle des amis de Pompeius, qui estoient en son nauire, spectateurs de cet horrible massacre? Si est-ce que la peur des voiles Egyptiennes, qui commençoient à les approcher, l'estouffa de maniere, qu'on a remerqué, qu'ils ne	The thing I am most afraid of is fear. And indeed it surpasses all other afflictions in sharpness. What feeling could be keener and more justified than that of Pompey's friends, who were on his ship and watched that horrible massacre? And yet fear of the Egyptian sails, which were beginning to close in on them, so smothered it that, as has been

4 Saint-Pol, in Artois, was taken by imperial troops in 1537; the Germanicus episode comes from Tacitus.
5 Theophilus was Byzantine emperor (AD 829–842); "Agarenes" (sons of Hagar) was a Byzantine name for the Arabs. The Latin is from Quintus Curtius, History of Alexander.
6 The battle of the Trebia, 218 BC.

FRENCH

s'amuserent qu'à haster les mariniers de diligenter, et de se sauuer à coups d'auiron; iusques à ce qu'arriuez à Tyr, libres de crainte, ils eurent loy de tourner leur pensee à la perte qu'ils venoient de faire, et lascher la bride aux lamentations et aux larmes, que cette autre plus forte passion auoit suspendües.

Tum pauor sapientiam omnem mihi ex animo expectorat. Ceux qui auront esté bien frottés en quelque estour de guerre, tous blessez encor et ensanglantez, on les rameine bien le lendemain à la charge. Mais ceux qui ont conçeu quelque bonne peur des ennemis, vous ne les leur feriez pas seulement regarder en face. Ceux qui sont en pressante crainte de perdre leur bien, d'estre exilez, d'estre subiuguez, viuent en continuelle angoisse, en perdent le boire, le manger, et le repos. Là où les pauures, les bannis, les serfs, viuent souuent aussi ioyeusement que les autres.

Et tant de gens, qui de l'impatience des pointures de la peur, se sont pendus, noyez, et precipitez, nous ont bien apprins qu'elle est encores plus importune et plus insupportable que la mort.

1.18.6 Les Grecs en recognoissent vne autre espece, qui est outre l'erreur de nostre discours: venant, disent-ils, sans cause apparente, et d'vne impulsion celeste. Des peuples entiers s'en voyent souuent frappez, et des armees entieres. Telle fut celle qui apporta à Carthage vne merueilleuse desolation. On n'y oyoit que cris et voix effrayees: on voyoit les habitans sortir de leurs maisons, comme à l'alarme; et se charger, blesser et entretuer les vns les autres, comme si ce fussent ennemis, qui vinssent à occuper leur ville. Tout y estoit en desordre, et en fureur: iusques à ce que par oraisons et sacrifices, ils eussent appaisé l'ire des dieux. Ils nomment cela terreurs Paniques.

ENGLISH

noted, they did nothing but urge the sailors to hurry and row for their lives. Only when they reached Tyre, free from fear, were they at leisure to turn their thoughts to the loss they had just suffered and give free rein to the lamentations and tears that this other, stronger passion had held in check.[7]

Then fear drives all wisdom out of my breast. Men who have been soundly thrashed in some fight, still all wounded and bloody, can easily be brought back to the charge the next day. But those who have conceived a good fear of the enemy—you could not make them so much as look him in the face. Those who are in pressing fear of losing their property, of being exiled, of being subjugated, live in continual anguish and lose their appetite for food and drink, and their rest. Whereas the poor, the banished and the serfs often live as cheerfully as anyone else.[8]

And so many people who, unable to bear the stings of fear, have hanged themselves, drowned themselves or thrown themselves from a height, have taught us well that it is even more oppressive and unbearable than death.

The Greeks recognize another kind of fear, which lies outside any error of our reasoning: it comes, they say, without apparent cause and from a heavenly impulse. Whole peoples are often seen struck by it, and whole armies. Such was the fear that brought marvelous desolation upon Carthage. Nothing was heard there but cries and terrified voices. The inhabitants were seen rushing out of their houses as at an alarm, attacking, wounding and killing one another as if they were enemies come to occupy their city. All was disorder and frenzy, until they had appeased the wrath of the gods with prayers and sacrifices. They call these Panic terrors.[9]

7 Pompey was murdered on landing in Egypt in 48 BC, in sight of his wife and friends on board his ship.
8 A line of Ennius, quoted by Cicero in the Tusculan Disputations.
9 Named after the god Pan, who was believed to send sudden, groundless terror.

I.19 That We Should Not Judge of Our Happiness Until After Our Death

Qu'il ne faut iuger de nostre heur, qu'après la mort
Following Solon, no one should be called happy before death, for only the last act shows what a soul is truly worth.

FRENCH

1.19.1 *Scilicet vltima semper*
Expectanda dies homini est, dicique beatus
Ante obitum nemo supremáque funera debet.

1.19.2 Les enfans sçauent le conte du Roy Crœsus à ce propos: lequel ayant esté pris par Cyrus, et condamné à la mort, sur le point de l'execution, il s'escria, O Solon, Solon: cela rapporté à Cyrus, et s'estant enquis que c'estoit à dire, il luy fit entendre, qu'il verifioit lors à ses despends l'aduertissement qu'autrefois luy auoit donné Solon: que les hommes, quelque beau visage que fortune leur face, ne se peuuent appeller heureux, iusques à ce qu'on leur ayt veu passer le dernier iour de leur vie, pour l'incertitude et varieté des choses humaines, qui d'vn bien leger mouuement se changent d'vn estat en autre tout diuers.

Et pourtant Agesilaus, à quelqu'vn qui disoit heureux le Roy de Perse, de ce qu'il estoit venu fort ieune à vn si puissant estat: Ouy-mais, dit-il, Priam en tel aage ne fut pas malheureux. Tantost des Roys de Macedoine, successeurs de ce grand Alexandre, il s'en faict des menuysiers et greffiers à Rome: des tyrans de Sicile, des pedants à Corinthe: d'vn conquerant de la moitié du monde, et Empereur de tant d'armees, il s'en faict vn miserable suppliant des belitres officiers d'vn Roy d'Ægypte: tant cousta à ce grand Pompeius la prolongation de cinq ou six mois de vie.

Et du temps de nos Peres ce Ludouic Sforce dixiesme Duc de Milan, soubs qui auoit si long temps branslé toute l'Italie, on l'a veu mourir prisonnier à Loches: mais apres y auoir vescu dix ans, qui est le pis de son marché. La plus belle Royne, vefue du plus grand Roy de la Chrestienté,

ENGLISH

Truly, a man must always await
his last day, and no one ought to be called happy
before his death and his final funeral rites.[1]

Children know the story of King Croesus on this subject. Taken prisoner by Cyrus and condemned to death, he cried out at the moment of execution: "O Solon, Solon!" When this was reported to Cyrus and he asked what it meant, Croesus explained that he was now proving, at his own expense, the warning Solon had once given him: that men, however fair a face Fortune shows them, cannot call themselves happy until they have been seen to pass the last day of their lives, because of the uncertainty and changeability of human affairs, which with a very slight movement shift from one state to another quite different.[2]

And so Agesilaus, when someone called the King of Persia happy for having come so young to so mighty a throne, said: "Yes, but Priam at that age was not unhappy." We see kings of Macedonia, successors of the great Alexander, turned into carpenters and clerks in Rome; tyrants of Sicily into schoolmasters at Corinth; the conqueror of half the world and commander of so many armies into a wretched suppliant of the beggarly officers of a king of Egypt. That is what five or six more months of life cost the great Pompey.[3]

And in our fathers' time, Ludovico Sforza, tenth Duke of Milan, under whom all Italy had so long been shaken, was seen to die a prisoner at Loches —but only after living there ten years, which was the worst of his bargain. Has not the most beauti-

1 Ovid, Metamorphoses.
2 Croesus, king of Lydia, was defeated by Cyrus of Persia; Solon was the Athenian lawgiver. The story is in Herodotus.
3 Agesilaus was a king of Sparta. The son of Perseus of Macedon ended as a craftsman and clerk at Rome, and Dionysius the Younger of Syracuse kept a school at Corinth.

FRENCH

vient elle pas de mourir par la main d'vn Bourreau? indigne et barbare cruauté! Et mille tels exemples. Car il semble que comme les orages et tempestes se piquent contre l'orgueil et hautaineté de nos bastimens, il y ayt aussi là haut des esprits enuieux des grandeurs de ça bas.

Vsque adeò res humanas vis abdita quædam
Obterit, et pulchros fasces sæuásque secures
Proculcare, ac ludibrio sibi habere videtur. Et semble que la fortune quelquefois guette à point nommé le dernier iour de nostre vie, pour montrer sa puissance, de renuerser en vn moment ce qu'elle auoit basty en longues annees; et nous fait crier apres Laberius, *Nimirum hac die vna plus vixi mihi, quàm viuendum fuit.*

1.19.3 Ainsi se peut prendre auec raison, ce bon aduis de Solon. Mais d'autant que c'est vn Philosophe, à l'endroit desquels les faueurs et disgraces de la fortune ne tiennent rang, ny d'heur ny de malheur, et sont les grandeurs, et puissances, accidens de qualité à peu pres indifferente, ie trouue vray-semblable, qu'il ayt regardé plus auant; et voulu dire que ce mesme bon-heur de nostre vie, qui dépend de la tranquillité et contentement d'vn esprit bien né, et de la resolution et asseurance d'vne ame reglee ne se doiue iamais attribuer à l'homme, qu'on ne luy ayt veu ioüer le dernier acte de sa comedie: et sans doute le plus difficile.

1.19.4 En tout le reste il y peut auoir du masque: ou ces beaux discours de la Philosophie ne sont en nous que par contenance, ou les accidens ne nous essayant pas iusques au vif, nous donnent loisir de maintenir tousiours nostre visage rassis. Mais à ce dernier rolle de la mort et de nous, il n'y a plus que faindre, il faut parler François; il faut montrer ce qu'il y a de bon et de net dans le fond du pot. *Nam veræ voces tum demum pectore ab imo / Eiiciuntur, et eripitur persona, manet res.* Voyla pourquoy se doiuent à ce dernier traict toucher et esprouuer toutes les autres actions de nostre vie.

ENGLISH

ful queen, widow of the greatest king in Christendom, just died at the hands of an executioner? Unworthy and barbarous cruelty! And a thousand such examples. For it seems that, just as storms and tempests take offense at the pride and loftiness of our buildings, there are also spirits up above who are envious of greatness here below.[4]

So true is it that some hidden power crushes human affairs
and seems to trample on the splendid rods and cruel axes
and make sport of them. And it seems that Fortune sometimes lies in wait for precisely the last day of our lives, to show her power to overturn in a moment what she had built over long years; and she makes us cry out with Laberius: *Clearly, on this one day I have lived one day longer than I should have.*[5]

So Solon's good advice may reasonably be taken in this way. But he is a philosopher, and for philosophers the favors and disgraces of Fortune rank as neither good fortune nor bad, and greatness and power are accidents of almost indifferent quality. So I find it likely that he looked further, and meant that this same happiness of our life, which depends on the tranquility and contentment of a well-born spirit and on the resolution and assurance of a well-ordered soul, should never be attributed to a man until he has been seen to play the last act of his play—and doubtless the hardest.

In everything else there may be some mask. Either those fine reasonings of philosophy are only a pose with us, or our misfortunes, not testing us to the quick, give us leisure to keep our faces always composed. But in this last scene, between death and ourselves, there is no more pretending. We must speak plain French; we must show what is good and clean at the bottom of the pot. *For only then are true words drawn from the depths of the heart; / the mask is torn away, the reality remains.* That is why all the other actions of our life must be tried and tested against this final stroke.

4 Ludovico Sforza was captured by Louis XII in 1500 and died at Loches in 1508. Mary Queen of Scots, widow of Francis II of France, was beheaded in 1587.
5 The verses are from Lucretius, On the Nature of Things. Decimus Laberius, a Roman writer of mimes, said this when Caesar forced him to perform on stage.

FRENCH

C'est le maistre iour, c'est le iour iuge de tous les autres: c'est le iour, dict vn ancien, qui doit iuger de toutes mes années passées. Ie remets à la mort l'essay du fruict de mes estudes. Nous verrons là si mes discours me partent de la bouche, ou du cœur.

1.19.5 I'ay veu plusieurs donner par leur mort reputation en bien ou en mal, à toute leur vie. Scipion beau-pere de Pompeius rabilla en bien mourant la mauuaise opinion qu'on auoit eu de luy iusques alors. Epaminondas interrogé lequel des trois il estimoit le plus, ou Chabrias, ou Iphicrates, ou soy-mesme: Il nous faut voir mourir, fit-il, auant que d'en pouuoir resoudre. De vray on desroberoit beaucoup à celuy là, qui le poiseroit sans l'honneur et grandeur de sa fin. Dieu l'a voulu comme il luy a pleu: mais en mon temps trois les plus execrables personnes, que ie cogneusse en toute abomination de vie, et les plus infames, ont eu des morts reglées, et en toute circonstance composées iusques à la perfection.

Il est des morts braues et fortunées. Ie luy ay veu trancher le fil d'vn progrez de merueilleux auancement, et dans la fleur de son croist, à quelqu'vn, d'vne fin si pompeuse, qu'à mon aduis ses ambitieux et courageux desseins n'auoient rien de si hault que fut leur interruption. Il arriua sans y aller, où il pretendoit, plus grandement et glorieusement, que ne portoit son desir et esperance. Et deuança par sa cheute, le pouuoir et le nom, où il aspiroit par sa course. Au iugement de la vie d'autruy, ie regarde tousiours comment s'en est porté le bout, et des principaux estudes de la mienne, c'est qu'il se porte bien, c'est à dire quietement et sourdement.

ENGLISH

It is the master day, the day that judges all the others. It is the day, says one of the ancients, that must judge all my past years. I leave it to death to test the fruit of my studies. We shall see then whether my reasonings come from my mouth or from my heart.[6]

I have seen many men give their whole lives a good or a bad reputation by their death. Scipio, Pompey's father-in-law, by dying well repaired the poor opinion people had had of him until then. Epaminondas, asked which of three men he esteemed most, Chabrias, Iphicrates or himself, said: "You must see us die before you can decide." Indeed, we would rob that man of a great deal if we weighed him without the honor and greatness of his end. God has willed it as he pleased; but in my time three of the most execrable and infamous people I have known, steeped in every abomination of life, have had well-ordered deaths, composed to perfection in every circumstance.[7]

There are gallant and fortunate deaths. I have seen death cut the thread of one man's marvelous rise, in the very flower of his growth, with so splendid an end that in my opinion his ambitious and courageous designs had nothing so lofty about them as their interruption. Without going there, he arrived where he was aiming, more grandly and gloriously than his desire and hope had reached. By his fall he outstripped the power and the name he was aspiring to in his course. In judging another man's life, I always look at how its end went; and one of my main concerns for my own is that its end go well—that is to say, quietly and without fuss.

6 Seneca, Letters to Lucilius.
7 Metellus Scipio killed himself after his defeat at Thapsus in 46 BC; Chabrias and Iphicrates were Athenian generals.

I.20 That to Philosophize Is to Learn to Die

Que philosopher, c'est apprendre à mourir
Philosophy teaches us not to fear death; Montaigne urges keeping death always in mind so it loses its power to terrify.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
1.20.1	CICERO dit que Philosopher ce n'est autre chose que s'aprester à la mort. C'est d'autant que l'estude et la contemplation retirent aucunement nostre ame hors de nous, et l'embesongnent à part du corps, qui est quelque apprentissage et ressemblance de la mort: ou bien, c'est que toute la sagesse et discours du monde se resoult en fin à ce point, de nous apprendre à ne craindre point à mourir. De vray, ou la raison se mocque, ou elle ne doit viser qu'à nostre contentement, et tout son trauail tendre en somme à nous faire bien viure, et à nostre aise, comme dict la Sainte Escriture.	Cicero says that to philosophize is nothing else than to prepare oneself for death. This is because study and contemplation draw our soul somewhat outside us and keep it busy apart from the body, which is a kind of apprenticeship and likeness of death. Or else it is because all the wisdom and reasoning in the world come down in the end to this point: to teach us not to be afraid to die. Indeed, either reason is mocking us, or it must aim solely at our contentment, and all its labor must tend, in sum, to make us live well and at our ease, as Holy Scripture says.[1]
	Toutes les opinions du monde en sont là, que le plaisir est nostre but, quoy qu'elles en prennent diuers moyens; autrement on les chasseroit d'arriuée. Car qui escouteroit celuy, qui pour sa fin establiroit nostre peine et mesaise? Les dissentions des sectes Philosophiques en ce cas, sont verbales. *Transcurramus solertissimas nugas.* Il y a plus d'opiniastreté et de picoterie, qu'il n'appartient à vne si saincte profession. Mais quelque personnage que l'homme entrepreigne, il iouë tousiours le sien parmy.	All the opinions in the world agree on this—that pleasure is our goal—though they take different means to it; otherwise they would be thrown out at once. For who would listen to a man who set up our pain and discomfort as his end? The disagreements of the philosophical sects on this point are merely verbal. *Let us skip over these most ingenious trifles.* There is more stubbornness and bickering than befits so holy a calling. But whatever role a man takes on, he always plays his own along with it.[2]
1.20.2	Quoy qu'ils dient, en la vertu mesme, le dernier but de nostre visee, c'est la volupté. Il me plaist de battre leurs oreilles de ce mot, qui leur est si fort à contrecœur: et s'il signifie quelque supreme plaisir, et excessif contentement, il est mieux deu à l'assistance de la vertu, qu'à nulle autre assistance. Cette volupté pour estre plus gaillarde, nerueuse, robuste, virile, n'en est que plus serieusement voluptueuse. Et luy deuions donner le nom du plaisir, plus fauorable, plus doux et naturel: non celuy de la vigueur, duquel nous l'auons denommee. Cette autre volupté plus basse, si elle meritoit ce beau nom: ce deuoit estre en concurrence, non par priuilege. Ie la	Whatever they say, even in virtue the ultimate goal we aim at is pleasure. I like to din this word into their ears, since they find it so distasteful. And if it means some supreme delight and surpassing contentment, it is owed more to the help of virtue than to any other help. This pleasure, for being more lusty, sinewy, robust and manly, is only the more seriously pleasurable. We ought to have given virtue the name of pleasure, a kindlier, sweeter and more natural name, not that of vigor, from which we have named it. That other, baser pleasure, if it deserved this fine name, should

1 Cicero, Tusculan Disputations; the scriptural allusion is to Ecclesiastes 3:12.
2 Seneca, Letters to Lucilius.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
	trouue moins pure d'incommoditez et de trauerses, que n'est la vertu.	have had it in competition, not by privilege. I find it less free of drawbacks and obstacles than virtue is.[3]
	Outre que son goust est plus momentanee, fluide et caduque, elle a ses veilles, ses ieusnes, et ses trauaux, et la sueur et le sang. Et en outre particulierement, ses passions trenchantes de tant de sortes; et à son costé vne satieté si lourde, qu'elle equipolle à penitence. Nous auons grand tort d'estimer que ses incommoditez luy seruent d'aiguillon et de condiment à sa douceur, comme en nature le contraire se viuifie par son contraire: et de dire, quand nous venons à la vertu, que pareilles suittes et difficultez l'accablent, la rendent austere et inacessible.	Besides the fact that its savor is more fleeting, fluid and perishable, it has its vigils, its fasts and its labors, its sweat and its blood; and in particular, moreover, its sharp passions of so many kinds, and at its side a satiety so heavy that it amounts to a penance. We are very wrong to think that its drawbacks serve it as a spur and a seasoning to its sweetness, as in nature one contrary is quickened by its contrary—and then to say, when we come to virtue, that similar consequences and difficulties overwhelm it and make it austere and inaccessible.
1.20.3	Là où beaucoup plus proprement qu'à la volupté, elles anoblissent, aiguisent, et rehaussent le plaisir diuin et parfaict, qu'elle nous moienne. Celuy la est certes bien indigne de son accointance, qui contrepoise son coust, à son fruict: et n'en cognoist ny les graces ny l'vsage. Ceux qui nous vont instruisant, que sa queste est scabreuse et laborieuse, sa iouïssance agréable: que nous disent-ils par là, sinon qu'elle est tousiours desagreable? Car quel moien humain arriua iamais à sa iouïssance? Les plus parfaits se sont bien contentez d'y aspirer, et de l'approcher, sans la posseder. Mais ils se trompent; veu que de tous les plaisirs que nous cognoissons, la poursuite mesme en est plaisante.	On the contrary: far more fittingly than with pleasure, they ennoble, sharpen and heighten the divine and perfect pleasure that virtue procures for us. A man is certainly unworthy of its acquaintance if he weighs its cost against its fruit; he knows neither its graces nor its use. Those who keep telling us that the quest for it is rugged and laborious, and the enjoyment of it pleasant—what are they telling us, except that it is always unpleasant? For what human means ever reached the enjoyment of it? The most perfect men have been content to aspire to it and to approach it, without possessing it. But they are wrong, seeing that of all the pleasures we know, the very pursuit is pleasant.
	L'entreprise se sent de la qualité de la chose qu'elle regarde: car c'est vne bonne portion de l'effect, et consubstancielle. L'heur et la beatitude qui reluit en la vertu, remplit toutes ses appartenances et auenues, iusques à la premiere entree et extreme barriere.	An undertaking takes on the quality of the thing it aims at, for it is a good part of the effect and of one substance with it. The happiness and bliss that shine in virtue fill all its approaches and avenues, right up to the first entrance and the outermost barrier.
1.20.4	Or des principaux bienfaicts de la vertu, c'est le mepris de la mort, moyen qui fournit nostre vie d'vne molle tranquillité, et nous en donne le goust pur et amiable: sans qui toute autre volupté est esteinte. Voyla pourquoy toutes les regles se rencontrent et conuiennent à cet article.	Now one of the chief benefits of virtue is contempt for death. It is the means that furnishes our life with a gentle tranquility and gives us a pure and pleasant taste of it; without it, all other pleasure is snuffed out. That is why all the rules meet and agree on this article.
	Et combien qu'elles nous conduisent aussi toutes d'vn commun accord à mespriser la douleur, la pauureté, et autres accidens, à quoy la vie humaine est subiecte, ce n'est pas d'vn pareil soing: tant par ce que ces accidens	And although they also all lead us with one accord to despise pain, poverty and the other accidents to which human life is subject, they do not do so with equal care. This is partly because those acci-

3 The Latin virtus derives from vir, "man", and was linked with vis, "force".

FRENCH

ne sont pas de telle necessité, la pluspart des hommes passent leur vie sans gouster de la pauureté, et tels encore sans sentiment de douleur et de maladie, comme Xenophilus le Musicien, qui vescut cent et six ans d'vne entiere santé: qu'aussi d'autant qu'au pis aller, la mort peut mettre fin, quand il nous plaira, et coupper broche à tous autres inconuenients. Mais quant à la mort, elle est ineuitable.

Omnes eodem cogimur, omnium
Versatur vrna, serius ocius
Sors exitura, et nos in æter-
Num exitium impositura cymbæ. Et par consequent, si elle nous faict peur, c'est vn subiect continuel de tourment, et qui ne se peut aucunement soulager. Il n'est lieu d'où elle ne nous vienne. Nous pouuons tourner sans cesse la teste çà et là, comme en pays suspect: *quæ quasi saxum Tantalo semper impendet*. Nos parlemens renuoyent souuent executer les criminels au lieu où le crime est commis: durant le chemin, promenez les par de belles maisons, faictes leur tant de bonne chere, qu'il vous plaira, *non Siculæ dapes*
Dulcem elaborabunt saporem,
Non auium, cytharæque cantus
Somnum reducent. Pensez vous qu'ils s'en puissent resiouir?

et que la finale intention de leur voyage leur estant ordinairement deuant les yeux, ne leur ayt alteré et affadi le goust à toutes ces commoditez? *Audit iter, numerátque dies, spatiòque viarum / Metitur vitam, torquetur peste futura.*

1.20.5 Le but de nostre carriere c'est la mort, c'est l'obiect necessaire de nostre visee: si elle nous effraye, comme est-il possible d'aller vn pas auant sans fiebure? Le remede du vulgaire c'est de n'y penser pas. Mais de quelle brutale stupidité luy peut venir vn si grossier aueuglement? Il luy faut faire brider l'asne par la queuë, *Qui capite ipse suo instituit vestigia retro.* Ce n'est pas de merueille s'il est si souuent pris au piege. On fait peur à nos gens seulement de nommer la mort, et la pluspart s'en seignent, comme du nom du diable. Et par-ce qu'il s'en faict mention aux testamens, ne vous attendez pas qu'ils y mettent la main, que le Medecin ne leur ayt donné l'extreme sentence.

ENGLISH

dents are not so inevitable—most men spend their lives without tasting poverty, and some even without feeling pain or sickness, like Xenophilus the musician, who lived a hundred and six years in perfect health—and partly because, at worst, death can put an end to them whenever we please and cut short all our other troubles. But death itself is inevitable.[4]

We are all driven to the same place; the lot of each
is tossed in the urn, and sooner or later
it will come out and put us aboard
the boat bound for eternal ruin. And consequently, if death frightens us, it is a continual source of torment, and one that cannot be relieved in any way. There is no place from which it may not come at us. We can keep turning our heads this way and that, as in hostile country: *it hangs over us always, like the rock over Tantalus.* Our parlements often send criminals back to be executed at the place where the crime was committed. On the way, take them past fine houses, give them as good a time as you please—*no Sicilian feasts*
will produce a sweet savor for them,
nor will the song of birds and the lyre
bring back their sleep. Do you think they can enjoy it?[5]

Do you not think that the final purpose of their journey, constantly before their eyes, has spoiled and dulled their taste for all these comforts? *He asks about the road, counts the days, measures his life by the length / of the way, tormented by the doom to come.*[6]

The goal of our course is death; it is the necessary object of our aim. If it frightens us, how is it possible to take one step forward without a fever? The remedy of ordinary people is not to think about it. But from what brutish stupidity can so gross a blindness come to them? They must be made to bridle the donkey by the tail, *like one who has taken it into his head to walk backward.* No wonder they are so often caught in the trap. You frighten our people merely by naming death, and most of them cross themselves as at the name of the devil. And because it is mentioned in wills, don't expect them

4 Xenophilus was a Pythagorean musician of the 4th century BC, cited by Pliny and Valerius Maximus.
5 The verses are from Horace, Odes; the prose line is from Cicero, On Ends. The parlements were the sovereign law courts of France.
6 Claudian, Against Rufinus.

FRENCH

ENGLISH

to put their hand to one until the doctor has pronounced the final sentence.[7]

Et Dieu sçait lors entre la douleur et la frayeur, de quel bon iugement ils vous le patissent.

And God knows, between pain and fright, with what sound judgment they knead it together for you.

1.20.6 Par ce que cette syllabe frappoit trop rudement leurs oreilles, et que cette voix leur sembloit malencontreuse, les Romains auoient apris de l'amollir ou l'estendre en perifrazes. Au lieu de dire, il est mort; il a cessé de viure, disent-ils, il a vescu. Pourueu que ce soit vie, soit elle passee, ils se consolent. Nous en auons emprunté, nostre feu Maistre-Iehan. A l'aduenture est-ce, que comme on dict, le terme vaut l'argent. Ie nasquis entre vnze heures et midi le dernier iour de Feburier, mil cinq cens trente trois: comme nous contons à cette heure, commençant l'an en Ianuier. Il n'y a iustement que quinze iours que i'ay franchy trente neuf ans, il m'en faut pour le moins encore autant.

Because this syllable struck their ears too harshly and the word seemed ill-omened to them, the Romans had learned to soften it or stretch it out into circumlocutions. Instead of saying "he is dead," they say "he has ceased to live," "he has lived." As long as it is life, even life past, they take comfort. From this we have borrowed our "the late Master John." Perhaps, as the saying goes, a delay is as good as cash. I was born between eleven o'clock and noon on the last day of February, 1533, by our present reckoning, which begins the year in January. It is just two weeks since I passed thirty-nine; I need at least as many years again.[8]

Ce pendant s'empescher du pensement de chose si esloignee, ce seroit folie. Mais quoy? les ieunes et les vieux laissent la vie de mesme condition. Nul n'en sort autrement que si tout presentement il y entroit, ioinct qu'il n'est homme si décrepite tant qu'il voit Mathusalem deuant, qui ne pense auoir encore vingt ans dans le corps. D'auantage, pauure fol que tu es, qui t'a estably les termes de ta vie? Tu te fondes sur les contes des Medecins. Regarde plustost l'effect et l'experience. Par le commun train des choses, tu vis pieça par faueur extraordinaire.

Meanwhile, to trouble oneself with the thought of something so far off would be folly. But what of it? Young and old leave life in the same condition. No one leaves it otherwise than as if he were just entering it. Besides, there is no man so decrepit that, as long as he sees Methuselah ahead of him, he does not think he still has twenty years in his body. Furthermore, poor fool that you are, who has fixed the limits of your life? You rely on the tales of doctors. Look rather at the facts and at experience. By the common course of things, you have long been living by extraordinary favor.

Tu as passé les termes accoustumez de viure: et qu'il soit ainsi, conte de tes cognoissans, combien il en est mort auant ton aage, plus qu'il n'en y a qui l'ayent atteint: et de ceux mesme qui ont annobli leur vie par renommee, fais en registre, et l'entreray en gageure d'en trouuer plus qui sont morts, auant, qu'apres trente cinq ans. Il est plein de raison, et de pieté, de prendre exemple de l'humanité mesme de Iesus-Christ. Or il finit sa vie à trente et trois ans. Le plus grand homme, simplement homme, Alexandre, mourut aussi à ce terme.

You have passed the customary limits of life. To see that this is so, count among your acquaintances how many have died before your age: more than have reached it. Even among those who have ennobled their lives by renown, make a list, and I will wager to find more who died before thirty-five than after. It is full of reason and piety to take our example from the humanity of Jesus Christ himself. Now he ended his life at thirty-three. The greatest man who was simply a man, Alexander, also died at that age.

1.20.7 Combien a la mort de façons de surprise? *Quid quisque vitet, nunquam homini satis / Cautum est in horas.* Ie laisse à part les fiebures et les pleuresies. Qui eust iamais pensé

How many ways death has of taking us by surprise! *Man can never take care enough / from hour to hour of what he should avoid.* I leave aside fevers

7 Lucretius, On the Nature of Things.

8 French feu, "late", was thought to come from Latin fuit, "he was". The year was made to begin on 1 January in France by a royal edict of 1564.

FRENCH

qu'vn Duc de Bretaigne deust estre estouffé de la presse, comme fut celuy là à l'entree du Pape Clement mon voisin, à Lyon? N'as tu pas veu tuer vn de nos Roys en se iouant? et vn de ses ancestres mourut il pas choqué par vn pourceau?

Æschylus menassé de la cheute d'vne maison, a beau se tenir à l'airte, le voyla assommé d'vn toict de tortue, qui eschappa des pattes d'vn aigle en l'air: l'autre mourut d'vn grain de raisin: vn Empereur de l'egratigneure d'vn peigne en se testonnant: Æmylius Lepidus pour auoir heurté du pied contre le seuil de son huis: et Aufidius pour auoir choqué en entrant contre la porte de la chambre du conseil. Et entre les cuisses des femmes Cornelius Gallus Preteur, Tigillinus Capitaine du guet à Rome, Ludouic fils de Guy de Gonsague, Marquis de Mantoüe. Et d'vn encore pire exemple, Speusippus Philosophe Platonicien, et l'vn de nos Papes.

Le pauure Bebius, Iuge, cependant qu'il donne delay de huictaine à vne partie, le voyla saisi, le sien de viure estant expiré: et Caius Iulius Medecin gressant les yeux d'vn patient, voyla la mort qui clost les siens. Et s'il m'y faut mesler, vn mien frere le Capitaine S. Martin, aagé de vingt trois ans, qui auoit desia faict assez bonne preuue de sa valeur, iouant à la paume, reçeut vn coup d'esteuf, qui l'assena vn peu au dessus de l'oreille droitte, sans aucune apparence de contusion, ny de blessure: il ne s'en assit, n'y reposa: mais cinq ou six heures apres il mourut d'vne Apoplexie que ce coup luy causa.

1.20.8 Ces exemples si frequents et si ordinaires nous passans deuant les yeux, comme est-il possible qu'on se puisse deffaire du pensement de la mort, et qu'à chasque instant il ne nous semble qu'elle nous tienne au collet? Qu'importe-il, me direz vous, comment que ce soit, pourueu qu'on ne s'en donne point de peine? Ie suis de cet aduis: et en quelque maniere qu'on se puisse mettre à l'abri des coups, fust ce soubs la peau d'vn veau, ie ne suis pas homme qui y reculast: car il me suffit de passer à mon aise, et le meilleur ieu que ie me puisse donner, ie le prens, si peu glorieux au reste et exemplaire que vous voudrez.

ENGLISH

and pleurisies. Who would ever have thought that a Duke of Brittany would be crushed to death in a crowd, as that one was at the entry into Lyon of Pope Clement, my neighbor? Have you not seen one of our kings killed at play? And did not one of his ancestors die from a collision with a pig?[9]

Aeschylus, warned that a falling house would kill him, may keep on his guard all he likes: there he is, knocked dead by a tortoise shell that slipped from the claws of an eagle in the air. Another died of a grape seed; an emperor, from the scratch of a comb while doing his hair; Aemilius Lepidus, from stubbing his foot on his own threshold; and Aufidius, from bumping into the door of the council chamber as he went in. And between women's thighs: Cornelius Gallus, praetor; Tigellinus, captain of the watch at Rome; Ludovico, son of Guido Gonzaga, Marquis of Mantua. And, an even worse example, Speusippus, the Platonist philosopher, and one of our popes.[10]

Poor Baebius, a judge, while granting a litigant a week's adjournment, is seized himself, his own term of life having expired. And Caius Julius, a doctor, while anointing a patient's eyes—there is death closing his own. And if I may bring in my own family: a brother of mine, Captain Saint-Martin, twenty-three years old, who had already given good proof of his valor, was struck while playing tennis by a ball that hit him a little above the right ear, without any sign of bruise or wound. He did not sit down or rest; but five or six hours later he died of an apoplexy caused by that blow.[11]

With such frequent and ordinary examples passing before our eyes, how can we possibly rid ourselves of the thought of death, or help feeling at every moment that it has us by the collar? "What does it matter," you will tell me, "how it happens, as long as we don't worry about it?" I am of that opinion. Whatever way one could find to shelter from the blows, even under a calf's hide, I am not the man to shrink from it. For it is enough for me to get through life at my ease; and the best

9 John II of Brittany was killed in 1305 during the entry into Lyon of Clement V, a former archbishop of Bordeaux. Henry II died of a jousting wound in 1559; Philip, son of Louis VI, was thrown when a pig ran under his horse in 1131.
10 The grape-seed death is the poet Anacreon's, as told by Pliny. Tigellinus was Nero's prefect of the guard; Speusippus succeeded Plato as head of the Academy.
11 Arnaud de Montaigne, the author's younger brother. The game is jeu de paume, an early form of tennis.

FRENCH	ENGLISH
	game I can give myself, I take, however inglorious and unexemplary you may think it.
prætulerim delirus inérsque videri, *Dum mea delectent mala me, vel denique fallant,* *Quàm sapere et ringi.*	*I would rather be thought a fool and a sluggard,* *so long as my failings please me, or at least deceive me,* *than be wise and gnash my teeth.*
1.20.9 Mais c'est folie d'y penser arriuer par là. Ils vont, ils viennent, ils trottent, ils dansent, de mort nulles nouuelles. Tout cela est beau: mais aussi quand elle arriue, ou à eux ou à leurs femmes, enfans et amis, les surprenant en dessoude et au descouuert, quels tourmens, quels cris, quelle rage et quel desespoir les accable? Vistes vous iamais rien si rabaissé, si changé, si confus? Il y faut prouuoir de meilleure heure: et cette nonchalance bestiale, quand elle pourroit loger en la teste d'vn homme d'entendement, ce que ie trouue entierement impossible, nous vend trop cher ses denrees.	But it is folly to think of getting there that way. They come, they go, they trot, they dance—of death, no news. All that is very fine. But then, when it does come, to them or to their wives, children or friends, catching them unawares and unprotected, what torments, what cries, what rage and what despair overwhelm them! Did you ever see anything so crushed, so changed, so confused? We must make provision for it earlier. And this brutish indifference, even if it could lodge in the head of a man of understanding—which I find entirely impossible—sells us its wares too dear.
Si c'estoit ennemy qui se peust euiter, ie conseillerois d'emprunter les armes de la coüardise: mais puis qu'il ne se peut; puis qu'il vous attrappe fuyant et poltron aussi bien qu'honeste homme, *Nempe et fugacem persequitur virum,* *Nec parcit imbellis iuuentæ* *Poplitibus, timidoque tergo.* et que nulle trampe de cuirasse vous couure, *Ille licet ferro cautus se condat in ære,* *Mors tamen inclusum protrahet inde caput.* aprenons à le soustenir de pied ferme, et à le combatre: Et pour commencer à luy oster son plus grand aduantage contre nous, prenons voye toute contraire à la commune.	If it were an enemy that could be avoided, I would advise borrowing the weapons of cowardice. But since it cannot be; since it catches you just the same whether you run away like a coward or stand like an honorable man—*Indeed, it pursues the man who flees,* *and does not spare the hamstrings or the timid backs of unwarlike youth*—and since no temper of breastplate can protect you—*Though he hide himself cautiously in iron and bronze,* *death will still drag his head out of its shelter*—let us learn to meet it steadfastly and to fight it. And to begin by depriving it of its greatest advantage over us, let us take a road quite contrary to the common one.[12]

GETTING USED TO DEATH

Strip death of its strangeness by keeping it always in mind, even at feasts.

FRENCH	ENGLISH
Ostons luy l'estrangeté, pratiquons le, accoustumons le, n'ayons rien si souuent en la teste que la mort: à tous instans representons la à nostre imagination et en tous visages. Au broncher d'vn cheual, à la cheute d'vne tuille, à la moindre piqueure d'espeingle, remachons soudain, Et bien quand ce seroit la mort mesme? et là dessus, roidissons nous, et nous efforçons. Parmy les festes et la ioye, ayons tousiours ce refrein de la souuenance de nostre condition, et ne nous laissons pas si fort emporter	Let us take away its strangeness, get to know it, get used to it. Let us have nothing so often in our minds as death. At every moment let us picture it in our imagination, in all its guises. At the stumble of a horse, at the fall of a tile, at the slightest pinprick, let us promptly chew on this: "Well, what if it were death itself?" And thereupon let us steel ourselves and make an effort. Amid feasting and gaiety, let us always keep this refrain, the remem-

12 The second quotation is from Propertius, Elegies; the first is Horace, Odes.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
	au plaisir, que par fois il ne nous repasse en la memoire, en combien de sortes cette nostre allegresse est en butte à la mort, et de combien de prinses elle la menasse.	brance of our condition, and not let ourselves be so carried away by pleasure that it does not now and then come back to mind in how many ways this gaiety of ours is exposed to death, and with how many holds death threatens it.
	Ainsi faisoient les Egyptiens, qui au milieu de leurs festins et parmy leur meilleure chere, faisoient apporter l'Anatomie seche d'vn homme, pour seruir d'auertissement aux conuiez. *Omnem crede diem tibi diluxisse supremum, / Grata superueniet, quæ non sperabitur hora.*	So did the Egyptians, who in the middle of their banquets and amid their best cheer had the dried skeleton of a man brought in, as a warning to the guests. *Believe that every day that has dawned for you is your last; / the hour you do not hope for will come as a welcome gift.*[13]
1.20.10	Il est incertain où la mort nous attende, attendons la par tout. La premeditation de la mort, est premeditation de la liberté. Qui a apris à mourir, il a desapris à seruir. Il n'y a rien de mal en la vie, pour celuy qui a bien comprins, que la priuation de la vie n'est pas mal. Le sçauoir mourir nous afranchit de toute subiection et contraincte. Paulus Æmylius respondit à celuy, que ce miserable Roy de Macedoine son prisonnier luy enuoyoit, pour le prier de ne le mener pas en son triomphe, Qu'il en face la requeste à soy mesme.	It is uncertain where death awaits us; let us await it everywhere. Premeditation of death is premeditation of freedom. He who has learned how to die has unlearned how to be a slave. There is nothing evil in life for the man who has fully understood that losing life is not an evil. Knowing how to die frees us from all subjection and constraint. Paulus Aemilius replied to the man sent by that wretched King of Macedonia, his prisoner, to beg him not to lead him in his triumph: "Let him make that request of himself."[14]
1.20.11	A la verité en toutes choses si nature ne preste vn peu, il est mal-aysé que l'art et l'industrie aillent guiere auant. Ie suis de moy-mesme non melancholique, mais songecreux: il n'est rien dequoy ie me soye des tousiours plus entretenu que des imaginations de la mort; voire en la saison la plus licentieuse de mon aage, *Iucundum cùm ætas florida ver ageret.* Parmy les dames et les ieux, tel me pensoit empesché à digerer à part moy quelque ialousie, ou l'incertitude de quelque esperance, cependant que ie m'entretenois de ie ne sçay qui surpris les iours precedens d'vne fieure chaude, et de sa fin au partir d'vne feste pareille, et la teste pleine d'oisiueté, d'amour et de bon temps, comme moy: et qu'autant m'en pendoit à l'oreille.	In truth, in all things, unless nature lends a little help, it is hard for art and effort to get very far. I am by nature not melancholy, but given to daydreaming. There is nothing I have always occupied myself with more than imaginings of death, even in the most licentious season of my life, *when my blooming youth was enjoying its pleasant spring.* Among the ladies and the games, someone would think me busy digesting some jealousy or the uncertainty of some hope, while I was actually thinking about some fellow or other who had been seized a few days before by a high fever and had died on the way home from a party just like this one, his head full of idleness, love and good times, like mine—and the same thing could happen to me.[15]
	Iam fuerit, nec post vnquam reuocare licebit. Ie ne ridois non plus le front de ce pensement là, que d'vn autre.	*Soon it will have been, and we shall never be able to call it back.* That thought furrowed my brow no more than any other.
1.20.12	Il est impossible que d'arriuee nous ne sentions des piqueures de telles imaginations: mais en les maniant et repassant, au long aller, on les appriuoise sans doubte:	It is impossible not to feel the stings of such imaginings at first. But by handling them and going over them, in the long run we no doubt tame

13 Herodotus, Histories II, describes this custom. The verses are from Horace, Epistles.
14 Perseus, last king of Macedonia, was defeated by Aemilius Paulus at Pydna in 168 BC.
15 Catullus.

FRENCH

autrement de ma part ie fusse en continuelle frayeur et frenesie: car iamais homme ne se défia tant de sa vie, iamais homme ne feit moins d'estat de sa duree. Ny la santé, que i'ay iouy iusques à present tresuigoureuse et peu souuent interrompue, ne m'en alonge l'esperance, ny les maladies ne me l'acourcissent. A chaque minute il me semble que ie m'eschappe. Et me rechante sans cesse, Tout ce qui peut estre faict vn autre iour, le peut estre auiourd'huy.

De vray les hazards et dangiers nous approchent peu ou rien de nostre fin: et si nous pensons, combien il en reste, sans cet accident qui semble nous menasser le plus, de millions d'autres sur nos testes, nous trouuerons que gaillars et fieureux, en la mer et en nos maisons, en la bataille et en repos elle nous est égallement pres. *Nemo altero fragilior est: nemo in crastinum sui certior.*

1.20.13 Ce que i'ay affaire auant mourir, pour l'acheuer tout loisir me semble court, fust ce d'vne heure. Quelcun feuilletant l'autre iour mes tablettes, trouua vn memoire de quelque chose, que ie vouloys estre faite apres ma mort: ie luy dy, comme il estoit vray, que n'estant qu'à vne lieuë de ma maison, et sain et gaillard, ie m'estoy hasté de l'escrire là, pour ne m'asseurer point d'arriuer iusques chez moy. Comme celuy, qui continuellement me couue de mes pensees, et les couche en moy: ie suis à toute heure preparé enuiron ce que ie le puis estre: et ne m'aduertira de rien de nouueau la suruenance de la mort.

Il faut estre tousiours botté et prest à partir, en tant que en nous est, et sur tout se garder qu'on n'aye lors affaire qu'à soy. *Quid breui fortes iaculamur æuo / Multa?* Car nous y aurons assez de besongne, sans autre surcrois. L'vn se pleint plus que de la mort, dequoy elle luy rompt le train d'vne belle victoire: l'autre qu'il luy faut desloger auant qu'auoir marié sa fille, ou contrerolé l'institution de ses enfans: l'vn pleint la compagnie de sa femme, l'autre de son fils, comme commoditez principales de son estre.

Ie suis pour cette heure en tel estat, Dieu mercy, que ie puis desloger quand il luy plaira, sans regret de chose quelconque: ie me desnoue par tout: mes adieux sont tantost prins de chascun, sauf de moy. Iamais homme ne se prepara à quiter le monde plus purement et pleinement, et ne s'en desprint plus vniuersellement que

ENGLISH

them. Otherwise, for my part, I would be in continual fright and frenzy; for never did a man so distrust his life, never did a man set less store by its duration. Neither my health, which so far has been very vigorous and seldom interrupted, lengthens my hope of it, nor do illnesses shorten it. Every minute I feel I am slipping away. And I keep singing to myself: "Whatever can be done another day can be done today."

In truth, chances and dangers bring us little or no nearer to our end. And if we think how many millions of other accidents remain hanging over our heads, besides the one that seems to threaten us most, we shall find that, in vigor or in fever, at sea or at home, in battle or at rest, death is equally near us. *No man is more fragile than another; no man more certain of tomorrow.*

To finish what I have to do before I die, any amount of time seems short to me, even if the task is only an hour's work. The other day someone leafing through my notebooks found a memorandum about something I wanted done after my death. I told him, and it was true, that though I was only a league from my house, and healthy and in good spirits, I had hurried to write it down there because I was not sure of getting as far as home. As a man who is constantly brooding over my thoughts and laying them up within me, I am at all times about as ready as I can be; and the arrival of death will tell me nothing new.

We must always have our boots on and be ready to leave, as far as it lies in us, and above all take care that by then we have no business with anyone but ourselves. *Why in our brief life do we boldly aim / at so many things?* For we shall have quite enough to do then without any further load. One man complains, more than of death itself, that it breaks off the course of a fine victory; another, that he must move out before marrying off his daughter or seeing to the education of his children. One mourns his wife's company, another his son's, as the chief comforts of his existence.

I am at present in such a state, thank God, that I can move out whenever it pleases him, without regretting anything whatsoever. I am untying myself everywhere; my farewells to everyone are nearly taken, except to myself. Never did a man prepare to leave the world more purely and fully, or detach

FRENCH

ENGLISH

ie m'attens de faire. Les plus mortes morts sont les plus saines. *miser ô miser (aiunt) omnia ademit*
Vna dies infesta mihi tot præmia vitæ: et le bastisseur, *manent* (dict-il) *opera interrupta, minæque*
Murorum ingentes. Il ne faut rien designer de si longue haleine, ou au moins auec telle intention de se passionner pour en voir la fin.

himself from it more completely, than I expect to do. The deadest deaths are the soundest. *Wretch, O wretch that I am* (they say), *one hateful day*
has robbed me of all the many rewards of life; and the builder: *The works remain* (he says) *broken off, and the huge threat*
of the walls. We must not plan anything of such long breath, or at least not with so passionate a wish to see it finished.[16]

1.20.14 Nous sommes nés pour agir: *Cùm moriar, medium soluar et inter opus.* Ie veux qu'on agisse, et qu'on allonge les offices de la vie, tant qu'on peut: et que la mort me treuue plantant mes choux; mais nonchallant d'elle, et encore plus de mon iardin imparfait. I'en vis mourir vn, qui estant à l'extremité se pleignoit incessamment, dequoy sa destinee coupoit le fil de l'histoire qu'il auoit en main, sur le quinziesme ou seixiesme de nos Roys. *Illud in his rebus non addunt, nec tibi earum / Iam desiderium rerum super insidet vna.*

We are born to act: *When I die, may it be in the midst of my work.* I want us to act and to prolong the duties of life as long as we can; and I want death to find me planting my cabbages, but caring little about it, and still less about my unfinished garden. I saw one man die who, at the very end, kept complaining that his destiny was cutting the thread of the history he had in hand, at the fifteenth or sixteenth of our kings. *But they do not add this: that no longer / will any longing for these things remain with you.*[17]

1.20.15 Il faut se descharger de ces humeurs vulgaires et nuisibles. Tout ainsi qu'on a planté nos cimetieres ioignant les Eglises, et aux lieux les plus frequentez de la ville, pour accoustumer, disoit Lycurgus, le bas populaire, les femmes et les enfans à ne s'effaroucher point de voir vn homme mort: et affin que ce continuel spectacle d'ossemens, de tombeaux, et de conuois nous aduertisse de nostre condition. *Quin etiam exhilarare viris conuiuia cæde*
Mos olim, et miscere epulis spectacula dira
Certantum ferro, sæpe et super ipsa cadentum
Pocula, respersis non parco sanguine mensis.

We must rid ourselves of these common and harmful notions. Just as our cemeteries have been placed next to churches and in the busiest parts of town, in order, as Lycurgus said, to accustom the common people, women and children not to be alarmed at the sight of a dead man, and so that this continual spectacle of bones, tombs and funeral processions may remind us of our condition: *Moreover, it was once the custom to enliven banquets with slaughter,*
and to mix with the feast the grim spectacle
of men fighting with the sword, who often fell among the very
cups, spattering the tables with abundant blood.[18]

1.20.16 Et comme les Egyptiens apres leurs festins, faisoient presenter aux assistans vne grande image de la mort, par vn qui leur crioit: Boy, et t'esiouy, car mort tu seras tel: aussi ay-ie pris en coustume, d'auoir non seulement en l'imagination, mais continuellement la mort en la bouche. Et n'est rien dequoy ie m'informe si volontiers, que de la mort des hommes: quelle parole, quel visage, quelle contenance ils y ont eu: ny endroit des histoires, que ie remarque si attentifuement. Il y paroist, à la farcissure de mes exemples: et que i'ay en particuliere

And as the Egyptians, after their banquets, had a large image of death shown to the guests by a man who cried out to them, "Drink and be merry, for when you are dead you will be like this," so I have made it my custom to have death not only in my imagination but constantly in my mouth. There is nothing I inquire about so willingly as men's deaths: what words, what face, what bearing they had; nor any passage in the histories that I note so attentively. It shows in the way I stuff my pages

16 The first verses are Lucretius; the second are from Virgil, Aeneid IV, of the walls of Carthage left unfinished.
17 Ovid, Amores; the closing verses are Lucretius.
18 Lycurgus was the legendary lawgiver of Sparta. The verses are from Silius Italicus, Punica.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
	affection cette matiere. Si i'estoy faiseur de liures, ie feroy vn registre commenté des morts diuerses: qui apprendroit les hommes à mourir, leur apprendroit à viure.	with examples, and that I have a particular fondness for this subject. If I were a maker of books, I would compile a register, with commentary, of various deaths. Whoever taught men to die would teach them to live.
	Dicearchus en feit vn de pareil titre, mais d'autre et moins vtile fin.	Dicaearchus wrote a book with a similar title, but with another and less useful aim.[19]
1.20.17	On me dira, que l'effect surmonte de si loing la pensee, qu'il n'y a si belle escrime, qui ne se perde, quand on en vient là: laissez les dire; le premediter donne sans doubte grand auantage: et puis n'est-ce rien, d'aller au moins iusques là sans alteration et sans fiéure? Il y a plus: nature mesme nous preste la main, et nous donne courage. Si c'est vne mort courte et violente, nous n'avons pas loisir de la craindre: si elle est autre, ie m'apperçois qu'à mesure que ie m'engage dans la maladie, i'entre naturellement en quelque desdain de la vie.	People will tell me that the reality so far exceeds the thought of it that no fencing skill is so fine that it is not lost when it comes to that point. Let them talk. Premeditation undoubtedly gives a great advantage. And then, is it nothing to get at least that far without agitation and without fever? There is more: nature herself lends us a hand and gives us courage. If it is a short and violent death, we have no time to fear it. If it is otherwise, I notice that as I sink further into illness I naturally come to feel a certain disdain for life.
	Ie trouue que i'ay bien plus affaire à digerer cette resolution de mourir, quand ie suis en santé, que ie n'ay quand ie suis en fiéure: d'autant que ie ne tiens plus si fort aux commoditez de la vie, à raison que ie commance à en perdre l'vsage et le plaisir, i'en voy la mort d'vne veuë beaucoup moins effrayee. Cela me faict esperer, que plus ie m'eslongneray de celle-là, et approcheray de cette-cy, plus aysément i'entreray en composition de leur eschange.	I find that I have much more trouble digesting this resolution to die when I am healthy than when I am feverish. Since I no longer cling so strongly to the comforts of life, as I begin to lose the use and pleasure of them, I look on death with far less frightened eyes. This makes me hope that the farther I move from the one and the nearer I come to the other, the more easily I shall come to terms over exchanging them.
1.20.18	Tout ainsi que i'ay essayé en plusieurs autres occurrences, ce que dit Cesar, que les choses nous paroissent souuent plus grandes de loing que de pres: i'ay trouué que sain i'auois eu les maladies beaucoup plus en horreur, que lors que ie les ay senties. L'alegresse où ie suis, le plaisir et la force, me font paroistre l'autre estat si disproportionné à celuy-là, que par imagination ie grossis ces incommoditez de la moitié, et les conçoy plus poisantes, que ie ne les trouue, quand ie les ay sur les espaules. I'espere qu'il m'en aduiendra ainsi de la mort.	I have tested on several other occasions what Caesar says, that things often look bigger to us from far off than close at hand; in the same way I have found that when healthy I dreaded illnesses much more than when I actually felt them. The cheerfulness I am in, my pleasure and my strength, make the other state seem so out of proportion to this one that in imagination I magnify those discomforts by half, and conceive them as heavier than I find them when I have them on my shoulders. I hope it will be the same for me with death.[20]
1.20.19	Voyons à ces mutations et declinaisons ordinaires que nous souffrons, comme nature nous desrobe la veuë de nostre perte et empirement. Que reste-il à vn vieillard de la vigueur de sa ieunesse, et de sa vie passee? *Heu senibus vitæ portio quanta manet!* Cesar à vn soldat de sa garde recreu et cassé, qui vint en la ruë, luy demander congé de	Let us see how, in the ordinary changes and declines we undergo, nature hides from us the sight of our loss and deterioration. What does an old man have left of the vigor of his youth and his past life? *Alas, how small a portion of life remains to the*

19 Dicaearchus of Messana, a pupil of Aristotle, wrote On the Destruction of Men, cited by Cicero.
20 Caesar, Gallic War VII.

FRENCH

se faire mourir: regardant son maintien decrepite, respondit plaisamment: Tu penses donc estre en vie.

1.20.20 Qui y tomberoit tout à vn coup, ie ne crois pas que nous fussions capables de porter vn tel changement: mais conduicts par sa main, d'vne douce pente et comme insensible, peu à peu, de degré en degré, elle nous roule dans ce miserable estat, et nous y appriuoise. Si que nous ne sentons aucune secousse, quand la ieunesse meurt en nous: qui est en essence et en verité, vne mort plus dure, que n'est la mort entiere d'vne vie languissante; et que n'est la mort de la vieillesse: d'autant que le sault n'est pas si lourd du mal estre au non estre, comme il est d'vn estre doux et fleurissant, à vn estre penible et douloureux.

Le corps courbe et plié a moins de force à soustenir un fais, aussi a nostre ame. Il la faut dresser et esleuer contre l'effort de cet aduersaire. Car comme il est impossible, qu'elle se mette en repos pendant qu'elle le craint: si elle s'en asseure aussi, elle se peut vanter, qui est chose comme surpassant l'humaine condition, qu'il est impossible que l'inquietude, le tourment, et la peur, non le moindre desplaisir loge en elle. *Non vultus instantis tyranni*
Mente quatit solida, neque Auster
Dux inquieti turbidus Adriæ,
Nec fulminantis magna Iouis manus. Elle est renduë maistresse de ses passions et concupiscences; maistresse de l'indigence, de la honte, de la pauureté, et de toutes autres iniures de fortune.

Gagnons cet aduantage qui pourra: c'est icy la vraye et souueraine liberté, qui nous donne dequoy faire la figue à la force, et à l'iniustice, et nous moquer des prisons et des fers. *in manicis, et*
Compedibus, sæuo te sub custode tenebo.
Ipse Deus simul atque volam, me soluet: opinor,
Hoc sentit, moriar: mors vltima linea rerum est. Nostre religion n'a point eu de plus asseuré fondement humain, que le mespris de la vie. Non seulement le discours de la raison nous y appelle; car pourquoy craindrions nous de perdre vne chose, laquelle perduë ne peut estre regrettée?

mais aussi puis que nous sommes menacez de tant de façons de mort, n'y a il pas plus de mal à les craindre

ENGLISH

old! When a soldier of Caesar's guard, worn out and broken, came up to him in the street to ask leave to kill himself, Caesar looked at his decrepit appearance and answered with a joke: "So you think you are alive?"[21]

If we fell into it all at once, I do not think we could bear such a change. But nature leads us by the hand down a gentle and almost imperceptible slope, little by little, step by step; she rolls us into this wretched state and makes us used to it. So we feel no jolt when youth dies in us—which in essence and in truth is a harder death than the complete death of a languishing life, or the death of old age. For the leap is not so heavy from ill-being to non-being as it is from a sweet and flourishing being to a painful and grievous one.

A bent and stooping body has less strength to carry a load; so does our soul. We must straighten it and raise it up against the onslaught of this adversary. For just as it cannot be at rest while it fears death, so, if it can make itself secure against it, it can boast—something almost beyond the human condition—that it is impossible for anxiety, torment or fear, or even the slightest displeasure, to lodge in it. *Not the face of a threatening tyrant*
shakes his firm mind, nor the South Wind,
stormy lord of the restless Adriatic,
nor the mighty hand of thundering Jove. It becomes mistress of its passions and cravings; mistress of want, shame and poverty, and of all the other injuries of Fortune.

Let whoever can gain this advantage. Here is the true and sovereign freedom, which enables us to thumb our noses at force and injustice and to laugh at prisons and chains. *"In handcuffs and*
in shackles I will keep you, under a cruel jailer."
"God himself will set me free the moment I wish." I think
he means: "I will die." Death is the final line of things.
Our religion has had no surer human foundation than contempt for life. Not only does rational argument call us to it—for why should we fear to lose a thing which, once lost, cannot be regretted?—[22]

but also, since we are threatened by so many kinds of death, is there not more harm in fearing

21 Maximianus, Elegies, attributed in Montaigne's day to Cornelius Gallus.
22 Horace, Epistles, adapting the exchange between Pentheus and Dionysus in Euripides' Bacchae.

FRENCH

toutes, qu'à en soustenir vne? Que chaut-il, quand ce soit, puis qu'elle est ineuitable? A celuy qui disoit à Socrates; Les trente tyrans t'ont condamné à la mort: Et nature, eux, respondit-il. Quelle sottise, de nous peiner, sur le point du passage à l'exemption de toute peine? Comme nostre naissance nous apporta la naissance de toutes choses: aussi fera la mort de toutes choses, nostre mort. Parquoy c'est pareille folie de pleurer de ce que d'icy à cent ans nous ne viurons pas, que de pleurer de ce que nous ne viuions pas, il y a cent ans.

La mort est origine d'vne autre vie: ainsi pleurasmes nous, et ainsi nous cousta-il d'entrer en cette-cy: ainsi nous despouillasmes nous de nostre ancien voile, en y entrant. Rien ne peut estre grief, qui n'est qu'vne fois. Est-ce raison de craindre si long temps, chose de si brief temps? Le long temps viure, et le peu de temps viure est rendu tout vn par la mort. Car le long et le court n'est point aux choses qui ne sont plus. Aristote dit, qu'il y a des petites bestes sur la riuiere Hypanis, qui ne viuent qu'vn iour. Celle qui meurt à huict heures du matin, elle meurt en ieunesse: celle qui meurt à cinq heures du soir, meurt en sa decrepitude.

Qui de nous ne se mocque de voir mettre en consideration d'heur ou de malheur, ce moment de durée? Le plus et le moins en la nostre, si nous la comparons à l'eternité, ou encores à la duree des montaignes, des riuieres, des estoilles, des arbres, et mesmes d'aucuns animaux, n'est pas moins ridicule.

ENGLISH

them all than in suffering one? What does it matter when it comes, since it is inevitable? To the man who told Socrates, "The Thirty Tyrants have condemned you to death," he replied, "And nature has condemned them." What foolishness to torment ourselves at the very moment of passing into freedom from all torment! As our birth brought us the birth of all things, so our death will bring the death of all things. Therefore it is as foolish to weep because a hundred years from now we shall not be alive as to weep because we were not alive a hundred years ago.[23]

Death is the origin of another life. So we wept, so it cost us to enter this one; so we stripped off our former veil as we entered it. Nothing can be grievous that happens only once. Is it reasonable to fear for so long a thing that lasts so short a time? Living a long time and living a short time are made all one by death. For long and short do not apply to things that no longer exist. Aristotle says that there are little creatures on the river Hypanis that live only one day. The one that dies at eight in the morning dies in its youth; the one that dies at five in the evening dies in its decrepitude.[24]

Which of us would not laugh to see this moment of duration weighed in terms of happiness or unhappiness? The more and the less in our own, if we compare it with eternity, or even with the duration of mountains, rivers, stars, trees and even some animals, is no less ridiculous.

NATURE'S SPEECH ON DEATH

Nature tells us that death is part of the order of the world and nothing to fear.

FRENCH

1.20.21 Mais nature nous y force. Sortez, dit-elle, de ce monde, comme vous y estes entrez. Le mesme passage que vous fistes de la mort à la vie, sans passion et sans frayeur, refaites le de la vie à la mort. Vostre mort est vne des pieces de l'ordre de l'vniuers, c'est vne piece de la vie du monde. *inter se mortales mutua viuunt, / Et quasi cursores vitaï lampada tradunt.* Changeray-ie pas pour vous cette belle contexture des choses? C'est la condition de vostre creation; c'est vne partie de vous que la mort: vous vous fuyez vous mesmes. Cettuy vostre estre, que vous iouyssez, est également party à la mort et à la vie.

ENGLISH

But nature compels us to it. Go out of this world, she says, as you entered it. The same passage you made from death to life, without feeling and without fear, make it again from life to death. Your death is one of the parts of the order of the universe; it is a part of the life of the world. *Mortals live by borrowing from one another, / and like runners they hand on the torch of life.* Shall I change this fine fabric of things for your sake? It is the condition of your creation; death is a part of you; you are running away from yourselves. This being of yours

23 The Thirty Tyrants were the oligarchy that ruled Athens in 404–403 BC.
24 Aristotle, History of Animals; the Hypanis is probably the modern Southern Bug, which flows into the Black Sea.

FRENCH

Le premier iour de vostre naissance vous achemine à mourir comme à viure. *Prima, quæ vitam dedit, hora, carpsit. / Nascentes morimur, finisque ab origine pendet.* Tout ce que vous viués, vous le desrobés à la vie: c'est à ses despens. Le continuel ouurage de vostre vie, c'est bastir la mort. Vous estes en la mort, pendant que vous estes en vie: car vous estes apres la mort, quand vous n'estes plus en vie. Ou, si vous l'aymez mieux ainsi, vous estes mort apres la vie: mais pendant la vie, vous estes mourant: et la mort touche bien plus rudement le mourant que le mort, et plus viuement et essentiellement.

1.20.22 Si vous auez faict vostre proufit de la vie, vous en estes repeu, allez vous en satisfaict. *Cur non vt plenus vitæ conuiua recedis?* Si vous n'en auez sçeu vser, si elle vous estoit inutile, que vous chaut-il de l'auoir perduë? à quoy faire la voulez vous encores? *cur amplius addere quæris / Rursum quod pereat malè, et ingratum occidat omne?* La vie n'est de soy ny bien ny mal: c'est la place du bien et du mal, selon que vous la leur faictes. Et si vous auez vescu vn iour, vous auez tout veu: vn iour est égal à tous iours. Il n'y a point d'autre lumiere, ny d'autre nuict.

Ce Soleil, cette Lune, ces Estoilles, cette disposition, c'est celle mesme que vos ayeuls ont iouye, et qui entretiendra vos arriere-nepueux. *Non alium videre patres: aliumve nepotes*
Aspicient. Et au pis aller, la distribution et varieté de tous les actes de ma comedie, se parfournit en vn an. Si vous auez pris garde au branle de mes quatre saisons, elles embrassent l'enfance, l'adolescence, la virilité, et la vieillesse du monde. Il a ioüé son ieu: il n'y sçait autre finesse, que de recommencer; ce sera tousiours cela mesme. *versamur ibidem, atque insumus vsque,*
Atque in se sua per vestigia voluitur annus. Ie ne suis pas deliberée de vous forger autres nouueaux passetemps.

Nam tibi præterea quod machiner, inueniámque
Quod placeat, nihil est, eadem sunt omnia semper. Faictes place aux autres, comme d'autres vous l'ont faite.

ENGLISH

that you enjoy is shared equally between death and life.

The first day of your birth sets you on the road to dying as well as to living. *The first hour that gave us life took it away. / As we are born we die, and the end hangs on the beginning.* All the time you live, you steal from life; it is at life's expense. The constant work of your life is to build death. You are in death while you are in life; for you are after death when you are no longer in life. Or, if you prefer it this way, you are dead after life; but during life you are dying; and death touches the dying much more roughly than the dead, and more keenly and essentially.[25]

If you have made good use of life, you have had your fill of it; go away satisfied. *Why not leave like a guest who has had his fill of life?* If you have not known how to use it, if it was useless to you, what does it matter to you that you have lost it? What do you still want it for? *Why seek to add more, / Only to lose it badly again and have it all perish without profit?* Life in itself is neither good nor evil: it is the place of good and evil, depending on the room you make for them. And if you have lived one day, you have seen everything: one day is equal to all days. There is no other light, and no other night.

This sun, this moon, these stars, this order of things, are the very same that your forefathers enjoyed and that will sustain your great-great-grandchildren. *Your fathers saw no other, nor will your grandsons*
Behold any other. And at worst, the distribution and variety of all the acts of my comedy is completed in a single year. If you have paid attention to the round of my four seasons, they take in the childhood, youth, manhood and old age of the world. It has played its game; it knows no other trick than to begin again; it will always be the very same thing. *We turn in the same place and stay there forever,*
And the year rolls back upon itself along its own tracks. I have no intention of devising other, new pastimes for you.[26]

For there is nothing more I can contrive or invent
To please you: all things are always the same. Make

25 The first line is from Seneca, Hercules Furens; the second from Manilius, Astronomica.
26 The second quotation joins a line of Lucretius to one from Virgil's Georgics.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
	L'equalité est la premiere piece de l'equité. Qui se peut plaindre d'estre comprins où tous sont comprins? Aussi auez vous beau viure, vous n'en rabattrez rien du temps que vous auez à estre mort: c'est pour neant; aussi long temps serez vous en cet estat là, que vous craignez, comme si vous estiez mort en nourrisse: *licet, quod vis, viuendo vincere secla,* *Mors æterna tamen, nihilominus illa manebit.*	room for others, as others have made room for you. Equality is the first part of equity. Who can complain of being included where all are included? Besides, live as long as you like, you will not shave anything off the time you have to be dead. It is no use: you will remain just as long in that state you fear as if you had died in your nurse's arms. *Though you may outlive as many generations as you please,* *That eternal death will still be waiting for you all the same.*
1.20.23	Et si vous mettray en tel point, auquel vous n'aurez aucun mescontentement. *In vera nescis nullum fore morte alium te,* *Qui possit viuus tibi te lugere peremptum,* *Stánsque iacentem.* Ny ne desirerez la vie que vous plaignez tant. *Nec sibi enim quisquam tum se vitámque requirit,* *Nec desiderium nostri nos afficit vllum.*	And besides, I will put you in such a state that you will feel no discontent. *Do you not know that in real death there will be no other you* *Still alive to mourn you dead,* *Standing over you as you lie?* Nor will you long for the life you lament so much. *For then no one misses himself or his life,* *And no longing for ourselves troubles us at all.*
1.20.24	La mort est moins à craindre que rien, s'il y auoit quelque chose de moins, que rien. *multo mortem minus ad nos esse putandum,* *Si minus esse potest quàm quod nihil esse videmus.* Elle ne vous concerne ny mort ny vif. Vif, par ce que vous estes: mort, par ce que vous n'estes plus. D'auantage nul ne meurt auant son heure. Ce que vous laissez de temps, n'estoit non plus vostre, que celuy qui s'est passé auant vostre naissance: et ne vous touche non plus. *Respice enim quàm nil ad nos antè acta vetustas* *Temporis æterni fuerit.*	Death is less to be feared than nothing, if there were anything less than nothing. *We must think death much less to us than nothing,* *If there can be anything less than what we see to be nothing.* It does not concern you either dead or alive: alive, because you are; dead, because you no longer are. Moreover, no one dies before his hour. The time you leave behind was no more yours than the time that passed before your birth, and it concerns you no more. *Look back and see how the ages of eternal time gone by before us* *Were nothing to us.*
1.20.25	Où que vostre vie finisse, elle y est toute. L'vtilité du viure n'est pas en l'espace: elle est en l'vsage. Tel a vescu long temps, qui a peu vescu. Attendez vous y pendant que vous y estes. Il gist en vostre volonté, non au nombre des ans, que vous ayez assez vescu. Pensiez vous iamais n'arriuer là, où vous alliez sans cesse? encore n'y a-il chemin qui n'aye son issuë. Et si la compagnie vous peut soulager, le monde ne va-il pas mesme train que vous allez? *omnia te vita perfuncta sequentur.*	Wherever your life ends, it is all there. The usefulness of living lies not in its length but in its use. Many a man has lived long who has lived little. Give it your attention while you are in it. Whether you have lived enough depends on your will, not on the number of your years. Did you think you would never arrive where you were constantly heading? Yet there is no road that does not come to an end. And if company can comfort you, is not the world going the same way you are? *All things, when your life is done, will follow you.*
1.20.26	Tout ne branle-il pas vostre branle? y a-il chose qui ne vieillisse quant et vous? Mille hommes, mille animaux et mille autres creatures meurent en ce mesme instant que vous mourez. *Nam nox nulla diem, neque noctem aurora sequuta est,*	Does not everything move with your movement? Is there anything that does not grow old along with you? A thousand men, a thousand animals and a thousand other creatures die at the very moment you die. *For no night has followed day, nor*

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
	Quæ non audierit mistos vagitibus ægris *Ploratus mortis comites et funeris atri.*	*dawn followed night,* *Without hearing, mingled with the sickly wailing of newborn infants,* *The laments that attend death and gloomy funerals.*
1.20.27	A quoy faire y reculez vous, si vous ne pouuez tirer arriere? Vous en auez assez veu qui se sont bien trouués de mourir, escheuant par là des grandes miseres. Mais quelqu'vn qui s'en soit mal trouué, en auez vous veu? Si est-ce grande simplesse, de condamner chose que vous n'auez esprouuée ny par vous ny par autre. Pourquoy te pleins-tu de moy et de la destinée? Te faisons nous tort? Est-ce à toy de nous gouuerner, ou à nous toy? Encore que ton aage ne soit pas acheué, ta vie l'est. Vn petit homme est homme entier comme vn grand. Ny les hommes ny leurs vies ne se mesurent à l'aune.	Why do you recoil from it, if you cannot draw back? You have seen plenty of people who were the better for dying, escaping great miseries by it. But have you ever seen anyone who was the worse for it? It is very simple-minded to condemn a thing you have never experienced, either yourself or through someone else. Why do you complain of me and of destiny? Do we wrong you? Is it for you to govern us, or for us to govern you? Though your age may not be complete, your life is. A small man is a whole man just as much as a tall one. Neither men nor their lives are measured by the yard.
1.20.28	Chiron refusa l'immortalité, informé des conditions d'icelle, par le Dieu mesme du temps, et de la durée, Saturne son pere. Imaginez de vray, combien seroit vne vie perdurable, moins supportable à l'homme, et plus penible, que n'est la vie que ie luy ay donnée. Si vous n'auiez la mort, vous me maudiriez sans cesse de vous en auoir priué.	Chiron refused immortality when he was told its conditions by the very god of time and duration, Saturn, his father. Just imagine how much less bearable to man, and how much more painful, an everlasting life would be than the life I have given him. If you did not have death, you would curse me endlessly for having deprived you of it.[27]
1.20.29	I'y ay à escient meslé quelque peu d'amertume, pour vous empescher, voyant la commodité de son vsage, de l'embrasser trop auidement et indiscretement. Pour vous loger en cette moderation, ny de fuir la vie, ny de refuir à la mort, que ie demande de vous; i'ay temperé l'vne et l'autre entre la douceur et l'aigreur.	I have deliberately mixed a little bitterness into it, to keep you, when you see how convenient it is to use, from embracing it too greedily and rashly. To settle you in the moderation I ask of you—neither to flee life nor to run away from death—I have tempered both of them between sweetness and sourness.
1.20.30	I'apprins à Thales le premier de voz sages, que le viure et le mourir estoit indifferent: par où, à celuy qui luy demanda, pourquoy donc il ne mouroit, il respondit tressagement, Pour ce qu'il est indifferent. L'eau, la terre, l'air et le feu, et autres membres de ce mien bastiment, ne sont non plus instruments de ta vie, qu'instruments de ta mort. Pourquoy crains-tu ton dernier iour? Il ne confere non plus à ta mort que chascun des autres. Le dernier pas ne faict pas la lassitude: il la declaire. Tous les iours vont à la mort: le dernier y arriue. Voila les bons aduertissemens de nostre mere Nature.	I taught Thales, the first of your sages, that living and dying were all one; and so, when someone asked him why, then, he did not die, he answered very wisely: "Because it is all one." Water, earth, air and fire, and the other parts of this building of mine, are no more instruments of your life than instruments of your death. Why do you fear your last day? It contributes no more to your death than each of the others. The last step does not cause the weariness; it reveals it. Every day travels toward death; the last one arrives. Such are the good counsels of our mother Nature.[28]

27 Chiron, the wise centaur, son of Saturn (the Greek Cronus), gave up his immortality after receiving an incurable wound.
28 Thales of Miletus (6th century BC), counted first among the Seven Sages of Greece.

TAKING OFF DEATH'S MASK

The trappings around a deathbed frighten us more than death itself.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
1.20.31	Or i'ay pensé souuent d'où venoit cela, qu'aux guerres le visage de la mort, soit que nous la voyons en nous ou en autruy, nous semble sans comparaison moins effroyable qu'en nos maisons: autrement ce seroit vne armée de medecins et de pleurars: et elle estant tousiours vne, qu'il y ait toutes-fois beaucoup plus d'asseurance parmy les gens de village et de basse condition qu'és autres.	Now I have often wondered why it is that in war the face of death, whether we see it in ourselves or in others, seems to us incomparably less terrifying than in our homes—otherwise an army would be made up of doctors and weepers; and why, death being always the same, there is nevertheless far more composure among village folk and people of low condition than among others.
	Ie croy à la verité que ce sont ces mines et appareils effroyables, dequoy nous l'entournons, qui nous font plus de peur qu'elle: vne toute nouuelle forme de viure: les cris des meres, des femmes, et des enfans: la visitation de personnes estonnees, et transies: l'assistance d'vn nombre de valets pasles et éplorés: vne chambre sans iour: des cierges allumez: nostre cheuet assiegé de medecins et de prescheurs: somme tout horreur et tout effroy autour de nous. Nous voyla des-ia enseuelis et enterrez. Les enfans ont peur de leurs amis mesmes quand ils les voyent masquez; aussi auons nous. Il faut oster le masque aussi bien des choses, que des personnes.	I truly believe it is those terrifying looks and trappings with which we surround it that frighten us more than death itself: an entirely new way of living; the cries of mothers, wives and children; visits from people dazed and numb with shock; the presence of a crowd of pale, tearful servants; a room without daylight; lighted candles; our bedside besieged by doctors and preachers; in short, nothing but horror and dread all around us. There we are, already shrouded and buried. Children are afraid even of their friends when they see them masked; so are we. We must strip the mask from things as well as from people.
	Osté qu'il sera, nous ne trouuerons au dessoubs, que cette mesme mort, qu'vn valet ou simple chambriere passerent dernierement sans peur. Heureuse la mort qui oste le loisir aux apprests de tel equipage!	Once it is off, we shall find underneath only that same death which a valet or a mere chambermaid went through not long ago without fear. Happy the death that leaves no leisure for preparing such a pageant!

I.21 Of the Power of the Imagination

De la force de l'imagination

Montaigne explores how imagination produces illness, cures, impotence, and supposed miracles, in himself and others.

FRENCH

1.21.1 FORTIS *imaginatio generat casum*, disent les clercs. Ie suis de ceux qui sentent tresgrand effort de l'imagination. Chacun en est heurté, mais aucuns en sont renuersez. Son impression me perse; et mon art est de luy eschapper, par faute de force à luy resister. Ie viuroye de la seule assistance de personnes saines et gaies. La veuë des angoisses d'autruy m'angoisse materiellement: et a mon sentiment souuent vsurpé le sentiment d'vn tiers. Vn tousseur continuel irrite mon poulmon et mon gosier. Ie visite plus mal volontiers les malades, ausquels le deuoir m'interesse, que ceux ausquels ie m'attens moins, et que ie considere moins. Ie saisis le mal, que i'estudie, et le couche en moy.

Ie ne trouue pas estrange qu'elle donne et les fieures, et la mort, à ceux qui la laissent faire, et qui luy applaudissent. Simon Thomas estoit vn grand medecin de son temps. Il me souuient que me rencontrant vn iour à Thoulouse chez vn riche vieillard pulmonique, et traittant auec luy des moyens de sa guarison, il luy dist, que c'en estoit l'vn, de me donner occasion de me plaire en sa compagnie: et que fichant ses yeux sur la frescheur de mon visage, et sa pensée sur cette allegresse et vigueur, qui regorgeoit de mon adolescence: et remplissant tous ses sens de cet estat florissant en quoy i'estoy lors, son habitude s'en pourroit amender: mais il oublioit à dire, que la mienne s'en pourroit empirer aussi.

Gallus Vibius banda si bien son ame, à comprendre l'essence et les mouuemens de la folie, qu'il emporta son iugement hors de son siege, si qu'onques puis il ne l'y peut remettre: et se pouuoit vanter d'estre deuenu fol par sagesse. Il y en a, qui de frayeur anticipent la main du bourreau; et celuy qu'on debandoit pour luy lire sa grace, se trouua roide mort sur l'eschaffaut du seul coup de son imagination. Nous tressuons, nous tremblons, nous

ENGLISH

A strong imagination produces the event, say the learned. I am one of those who feel the very great force of the imagination. Everyone is jolted by it, but some are knocked flat. Its impression pierces me; and my art is to escape it, for lack of strength to resist it. I would like to live in the company of none but healthy and cheerful people. The sight of other people's anguish causes me real physical anguish, and my senses have often usurped the sensations of someone else. A man who coughs constantly irritates my lungs and my throat. I visit more reluctantly the sick to whom duty binds me than those I am less attached to and care less about. I catch the illness I study and lodge it in myself.

I do not find it strange that imagination brings on fevers and even death in those who give it free rein and encourage it. Simon Thomas was a great physician in his day. I remember that one day, when he met me in Toulouse at the house of a rich old man with a lung disease, and was discussing with him the means of curing him, he told him that one of them was to give me reason to enjoy his company: by fixing his eyes on the freshness of my face and his thoughts on the cheerfulness and vigor overflowing from my youth, and filling all his senses with the flourishing state I was then in, his condition might improve. But he forgot to say that mine might get worse as well.[1]

Vibius Gallus strained his mind so hard to understand the essence and the impulses of madness that he carried his judgment off its seat, so that he could never put it back again; he could boast of having gone mad through wisdom. There are some who, out of fright, forestall the executioner's hand; and one man, whose blindfold was being re-

1 Simon Thomas, a physician of Lectoure in Gascony.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
	pallissons, et rougissons aux secousses de nos imaginations; et renuersez dans la plume sentons nostre corps agité à leur bransle, quelques-fois iusques à en expirer. Et la ieunesse bouillante s'eschauffe si auant en son harnois toute endormie, qu'elle assouuit en songe ses amoureux desirs.	moved so that his pardon could be read to him, was found stone dead on the scaffold, struck down by his imagination alone. We sweat, we tremble, we turn pale and we blush at the jolts of our imaginings; and lying back in our feather beds we feel our bodies shaken by their agitation, sometimes to the point of dying of it. And hot-blooded youth gets so heated in its harness, fast asleep, that it satisfies its amorous desires in dreams.[2]
	Vt quasi transactis sæpe omnibus rebu' profundant / Fluminis ingentes fluctus, vestémque cruentent.	*So that often, as though the whole business were accomplished, they pour out / Great floods in a stream and stain their clothes.*[3]
1.21.2	Et encore qu'il ne soit pas nouueau de voir croistre la nuict des cornes à tel, qui ne les auoit pas en se couchant: toutesfois l'euenement de Cyppus Roy d'Italie est memorable, lequel pour auoir assisté le iour auec grande affection au combat des taureaux, et avoir eu en songe toute la nuict des cornes en la teste, les produisit en son front par la force de l'imagination. La passion donna au fils de Crœsus la voix, que nature luy auoit refusée. Et Antiochus print la fieure, par la beauté de Stratonicé trop viuement empreinte en son ame. Pline dit auoir veu Lucius Cossitius, de femme changé en homme le iour de ses nopces.	And although it is nothing new to see someone sprout horns in the night who did not have them when he went to bed, still the case of Cippus, king of Italy, is memorable: having watched a bullfight with great excitement during the day, and having had horns on his head in his dreams all night, he produced them on his forehead by the power of imagination. Passion gave the son of Croesus the voice that nature had denied him. And Antiochus caught a fever from the beauty of Stratonice, too vividly imprinted on his soul. Pliny says he saw Lucius Cossitius changed from a woman into a man on his wedding day.[4]
	Pontanus et d'autres racontent pareilles metamorphoses aduenuës en Italie ces siecles passez: et par vehement desir de luy et de sa mere, *Vota puer soluit, quæ fæmina vouerat Iphis.*	Pontanus and others tell of similar metamorphoses that occurred in Italy in past centuries; and through his own and his mother's vehement desire, *Iphis paid as a boy the vows he had made as a girl.*[5]
1.21.3	Passant à Vitry le François ie peu voir vn homme que l'Euesque de Soissons auoit nommé Germain en confirmation, lequel tous les habitans de là ont cogneu, et veu fille, iusques à l'aage de vingt deux ans, nommée Marie. Il estoit à cette heure là fort barbu, et vieil, et point marié. Faisant, dit-il, quelque effort en saultant, ses membres virils se produisirent: et est encore en vsage entre les filles de là, vne chanson, par laquelle elles s'entraduertissent de ne faire point de grandes eniambees, de peur de deuenir garçons, comme Marie Germain.	Passing through Vitry-le-François, I was able to see a man whom the Bishop of Soissons had named Germain at his confirmation. All the inhabitants there had known him, and seen him as a girl named Marie, until the age of twenty-two. He was by then heavily bearded, and old, and not married. He said that as he was straining in a jump, his male organs came out. And there is still a song current among the girls there in which they warn one another not to take long strides, for fear of becoming boys, like Marie Germain.[6]

2 Vibius Gallus, a rhetorician of Augustus' time; the story is told by Seneca the Elder.
3 Lucretius, On the Nature of Things.
4 Croesus' mute son cried out when a soldier was about to kill his father (Herodotus); Antiochus fell ill for love of his stepmother Stratonice.
5 Giovanni Pontano, a 15th-century Neapolitan humanist. The line is from Ovid's Metamorphoses, where the girl Iphis, raised as a boy, is changed into one.
6 Vitry-le-François, a town in Champagne; Montaigne passed through it in 1580 on his way to Italy.

FRENCH

Ce n'est pas tant de merueille que cette sorte d'accident se rencontre frequent: car si l'imagination peut en telles choses, elle est si continuellement et si vigoureusement attachée à ce subiect, que pour n'auoir si souuent à rechoir en mesme pensée et aspreté de desir, elle a meilleur compte d'incorporer, vne fois pour toutes, cette virile partie aux filles.

1.21.4 Les vns attribuent à la force de l'imagination les cicatrices du Roy Dagobert et de Sainct François. On dit que les corps s'en-enleuent telle fois de leur place. Et Celsus recite d'vn Prestre, qui rauissoit son ame en telle extase, que le corps en demeuroit longue espace sans respiration et sans sentiment. Sainct Augustin en nomme vn autre, à qui il ne falloit que faire ouïr des cris lamentables et plaintifs: soudain il defailloit, et s'emportoit si viuement hors de soy, qu'on auoit beau le tempester, et hurler, et le pincer, et le griller, iusques à ce qu'il fust resuscité: lors il disoit auoir ouy des voix, mais comme venant de loing: et s'aperceuoit de ses eschaudures et meurtrisseures.

Et que ce ne fust vne obstination apostée contre son sentiment, cela le montroit, qu'il n'auoit ce pendant ny poulx ny haleine. Il est vraysemblable, que le principal credit des visions, des enchantemens, et de tels effects extraordinaires, vienne de la puissance de l'imagination, agissant principalement contre les ames du vulgaire, plus molles. On leur a si fort saisi la creance, qu'ils pensent voir ce qu'ils ne voyent pas.

ENGLISH

It is not so very surprising that this sort of accident happens often. For if imagination has power in such matters, it is so continually and so vigorously fixed on this subject that, rather than having to fall back so often into the same thought and the same sharpness of desire, it finds it simpler to incorporate this male part into girls once and for all.

Some attribute to the power of imagination the scars of King Dagobert and of Saint Francis. It is said that bodies are sometimes lifted from their place by it. And Celsus tells of a priest who would carry his soul off into such an ecstasy that his body remained for a long time without breath or sensation. Saint Augustine names another who had only to hear cries of lament and grief to faint at once, and to go so completely out of himself that it was no use storming at him and yelling, pinching him and burning him, until he came back to life. Then he would say he had heard voices, but as if from far away; and he would notice his burns and bruises.[7]

And that this was not a stubbornness put on in defiance of his feelings was shown by the fact that meanwhile he had neither pulse nor breath. It is likely that visions, enchantments and such extraordinary effects owe most of their credit to the power of imagination, acting chiefly on the souls of the common people, which are softer. Their belief has been so firmly seized that they think they see what they do not see.

SPELLS OF IMPOTENCE

Fear and imagination cause the failures blamed on knotting spells; a playful counter-charm cures one.

FRENCH

1.21.5 Ie suis encore en ce doubte, que ces plaisantes liaisons dequoy nostre monde se voit si entraué qu'il ne se parle d'autre chose, ce sont volontiers des impressions de l'apprehension et de la crainte. Car ie sçay par experience, que tel de qui ie puis respondre, comme de moy-mesme, en qui il ne pouuoit choir soupçon aucun de foiblesse, et aussi peu d'enchantement, ayant ouy faire le conte à vn sien compagnon d'vne defaillance extraordinaire, en quoy il estoit tombé sur le point qu'il en auoit le moins de besoin, se trouuant en pareille occasion, l'horreur de ce conte luy vint à coup si

ENGLISH

I am still inclined to suspect that those comical spells of tying, which hamper our world so much that people talk of nothing else, are usually the effects of apprehension and fear. For I know from experience that a certain man, for whom I can answer as for myself, and on whom no suspicion of weakness could fall, and just as little of enchantment, had heard one of his companions tell of an extraordinary failure that had come over him at the very moment he could least afford it. Finding himself in a similar situation, the horror of this

7 The "scars" are the stigmata of Saint Francis of Assisi; Dagobert was a 7th-century Frankish king.

FRENCH

rudement frapper l'imagination, qu'il en courut vne fortune pareille.

Et de là en hors fut subiect à y renchoir: ce villain souuenir de son inconuenient le gourmandant et tyrannisant. Il trouua quelque remede à cette resuerie, par vne autre resuerie. C'est qu'aduouant luy mesme, et preschant auant la main, cette sienne subiection, la contention de son ame se soulageoit, sur ce, qu'apportant ce mal comme attendu, son obligation en amoindrissoit, et luy en poisoit moins. Quand il a eu loy, à son chois (sa pensée desbrouillée et desbandée, son corps se trouuant en son deu) de le faire lors premierement tenter, saisir, et surprendre à la cognoissance d'autruy, il s'est guari tout net. A qui on a esté vne fois capable, on n'est plus incapable, sinon par iuste foiblesse.

Ce malheur n'est à craindre qu'aux entreprinses, où nostre ame se trouue outre mesure tendue de desir et de respect; et notamment où les commoditez se rencontrent improuueues et pressantes. On n'a pas moyen de se rauoir de ce trouble. I'en sçay, à qui il a seruy d'y apporter le corps mesme, demy rassasié d'ailleurs, pour endormir l'ardeur de cette fureur, et qui par l'aage, se trouue moins impuissant, de ce qu'il est moins puissant: et tel autre, à qui il a serui aussi qu'vn amy l'ayt asseuré d'estre fourni d'vne contrebatterie d'enchantemens certains, à le preseruer. Il vaut mieux, que ie die comment ce fut.

1.21.6 Vn Comte de tresbon lieu, de qui i'estoye fort priué, se mariant auec vne belle dame, qui auoit esté poursuiuie de tel qui assistoit à la feste, mettoit en grande peine ses amis: et nommément vne vieille dame sa parente, qui presidoit à ces nopces, et les faisoit chez elle, craintiue de ces sorcelleries: ce qu'elle me fit entendre. Ie la priay s'en reposer sur moy. I'auoye de fortune en mes coffres, certaine petite piece d'or platte, où estoient grauées quelques figures celestes, contre le coup du Soleil, et pour oster la douleur de teste, la logeant à point, sur la cousture du test: et pour l'y tenir, elle estoit cousuë à vn ruban propre à rattacher souz le menton.

Resuerie germaine à celle dequoy nous parlons. Iacques Peletier, viuant chez moy, m'auoit faict ce present

ENGLISH

story suddenly struck his imagination so hard that he met with the same fate.[8]

And from then on he was liable to relapse, that wretched memory of his mishap bullying and tyrannizing him. He found some remedy for this fancy in another fancy. By admitting and announcing this weakness of his in advance, he relieved the strain on his soul, because by presenting the trouble as something expected, he lessened his obligation and it weighed on him less. When he had the opportunity, at a time of his own choosing—his mind clear and relaxed, his body in proper order—to let it first be tried, taken hold of and caught unawares, with the other person's knowledge, he was completely cured. With a woman toward whom one has once been capable, one is never again incapable, except through genuine weakness.

This misfortune is only to be feared in undertakings where our soul is strained beyond measure with desire and respect, and particularly where the opportunity comes unexpectedly and urgently. There is no way to recover from that disturbance. I know one man who found it helpful to bring to the task a body already half sated elsewhere, to dull the heat of that frenzy, and who with age finds himself less impotent for being less potent; and another who was also helped when a friend assured him that he was supplied with a counterbattery of sure enchantments to protect him. I had better tell how that came about.

A count of very good family, with whom I was on very intimate terms, was marrying a beautiful lady who had been courted by a man present at the festivities. This caused his friends great anxiety, and especially an old lady, a relative of his, who was presiding over the wedding and holding it at her house, and who feared these sorceries; she told me so. I asked her to leave it to me. I happened to have in my coffers a certain small flat piece of gold engraved with some celestial figures, good against sunstroke and for taking away headaches when placed exactly on the suture of the skull; and to keep it there, it was sewn to a ribbon meant to be tied under the chin.

A fancy akin to the one we are talking about. Jacques Peletier, when he was living at my house,

8 An allusion to the popular belief in "knotting the cord" (nouer l'aiguillette), a spell supposed to make a bridegroom impotent.

FRENCH

singulier. I'aduisay d'en tirer quelque vsage, et dis au Comte, qu'il pourroit courre fortune comme les autres, y ayant là des hommes pour luy en vouloir prester vne; mais que hardiment il s'allast coucher: que ie luy feroy vn tour d'amy: et n'espargneroys à son besoin, vn miracle, qui estoit en ma puissance: pourueu que sur son honneur, il me promist de le tenir tresfidelement secret. Seulement, comme sur la nuict on iroit luy porter le resueillon, s'il luy estoit mal allé, il me fist vn tel signe.

Il avoit eu l'ame et les oreilles si battues, qu'il se trouua lié du trouble de son imagination: et me feit son signe à l'heure susditte. Ie luy dis lors à l'oreille, qu'il se leuast, souz couleur de nous chasser, et prinst en se iouant la robbe de nuict, que i'auoye sur moy (nous estions de taille fort voisine) et s'en vestist, tant qu'il auroit executé mon ordonnance, qui fut; Quand nous serions sortis, qu'il se retirast à tomber de l'eaue: dist trois fois telles parolles: et fist tels mouuements. Qu'à chascune de ces trois fois, il ceignist le ruban, que ie luy mettoys en main, et couchast bien soigneusement la medaille qui y estoit attachée, sur ses roignons: la figure en telle posture.

Cela faict, ayant à la derniere fois bien estreint ce ruban, pour qu'il ne se peust ny desnouer, ny mouuoir de sa place, qu'en toute asseurance il s'en retournast à son prix faict: et n'oubliast de reietter ma robbe sur son lict, en maniere qu'elle les abriast tous deux. Ces singeries sont le principal de l'effect. Nostre pensée ne se pouuant desmesler, que moyens si estranges ne viennent de quelque abstruse science. Leur inanité leur donne poids et reuerence. Somme il fut certain, que mes characteres se trouuerent plus Veneriens que Solaires, plus en action qu'en prohibition. Ce fut vne humeur prompte et curieuse, qui me conuia à tel effect, esloigné de ma nature.

Ie suis ennemy des actions subtiles et feintes: et hay la finesse, en mes mains, non seulement recreatiue, mais aussi profitable. Si l'action n'est vicieuse, la routte l'est.

ENGLISH

had made me this singular present. I thought of putting it to some use, and told the count that he might run the same risk as others, since there were men present who would like to play such a trick on him; but that he should go boldly to bed: I would do him a friend's turn, and would not withhold, if he needed it, a miracle that was in my power, provided he promised me on his honor to keep it most faithfully secret. Only, when they came during the night to bring him the late-night collation, if things had gone badly for him, he was to give me such-and-such a sign.[9]

His mind and ears had been so battered that he found himself tied up by the agitation of his imagination, and he gave me his sign at the appointed time. Then I whispered to him to get up, on the pretext of chasing us out, and playfully take the dressing gown I had on (we were very close in size) and put it on until he had carried out my prescription, which was this: when we had gone out, he was to withdraw to pass water, say such-and-such words three times, and make such-and-such movements. Each of those three times he was to tie around himself the ribbon I was putting into his hand, and very carefully place the medal attached to it over his loins, with the figure in such-and-such a position.

That done, and having tied the ribbon tight the last time so that it could neither come undone nor slip from its place, he was to go back to his appointed task with complete confidence, and not forget to throw my gown over his bed so that it covered them both. These monkey tricks are the main part of the effect, since our minds cannot rid themselves of the idea that such strange means must come from some abstruse science. Their very inanity gives them weight and reverence. In short, it was certain that my figures proved more Venusian than solar, more for action than for prohibition. It was a sudden and curious whim that led me to such a deed, so far removed from my nature.

I am an enemy of subtle and feigned actions, and I hate trickery in my own hands, not only when it is for amusement but even when it is profitable. If the action is not wicked, the way to it is.

1.21.7

9 Jacques Peletier du Mans, poet and mathematician. It was customary to bring newlyweds a late-night collation (réveillon) on the wedding night.

FRENCH

Amasis Roy d'Ægypte, espousa Laodice tresbelle fille Grecque: et luy, qui se montroit gentil compagnon par tout ailleurs, se trouua court à iouïr d'elle: et menaça de la tuer, estimant que ce fust quelque sorcerie. Comme és choses qui consistent en fantasie, elle le reietta à la deuotion: et ayant faict ses vœus et promesses à Venus, il se trouua diuinement remis, dés la premiere nuict, d'apres ses oblations et sacrifices. Or elles ont tort de nous recueillir de ces contenances mineuses, querelleuses et fuyardes, qui nous esteignent en nous allumant. La bru de Pythagoras, disoit, que la femme qui se couche auec vn homme, doit auec sa cotte laisser quant et quant la honte, et la reprendre auec sa cotte.

ENGLISH

Amasis, king of Egypt, married Laodice, a very beautiful Greek girl; and he, who showed himself a lusty fellow everywhere else, found himself falling short when it came to enjoying her, and threatened to kill her, thinking it was some sorcery. As is usual in things that consist in fancy, she referred him to devotion; and having made his vows and promises to Venus, he found himself divinely restored from the very first night after his offerings and sacrifices. Now women are wrong to receive us with those coy, quarrelsome, evasive airs that put out our fire while kindling it. The daughter-in-law of Pythagoras used to say that a woman who goes to bed with a man should put off her modesty along with her petticoat, and put it back on with her petticoat.

L'ame de l'assaillant troublée de plusieurs diuerses allarmes, se perd aisement. Et à qui l'imagination a faict vne fois souffrir cette honte (et elle ne la fait souffrir qu'aux premieres accointances, d'autant qu'elles sont plus ardantes et aspres; et aussi qu'en cette premiere cognoissance qu'on donne de soy, on craint beaucoup plus de faillir) ayant mal commencé, il entre en fieure et despit de cet accident, qui luy dure aux occasions suiuantes.

The soul of the assailant, troubled by many different alarms, is easily lost. And when imagination has once made a man suffer this shame—and it does so only in first encounters, since these are more ardent and eager, and also because in this first acquaintance one gives of oneself one is far more afraid of failing—having begun badly, he falls into a fever of vexation over the accident, which stays with him on later occasions.

1.21.8 Les mariez, le temps estant tout leur, ne doiuent ny presser ny taster leur entreprinse, s'ils ne sont prests. Et vault mieux faillir indecemment, à estreiner la couche nuptiale, pleine d'agitation et de fieure, attendant vne et vne autre commodité plus priuée et moins allarmée, que de tomber en vne perpetuelle misere, pour s'estre estonné et desesperé du premier refus. Auant la possession prinse, le patient se doibt à saillies et diuers temps, legerement essayer et offrir, sans se piquer et opiniastrer, à se conuaincre definitiuement soy-mesme. Ceux qui sçauent leurs membres de nature dociles, qu'ils se soignent seulement de contre-pipper leur fantasie.

Married couples, who have all the time in the world, should neither press nor attempt their undertaking if they are not ready. It is better to fail, however unseemly, to christen the marriage bed while it is full of agitation and fever, and to wait for some other, more private and less anxious opportunity, than to fall into perpetual misery from having been stunned and driven to despair by the first refusal. Before taking possession, the patient should try and offer himself lightly, in sallies and at various times, without getting stubborn and insisting on convincing himself once and for all. Those who know their members to be naturally docile need only take care to outwit their own fancy.

IN DEFENSE OF AN UNRULY MEMBER

Every part of the body, and the will most of all, disobeys us as often as this one.

FRENCH

1.21.9 On a raison de remarquer l'indocile liberté de ce membre, s'ingerant si importunément lors que nous n'en auons que faire, et defaillant si importunément lors que nous en

ENGLISH

People are right to note the unruly freedom of this member, thrusting itself forward so inopportunely when we have no use for it, and failing so inoppor-

FRENCH

auons le plus affaire: et contestant de l'authorité, si imperieusement, auec nostre volonté, refusant auec tant de fierté et d'obstination noz solicitations et mentales et manuelles. Si toutesfois en ce qu'on gourmande sa rebellion, et qu'on en tire preuue de sa condemnation, il m'auoit payé pour plaider sa cause: à l'aduenture mettroy-ie en souspeçon noz autres membres ses compagnons, de luy estre allé dresser par belle enuie, de l'importance et douceur de son vsage, cette querelle apostée, et auoir par complot, armé le monde à l'encontre de luy, le chargeant malignement seul de leur faute commune.

Car ie vous donne à penser, s'il y a vne seule des parties de nostre corps, qui ne refuse à nostre volonté souuent son operation, et qui souuent ne s'exerce contre nostre volonté: elles ont chacune des passions propres, qui les esueillent et endorment, sans nostre congé. A quant de fois tesmoignent les mouuements forcez de nostre visage, les pensées que nous tenions secrettes, et nous trahissent aux assistants? Cette mesme cause qui anime ce membre, anime aussi sans nostre sceu, le cœur, le poulmon, et le pouls: la veue d'vn obiect agreable, respandant imperceptiblement en nous la flamme d'vne emotion fieureuse.

N'y a-il que ces muscles et ces veines, qui s'eleuent et se couchent, sans l'adueu non seulement de nostre volonté, mais aussi de notre pensée? Nous ne commandons pas à noz cheueux de se herisser, et à nostre peau de fremir de desir ou de crainte. La main se porte souuent où nous ne l'enuoyons pas. La langue se transit, et la voix se fige à son heure. Lors mesme que n'ayans de quoy frire, nous le luy deffendrions volontiers, l'appetit de manger et de boire ne laisse pas d'emouuoir les parties, qui luy sont subiettes, ny plus ny moins que cet autre appetit: et nous abandonne de mesme, hors de propos, quand bon luy semble.

1.21.10 Les vtils qui seruent à descharger le ventre, ont leurs propres dilatations et compressions, outre et contre nostre aduis, comme ceux-cy destinés à descharger les roignons. Et ce que pour autorizer la puissance de nostre volonté, Sainct Augustin allegue auoir veu quelqu'vn, qui commandoit à son derriere autant de pets qu'il en vouloit: et que Viues encherit d'vn autre exemple de son temps, de pets organizez, suiuants le ton des voix qu'on leur prononçoit, ne suppose non plus pure l'obeissance de ce membre. Car en est-il ordinairement de plus indiscret et tumultuaire?

ENGLISH

tunely when we have most use for it, contesting authority so imperiously with our will, and refusing with such pride and obstinacy our solicitations both mental and manual. Yet if, when its rebellion is being scolded and used as proof for its condemnation, it had paid me to plead its cause, I might perhaps cast suspicion on our other members, its fellows, of having trumped up this quarrel against it out of sheer envy of the importance and sweetness of its function, and of having conspired to arm the world against it, maliciously charging it alone with their common fault.

For I leave you to consider whether there is a single part of our body that does not often refuse to work at our will, and that does not often act against our will. Each of them has passions of its own that rouse it and put it to sleep without our leave. How often do the involuntary movements of our face bear witness to thoughts we were keeping secret, and betray us to those around us? The same cause that animates this member also animates, without our knowledge, the heart, the lungs and the pulse, the sight of a pleasing object imperceptibly spreading through us the flame of a feverish emotion.

Is it only these muscles and veins that rise and lie down without the consent not only of our will but even of our thought? We do not command our hair to stand on end, or our skin to quiver with desire or fear. Our hand often goes where we do not send it. Our tongue goes numb and our voice freezes when they please. Even when we have nothing to put in the pan and would gladly forbid it, the appetite for eating and drinking does not fail to stir the parts subject to it, just like that other appetite; and it likewise deserts us, at the wrong moment, whenever it likes.

The organs that serve to empty the bowels have their own dilations and contractions, beyond and against our wishes, just like those meant to empty the kidneys. And when, to vindicate the power of our will, Saint Augustine claims to have seen a man who could command his backside to produce as many farts as he wanted, and Vives caps this with another example from his own time, of farts arranged to follow the tone of words spoken to them, that does not imply any more perfect obedi-

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
		ence in this member. For is there any member ordinarily more indiscreet and unruly?[10]
	Ioint que i'en cognoy vn, si turbulent et reuesche, qu'il y a quarante ans, qu'il tient son maistre à peter d'vne haleine et d'vne obligation constante et irremittente, et le menne ainsin à la mort. Et pleust à Dieu, que ie ne le sceusse que par les histoires, combien de fois nostre ventre par le refus d'vn seul pet, nous menne iusques aux portes d'vne mort tres-angoisseuse: et que l'Empereur qui nous donna liberté de peter par tout, nous en eust donné le pouuoir.	Besides, I know of one so turbulent and unruly that for forty years it has kept its master farting with a constant and unremitting wind and compulsion, and is thus leading him to his death. And I wish to God I knew only from history books how often our belly, by refusing a single fart, brings us to the very gates of an agonizing death; and that the emperor who gave us the freedom to fart anywhere had given us the power to do so![11]
1.21.11	Mais nostre volonté, pour les droits de qui nous mettons en auant ce reproche, combien plus vray-semblablement la pouuons nous marquer de rebellion et sedition, par son des-reglement et desobeissance? Veut elle tousiours ce que nous voudrions qu'elle voulsist? Ne veut elle pas souuent ce que nous luy prohibons de vouloir; et à nostre euident dommage? se laisse elle non plus mener aux conclusions de nostre raison?	But our will, on behalf of whose rights we bring this reproach—how much more plausibly can we brand it with rebellion and sedition for its unruliness and disobedience! Does it always will what we would like it to will? Does it not often will what we forbid it to will, and to our evident harm? Does it let itself be led any better by the conclusions of our reason?
1.21.12	En fin, ie diroy pour monsieur ma partie, que plaise à considerer, qu'en ce fait sa cause estant inseparablement coniointe à vn consort, et indistinctement, on ne s'adresse pourtant qu'à luy, et par les arguments et charges qui ne peuuent appartenir à sondit consort. Car l'effect d'iceluy est bien de conuier inopportunement par fois, mais refuser, iamais: et de conuier encore tacitement et quietement. Partant se void l'animosité et illegalité manifeste des accusateurs. Quoy qu'il en soit, protestant, que les Aduocats et Iuges ont beau quereller et sentencier: nature tirera cependant son train: qui n'auroit faict que raison, quand elle auroit doüé ce membre de quelque particulier priuilege. Autheur du seul ouurage immortel, des mortels.	Finally, I would say on behalf of the gentleman my client: may it please the court to consider that in this matter, although his case is inseparably and indistinguishably joined with that of an associate, it is he alone who is accused, and with arguments and charges that cannot apply to his said associate. For the latter's action is indeed sometimes to invite inopportunely, but never to refuse; and to invite, moreover, silently and quietly. Hence the animosity and manifest illegality of the accusers is plain to see. Be that as it may, I protest that lawyers and judges may wrangle and pass sentence as they please: nature will meanwhile go her own way. And she would only have done right had she endowed this member with some special privilege, as the author of the only immortal work of mortals.
	Ouurage diuin selon Socrates: et Amour desir d'immortalité, et Dæmon immortel luy mesmes.	A divine work, according to Socrates; and Love is a desire for immortality, and himself an immortal daemon.[12]
1.21.13	Tel à l'aduenture par cet effect de l'imagination, laisse icy les escrouëlles, que son compagnon reporte en Espaigne. Voyla pourquoy en telles choses l'on a accoustumé de demander vne ame preparée. Pourquoy praticquent les Medecins auant main, la creance de leur patient, auec	One man, perhaps, through this effect of imagination, leaves his scrofula behind here, while his companion carries his back to Spain. That is why, in such matters, it is customary to require a soul that is prepared. Why do doctors work on their pa-

10 Juan Luis Vives, Spanish humanist, wrote a commentary on Augustine's City of God.
11 The emperor Claudius was said to have planned an edict allowing people to break wind at table (Suetonius).
12 Plato, Symposium.

FRENCH

tant de fausses promesses de sa guerison: si ce n'est afin que l'effect de l'imagination supplee l'imposture de leur aposéme? Ils sçauent qu'vn des maistres de ce mestier leur a laissé par escrit, qu'il s'est trouué des hommes à qui la seule veuë de la medecine faisoit l'operation.

Et tout ce caprice m'est tombé presentement en main, sur le conte que me faisoit vn domestique apotiquaire de feu mon pere, homme simple et Souysse, nation peu vaine et mensongiere: d'auoir cogneu long temps vn marchand à Toulouse maladif et subiect à la pierre qui auoit, souuent besoing de clysteres, et se les faisoit diuersement ordonner aux Medecins, selon l'occurrence de son mal: apportez qu'ils estoyent, il n'y auoit rien obmis des formes accoustumées: souuent il tastoit s'ils estoyent trop chauds: le voyla couché, renuersé, et toutes les approches faictes, sauf qu'il ne s'y faisoit aucune iniection. L'apotiquaire retiré apres cette ceremonie, le patient accommodé, comme s'il auoit veritablement pris le clystere, il en sentoit pareil effect à ceux qui les prennent.

Et si le Medecin n'en trouuoit l'operation suffisante, il luy en redonnoit deux ou trois autres, de mesme forme. Mon tesmoin iure, que pour espargner la despence, car il les payoit, comme s'il les eut receus, la femme de ce malade ayant quelquefois essayé d'y faire seulement mettre de l'eau tiede, l'effect en descouurit la fourbe; et pour auoir trouué ceux-la inutiles, qu'il faulsit reuenir à la premiere façon.

1.21.14 Vne femme pensant auoir aualé vne espingle auec son pain, crioit et se tourmentoit comme ayant vne douleur insupportable au gosier, où elle pensoit la sentir arrestée: mais par ce qu'il n'y auoit ny enfleure ny alteration par le dehors, vn habil'homme ayant iugé que ce n'estoit que fantasie et opinion, prise de quelque morceau de pain qui l'auoit picquée en passant, la fit vomir, et ietta à la desrobée dans ce qu'elle rendit, vne espingle tortue. Cette femme cuidant l'auoir rendue, se sentit soudain deschargée de sa douleur.

Ie sçay qu'vn Gentil'homme ayant traicté chez luy vne bonne compagnie, se vanta trois ou quatre iours apres par maniere de ieu, car il n'en estoit rien, de leur auoir faict manger vn chat en paste: dequoy vne damoyselle de

ENGLISH

tient's credulity beforehand with so many false promises of a cure, if not so that the effect of imagination may make up for the imposture of their potion? They know that one of the masters of their profession has left it in writing that there have been men on whom the mere sight of medicine did the work.[13]

And this whole fancy has just come to hand from a story told me by an apothecary in my late father's household, a simple man and a Swiss, a nation little given to vanity and lying. He had long known a merchant in Toulouse, sickly and subject to the stone, who often needed enemas and had his doctors prescribe them in various forms according to the course of his illness. When they were brought, none of the usual formalities was left out; he would often feel them to see if they were too hot; there he lay, turned over, with all the preliminaries done—except that no injection was given. The apothecary having withdrawn after this ceremony, and the patient settled as if he had really taken the enema, he felt the same effect from it as those who actually take them.

And if the doctor did not find its effect sufficient, he would give him two or three more of the same kind. My witness swears that when the sick man's wife, to save expense (for he paid for them as if he had received them), sometimes tried having just warm water put in, the effect gave away the trick; and since those proved useless, they had to go back to the first method.

A woman who thought she had swallowed a pin with her bread was crying out and tormenting herself as if she had an unbearable pain in her throat, where she thought she felt it stuck. But because there was no swelling or change on the outside, a clever man judged that it was only fancy and imagination, caused by some piece of bread that had scratched her on the way down. He made her vomit, and slipped a bent pin into what she brought up. The woman, believing she had got rid of it, felt suddenly relieved of her pain.

I know of a gentleman who, having entertained a good company at his house, boasted three or four days later, as a joke (for there was nothing to it), that he had made them eat a cat baked in a pie. A

13 The kings of France were believed to cure scrofula by touch, and Spaniards came to France to be touched.

FRENCH

la troupe print telle horreur, qu'en estant tombée en vn grand déuoyement d'estomac et fieure, il fut impossible de la sauuer.

1.21.15 Les bestes mesmes se voyent comme nous, subiectes à la force de l'imagination: tesmoings les chiens, qui se laissent mourir de dueil de la perte de leurs maistres: nous les voyons aussi iapper et tremousser en songe, hannir les cheuaux et se debatre.

1.21.16 Mais tout cecy se peut rapporter à l'estroite cousture de l'esprit et du corps s'entre-communiquants leurs fortunes. C'est autre chose; que l'imagination agisse quelque fois, non contre son corps seulement, mais contre le corps d'autruy. Et tout ainsi qu'vn corps reiette son mal à son voisin, comme il se voit en la peste, en la verolle, et au mal des yeux, qui se chargent de l'vn à l'autre: *Dum spectant oculi læsos, læduntur et ipsi: / Multáque corporibus transitione nocent.* pareillement l'imagination esbranlée auecques vehemence, eslance des traits, qui puissent offencer l'obiect estrangier. L'ancienneté a tenu de certaines femmes en Scythie, qu'animées et courroussées contre quelqu'vn, elles le tuoient du seul regard.

Les tortues, et les autruches couuent leurs œufs de la seule veuë, signe qu'ils y ont quelque vertu eiaculatrice. Et quant aux sorciers, on les dit auoir des yeux offensifs et nuisans. *Nescio quis teneros oculus mihi fascinat agnos.* Ce sont pour moy mauuais respondans que magiciens. Tant y a que nous voyons par experience, les femmes enuoyer aux corps des enfans, qu'elles portent au ventre, des marques de leurs fantasies: tesmoin celle qui engendra le More. Et il fut presenté à Charles Roy de Boheme et Empereur, vne fille d'aupres de Pise toute velue et herissée, que sa mere disoit auoir esté ainsi conceuë, à cause d'vn' image de Sainct Iean Baptiste pendue en son lict.

1.21.17 Des animaux il en est de mesmes: tesmoing les brebis de Iacob, et les perdris et lieures, que la neige blanchit aux montaignes. On vit dernierement chez moy vn chat guestant vn oyseau au hault d'vn arbre, et s'estans fichez la veuë ferme l'vn contre l'autre, quelque espace de temps, l'oyseau s'estre laissé choir comme mort entre les

ENGLISH

young lady of the party was seized with such horror at this that she fell into a severe stomach disorder and fever, and it proved impossible to save her.

Even animals are seen to be subject, as we are, to the power of imagination: witness dogs that let themselves die of grief at the loss of their masters. We also see them yap and twitch in their dreams, and horses whinny and thrash about.

But all this may be put down to the close seam between mind and body, which share their fortunes with each other. It is another matter for the imagination sometimes to act not only on its own body but on someone else's. And just as a body passes its illness on to its neighbor, as is seen with the plague, the pox and sore eyes, which are caught from one person to another—*Eyes that look on sore eyes grow sore themselves; / And many ills pass from body to body by contagion*—so the imagination, when violently stirred, shoots out darts that can strike an outside object. Antiquity held that certain women in Scythia, when roused and angry with someone, could kill him with a look alone.[14]

Tortoises and ostriches hatch their eggs by sight alone, a sign that there is some ejaculatory power in their eyes. And as for sorcerers, they are said to have harmful and baneful eyes. *Some eye or other is bewitching my tender lambs.* Magicians are poor guarantors, as far as I am concerned. Be that as it may, we see by experience that women transmit marks of their fancies to the bodies of the children they carry in their wombs: witness the woman who gave birth to the dark-skinned child. And there was presented to Charles, king of Bohemia and emperor, a girl from near Pisa, all hairy and bristly, whose mother said she had been conceived that way because of an image of Saint John the Baptist hanging by her bed.[15]

The same is true of animals: witness Jacob's sheep, and the partridges and hares that the snow turns white in the mountains. Recently at my house a cat was seen watching a bird at the top of a tree; and after they had fixed their eyes firmly on each other for some time, the bird let itself drop as if dead between the cat's paws, either intoxicated by

14 Ovid, Remedies of Love.
15 Virgil, Eclogues. Charles IV (1316–1378), king of Bohemia and Holy Roman Emperor.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
	pates du chat, ou enyuré par sa propre imagination, ou attiré par quelque force attractiue du chat.	its own imagination or drawn by some power of attraction in the cat.[16]

TRUE STORIES AND POSSIBLE ONES

Montaigne borrows tales on others' word, since even possible examples show what humans can do.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
1.21.18	Ceux qui ayment la volerie ont ouy faire le conte du fauconnier, qui arrestant obstinément sa veuë contre vn milan en l'air, gageoit, de la seule force de sa veuë le ramener contrebas: et le faisoit, à ce qu'on dit. Car les histoires que i'emprunte, ie les renuoye sur la conscience de ceux de qui ie les prens. Les discours sont à moy, et se tiennent par la preuue de la raison, non de l'experience; chacun y peut ioindre ses exemples: et qui n'en a point, qu'il ne laisse pas de croire qu'il en est assez, veu le nombre et varieté des accidens. Si ie ne comme bien, qu'vn autre comme pour moy.	Those who love falconry have heard the story of the falconer who, fixing his gaze stubbornly on a kite in the air, wagered that by the sole force of his gaze he would bring it down; and he did, so they say. For the stories I borrow, I leave them on the conscience of those I take them from. The reasonings are mine, and they stand by the proof of reason, not of experience; anyone can add his own examples to them; and whoever has none, let him not stop believing that there are plenty, given the number and variety of things that happen. If my comparisons are not apt, let someone else make them for me.
	Aussi en l'estude que ie traitte, de noz mœurs et mouuements, les tesmoignages fabuleux, pourueu qu'ils soient possibles, y seruent comme les vrais. Aduenu ou non aduenu, à Rome ou à Paris, à Iean ou à Pierre, c'est tousiours vn tour de l'humaine capacité: duquel ie suis vtilement aduisé par ce recit. Ie le voy, et en fay mon profit, egalement en vmbre qu'en corps. Et aux diuerses leçons, qu'ont souuent les histoires, ie prens à me seruir de celle qui est la plus rare et memorable. Il y a des autheurs, desquels la fin c'est dire les euenements. La mienne, si i'y scauoye aduenir, seroit dire sur ce qui peut aduenir.	Besides, in the study I am engaged in, of our ways and impulses, fabulous testimonies, provided they are possible, serve as well as true ones. Whether it happened or not, in Rome or in Paris, to John or to Peter, it is always a turn of human capability, of which this account usefully informs me. I see it and profit from it as much in shadow as in substance. And of the various versions that stories often have, I make a point of using the rarest and most memorable. There are authors whose aim is to relate what happened. Mine, if I could achieve it, would be to speak about what can happen.
	Il est justement permis aux Escholes, de supposer des similitudes, quand ilz n'en ont point. Ie n'en fay pas ainsi pourtant, et surpasse de ce costé là, en religion superstitieuse, toute foy historiale. Aux exemples que ie tire ceans, de ce que i'ay leu, ouï, faict, ou dict, ie me suis defendu d'oser alterer iusques aux plus legeres et inutiles circonstances, ma conscience ne falsifie pas vn iota, mon inscience ie ne sçay.	The schools are rightly allowed to invent illustrations when they have none. I do not do so, however, and in that respect I surpass all historical fidelity in superstitious scrupulousness. In the examples I bring in here from what I have read, heard, done or said, I have forbidden myself to dare to alter even the slightest and most useless circumstances. My conscience does not falsify one iota; my ignorance—I don't know.
1.21.19	Sur ce propos, i'entre par fois en pensée, qu'il puisse asses bien conuenir à vn Theologien, à vn Philosophe, et telles gens d'exquise et exacte conscience et prudence, d'escrire l'histoire. Comment peuuent-ils engager leur foy sur vne foy populaire? comment respondre des	On this subject, I sometimes find myself wondering whether it is quite fitting for a theologian, a philosopher and such people of exquisite and exact conscience and prudence to write history. How can they stake their good faith on popular belief?

16 In Genesis 30, Jacob makes his flocks bear striped and spotted young by setting peeled rods before them as they breed.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
	pensées de personnes incognues; et donner pour argent contant leurs coniectures? Des actions à diuers membres, qui se passent en leur presence, ils refuseroient d'en rendre tesmoignage, assermentez par vn iuge. Et n'ont homme si familier, des intentions duquel ils entreprennent de pleinement respondre. Ie tien moins hazardeux d'escrire les choses passées, que presentes: d'autant que l'escriuain n'a à rendre compte que d'vne verité empruntée.	How can they answer for the thoughts of people they do not know, and pass off their conjectures as ready cash? Of actions involving many parties that take place in their presence, they would refuse to bear witness if put under oath by a judge; and they know no man so intimately that they would undertake to answer fully for his intentions. I consider it less hazardous to write of things past than of things present, inasmuch as the writer has only to account for a borrowed truth.
1.21.20	Aucuns me conuient d'escrire les affaires de mon temps: estimants que ie les voy d'vne veuë moins blessée de passion, qu'vn autre, et de plus pres, pour l'accés que fortune m'a donné aux chefs de diuers partis. Mais ils ne disent pas, que pour la gloire de Salluste ie n'en prendroys pas la peine: ennemy iuré d'obligation, d'assiduité, de constance: qu'il n'est rien si contraire à mon stile, qu'vne narration estendue. Ie me recouppe si souuent, à faute d'haleine. Ie n'ay ny composition ny explication, qui vaille. Ignorant au delà d'vn enfant, des frases et vocables, qui seruent aux choses plus communes. Pourtant ay-ie prins à dire ce que ie sçay dire: accommodant la matiere à ma force.	Some people urge me to write the history of my own times, believing that I see things with an eye less wounded by passion than another man's, and from closer up, because of the access fortune has given me to the leaders of various parties. But they do not mention that I would not take the trouble even for the glory of Sallust, sworn enemy that I am of obligation, assiduity and constancy; and that nothing is so contrary to my style as an extended narrative. I cut myself short so often, for lack of breath. I have neither composition nor exposition worth anything. I am more ignorant than a child of the phrases and words used for the commonest things. That is why I have undertaken to say what I know how to say, fitting the matter to my strength.[17]
	Si i'en prenois qui me guidast, ma mesure pourroit faillir à la sienne. Que ma liberté, estant si libre, i'eusse publié des iugements, à mon gré mesme, et selon raison, illegitimes et punissables.	If I took a subject that led me, my measure might fall short of its own. And my freedom being so free, I might have published judgments that, even in my own opinion and according to reason, were unlawful and punishable.
1.21.21	Plutarche nous diroit volontiers de ce qu'il en a faict, que c'est l'ouurage d'autruy, que ses exemples soient en tout et par tout veritables: qu'ils soient vtiles à la posterité, et presentez d'vn lustre, qui nous esclaire à la vertu, que c'est son ouurage. Il n'est pas dangereux, comme en vne drogue medicinale, en vn compte ancien, qu'il soit ainsin ou ainsi.	Plutarch would readily tell us, of what he has done, that if his examples are true in every respect and every detail, that is the work of others; that if they are useful to posterity, and presented with a luster that lights our way to virtue, that is his own work. In an old tale, unlike a medicinal drug, there is no danger whether it is this way or that.

17 Sallust (86–35 BC), the Roman historian.

I.22 One Man's Profit Is Another Man's Loss

Le profit de l'vn est dommage de l'autre
Every profit comes at someone's loss—and nature too lives by one thing's birth being another's corruption.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
1.22.1	DEMADES Athenien condemna vn homme de sa ville, qui faisoit mestier de vendre les choses necessaires aux enterremens, soubs tiltre de ce qu'il en demandoit trop de profit, et que ce profit ne luy pouuoit venir sans la mort de beaucoup de gens. Ce iugement semble estre mal pris; d'autant qu'il ne se faict aucun profit qu'au dommage d'autruy, et qu'à ce compte il faudroit condamner toute sorte de guain.	Demades the Athenian condemned a man of his city whose trade was selling the things needed for funerals, on the ground that he asked too much profit for them, and that this profit could not come to him without the death of many people. This judgment seems ill-founded, since no profit is made except at someone else's expense, and by that reckoning every kind of gain would have to be condemned.[1]
1.22.2	Le marchand ne faict bien ses affaires, qu'à la débauche de la ieunesse: le laboureur à la cherté des bleds: l'architecte à la ruine des maisons: les officiers de la Iustice aux procez et querelles des hommes: l'honneur mesme et pratique des Ministres de la religion se tire de nostre mort et de noz vices. Nul Medecin ne prent plaisir à la santé de ses amis mesmes, dit l'ancien Comique Grec; ny soldat à la paix de sa ville: ainsi du reste. Et qui pis est, que chacun se sonde au dedans, il trouuera que nos souhaits interieurs pour la plus part naissent et se nourrissent aux despens d'autruy.	The merchant does good business only through the extravagance of the young; the farmer through the high price of grain; the architect through the ruin of houses; officers of justice through men's lawsuits and quarrels; even the honor and practice of ministers of religion derive from our death and our vices. No doctor takes pleasure in the health even of his friends, says the ancient Greek comic poet, nor any soldier in the peace of his city; and so on with the rest. And what is worse, let each of us sound himself within, and he will find that our inmost wishes are for the most part born and nourished at the expense of others.[2]
	Ce que considerant, il m'est venu en fantasie, comme nature ne se dement point en cela de sa generale police: car les Physiciens tiennent, que la naissance, nourrissement et, augmentation de chasque chose, est l'alteration et corruption d'vn' autre. *Nam quodcunque suis mutatum finibus exit, / Continuó hoc mors est illius, quod fuit antè.*	As I considered this, it occurred to me that nature in this respect does not depart from her general order; for the natural philosophers hold that the birth, nourishment and growth of each thing is the alteration and corruption of another. *For whatever is changed and passes beyond its bounds, / That is at once the death of what it was before.*[3]

1 Demades, an Athenian orator of the 4th century BC.
2 The Greek comic poet Philemon, in a fragment preserved by Stobaeus.
3 Lucretius, On the Nature of Things.

I.23 Of Custom, and Not Easily Changing an Accepted Law

De la coustume, et de ne changer aisément vne loy receüe
Custom rules us like a tyrant, shaping even conscience; yet Montaigne counsels against lightly changing established laws.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
1.23.1	CELVY me semble auoir tres-bien conceu la force de la coustume, qui premier forgea ce compte, qu'vne femme de village ayant appris de caresser et porter entre ses bras vn veau des l'heure de sa naissance, et continuant tousiours à ce faire, gaigna cela par l'accoustumance, que tout grand beuf qu'il estoit, elle le portoit encore. Car c'est à la verité vne violente et traistresse maistresse d'escole, que la coustume. Elle establit en nous, peu à peu, à la desrobée, le pied de son authorité: mais par ce doux et humble commencement, l'ayant rassis et planté auec l'ayde du temps, elle nous descouure tantost vn furieux et tyrannique visage, contre lequel nous n'auons plus la liberté de hausser seulement les yeux.	He seems to me to have grasped very well the power of custom who first made up this story: that a village woman, having learned to pet a calf and carry it in her arms from the hour of its birth, and continuing always to do so, gained this by habit, that even when it was a great ox she could still carry it. For custom is in truth a violent and treacherous schoolmistress. Little by little, by stealth, she establishes the foothold of her authority in us; but having by this gentle and humble beginning settled and planted it with the help of time, she soon reveals to us a furious and tyrannical face, against which we no longer have the freedom even to raise our eyes.
	Nous luy voyons forcer tous les coups les regles de nature: *Vsus efficacissimus rerum omnium magister*. I'en croy l'antre de Platon en sa republique, et les Medecins, qui quittent si souuent à son authorité les raisons de leur art: et ce Roy qui par son moyen rangea son estomac à se nourrir de poison: et la fille qu'Albert recite s'estre accoustumée à viure d'araignées: et en ce monde des Indes nouuelles on trouua des grands peuples, et en fort diuers climats, qui en viuoient, en faisoient prouision, et les appastoient: comme aussi des sauterelles, formiz, laizards, chauuesouriz, et fut vn crapault vendu six escus en vne necessité de viures: ils les cuisent et apprestent à diuerses sauces.	We see her force the rules of nature at every turn. *Custom is the most effective teacher of all things.* I take as witness Plato's cave in his Republic; and the doctors, who so often abandon the reasonings of their art in favor of her authority; and that king who by her means trained his stomach to feed on poison; and the girl Albert tells of, who accustomed herself to live on spiders. And in that world of the new Indies, great peoples were found, in very different climates, who lived on spiders, laid in stores of them and fattened them; and also on grasshoppers, ants, lizards and bats; and a toad was sold for six crowns in a time of food shortage. They cook them and serve them with various sauces.[1]
	Il en fut trouué d'autres ausquels noz chairs et noz viandes estoyent mortelles et venimeuses. *Consuetudinis magna vis est. Pernoctant venatores in niue: in montibus vri se patiuntur: Pugiles, cœstibus contusi, ne ingemiscunt quidem.*	Others were found to whom our meats and our foods were deadly and poisonous. *Great is the power of custom. Hunters spend the night in the snow; they let themselves be scorched in the mountains. Boxers, bruised by the cestus, do not even groan.*[2]
1.23.2	Ces exemples estrangers ne sont pas estranges, si nous considerons ce que nous essayons ordinairement;	These foreign examples are not strange if we consider what we commonly experience: how much

1 Pliny the Elder, Natural History. The king is Mithridates of Pontus; Albert is Albertus Magnus, the 13th-century scholar.

FRENCH

combien l'accoustumance hebete noz sens. Il ne nous faut pas aller cercher ce qu'on dit des voisins des cataractes du Nil: et ce que les Philosophes estiment de la musicque celeste; que les corps de ces cercles, estants solides, polis, et venants à se lescher et frotter l'vn à l'autre en roullant, ne peuuent faillir de produire vne merueilleuse harmonie: aux couppures et muances de laquelle se manient les contours et changements des caroles des astres. Mais qu'vniuersellement les ouïes des creatures de çà bas, endormies, comme celles des Ægyptiens, par la continuation de ce son, ne le peuuent apperceuoir, pour grand qu'il soit.

Les mareschaux, meulniers, armuriers, ne sçauroient demeurer au bruit, qui les frappe, s'il les perçoit comme nous. Mon collet de fleurs sert à mon nez: mais apres que ie m'en suis vestu trois iours de suitte, il ne sert qu'aux nez assistants. Cecy est plus estrange, que, nonobstant les longs interualles et intermissions, l'accoustumance puisse ioindre et establir l'effect de son impression sur noz sens: comme essayent les voysins des clochiers. Ie loge chez moy en vne tour, où à la diane et à la retraitte vne forte grosse cloche sonne tous les iours l'Aué Maria.

Ce tintamarre estonne ma tour mesme: et aux premiers iours me semblant insupportable, en peu de temps m'appriuoise de maniere que ie l'oy sans offense, et souuent sans m'en esueiller.

1.23.3 Platon tansa vn enfant, qui iouoit aux noix. Il luy respondit: Tu me tanses de peu de chose. L'accoustumance, repliqua Platon, n'est pas chose de peu. Ie trouue que noz plus grands vices prennent leur ply des nostre plus tendre enfance, et que nostre principal gouuernement est entre les mains des nourrices. C'est passetemps aux meres de veoir vn enfant tordre le col à vn poulet, et s'esbatre à blesser vn chien et vn chat. Et tel pere est si sot, de prendre à bon augure d'vne ame martiale, quand il voit son fils gourmer iniurieusement vn païsant, ou vn laquay, qui ne se defend point: et à gentillesse, quand il le void affiner son compagnon par quelque malicieuse desloyauté, et tromperie.

Ce sont pourtant les vrayes semences et racines de la cruauté, de la tyrannie, de la trahyson. Elles se germent là, et s'esleuent apres gaillardement, et profittent à force entre les mains de la coustume. Et est vne tres-

ENGLISH

habit dulls our senses. We need not go looking for what is said of the people who live near the cataracts of the Nile, or for what the philosophers think about the music of the heavens: that the bodies of those spheres, being solid and polished, and touching and rubbing against one another as they roll, cannot fail to produce a wonderful harmony, to whose cadences and modulations the turns and changes of the stars' round dances are measured; but that the hearing of all creatures here below, lulled to sleep, like that of the Egyptians, by the unbroken continuity of this sound, cannot perceive it, however loud it may be.

Blacksmiths, millers and armorers could not stand the noise that strikes them if it pierced them as it does us. My perfumed collar serves my nose; but after I have worn it three days in a row, it serves only the noses of those around me. What is stranger is that, despite long intervals and interruptions, habit can join together and establish the effect of its impression on our senses, as people who live near belfries find. At home I lodge in a tower where at dawn and at dusk a very big bell rings the Ave Maria every day.

This din shakes my very tower; and though in the first days it seemed unbearable to me, in a short time it so tamed me that I hear it without annoyance, and often without being woken by it.

Plato once scolded a child who was playing at nuts. The child answered, "You scold me over a small thing." "Habit," Plato replied, "is no small thing." I find that our greatest vices take their bent from our tenderest childhood, and that our upbringing is chiefly in the hands of nurses. Mothers find it amusing to watch a child wring a chicken's neck, or enjoy himself hurting a dog or a cat. And many a father is foolish enough to take it as a good omen of a martial spirit when he sees his son insolently beating a peasant or a lackey who does not defend himself, and as a sign of cleverness when he sees him get the better of a playmate by some spiteful disloyalty and deceit.

Yet these are the true seeds and roots of cruelty, tyranny and treachery. They sprout there, then shoot up vigorously and thrive mightily in the hands of custom. And it is a very dangerous way to

2 Cicero, Tusculan Disputations.

FRENCH

dangereuse institution, d'excuser ces villaines inclinations, par la foiblesse de l'aage, et legereté du subiect. Premierement c'est nature qui parle; de qui la voix est lors plus pure et plus naifue, qu'elle est plus gresle et plus neufue. Secondement, la laideur de la piperie ne depend pas de la difference des escutz aux espingles: elle depend de soy. Ie trouue bien plus iuste de conclurre ainsi: Pourquoy ne tromperoit il aux escutz, puis qu'il trompe aux espingles?

que, comme ils font; Ce n'est qu'aux espingles: il n'auroit garde de le faire aux escutz. Il faut apprendre soigneusement aux enfants de haïr les vices de leur propre contexture, et leur en faut apprendre la naturelle difformité, à ce qu'ils les fuient non en leur action seulement, mais sur tout en leur cœur: que la pensee mesme leur en soit odieuse, quelque masque qu'ils portent.

1.23.4 Ie sçay bien, que pour m'estre duict en ma puerilité, de marcher tousiours mon grand et plain chemin, et auoir eu à contrecœur de mesler ny tricotterie ny finesse à mes ieux enfantins, (comme de vray il faut noter, que les ieux des enfants ne sont pas ieux: et les faut iuger en eux, comme leurs plus serieuses actions) il n'est passetemps si leger, où ie n'apporte du dedans, et d'vne propension naturelle, et sans estude, vne extreme contradiction à tromper. Ie manie les chartes pour les doubles, et tien compte, comme pour les doubles doublons, lors que le gaigner et le perdre, contre ma femme et ma fille, m'est indifferent, comme lors qu'il va de bon.

En tout et par tout, il y a assés de mes yeux à me tenir en office: il n'y en a point, qui me veillent de si pres, ny que ie respecte plus.

1.23.5 Ie viens de voir chez moy vn petit homme natif de Nantes, né sans bras, qui a si bien façonné ses pieds, au seruice que luy deuoient les mains, qu'ils en ont à la verité à demy oublié leur office naturel. Au demourant il les nomme ses mains, il trenche, il charge vn pistolet et le lasche, il enfille son eguille, il coud, il escrit, il tire le bonnet, il se peigne, il iouë aux cartes et aux dez, et les remue auec autant de dexterité que sçauroit faire quelqu'autre: l'argent que luy ay donné, il l'a emporté en son pied, comme nous faisons en nostre main.

ENGLISH

bring up children to excuse these vile inclinations on the grounds of the child's tender age and the triviality of the matter. In the first place, it is nature speaking, and her voice is all the purer and more unaffected for being still thin and new. In the second place, the ugliness of cheating does not depend on the difference between crowns and pins; it depends on itself. I think it far more right to reason like this: "Why should he not cheat for crowns, since he cheats for pins?"

rather than, as people do: "It is only for pins; he would never do it for crowns." Children must be carefully taught to hate vices for what they are in themselves, and must be taught their natural deformity, so that they shun them not only in their actions but above all in their hearts, and the very thought of them is odious to them, whatever mask the vices wear.

I know very well that, because I was trained in childhood always to walk my own broad, open road, and had a strong distaste for mixing any trickery or slyness into my childish games (and indeed it should be noted that children's games are not games, and must be judged in children as their most serious actions), there is no pastime so trivial that I do not bring to it, from within, from a natural inclination and without any effort, an extreme aversion to cheating. I play cards for pennies and keep score as if for double doubloons, when winning or losing against my wife and daughter makes no difference to me, just as I do when the stakes are real.[3]

In everything and everywhere, my own eyes are enough to keep me to my duty; there are none that watch me so closely, and none that I respect more.

I have just seen at my house a little man, a native of Nantes, born without arms, who has trained his feet so well to do the service his hands owed him that his feet have, in truth, half forgotten their natural function. What is more, he calls them his hands. He cuts his food, he loads a pistol and fires it, he threads his needle, he sews, he writes, he doffs his hat, he combs his hair, he plays cards and dice and handles them with as much dexterity as anyone could; the money I gave him he carried away in his foot, as we do in our hand.

3 His wife was Françoise de La Chassaigne; Léonor was his only daughter to survive infancy.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
	I'en vy vn autre estant enfant, qui manioit vn' espee à deux mains, et vn' hallebarde, du ply du col à faute de mains, les iettoit en l'air et les reprenoit, lançoit vne dague, et faisoit craqueter vn fouët aussi bien que charretier de France.	When I was a child I saw another who, for want of hands, wielded a two-handed sword and a halberd in the crook of his neck, threw them into the air and caught them again, hurled a dagger, and cracked a whip as well as any carter in France.
1.23.6	Mais on descouure bien mieux ses effets aux estranges impressions, qu'elle faict en nos ames, où elle ne trouue pas tant de resistance. Que ne peut elle en nos iugemens et en nos creances? y a il opinion si bizarre: ie laisse à part la grossiere imposture des religions, dequoy tant de grandes nations, et tant de suffisants personnages se sont veuz enyurez: car cette partie estant hors de nos raisons humaines, il est plus excusable de s'y perdre, à qui n'y est extraordinairement esclairé par faueur diuine: mais d'autres opinions y en a il de si estranges, qu'elle n'aye planté et estably par loix és regions que bon luy a semblé?	But custom's effects are discovered far better in the strange impressions it makes on our souls, where it meets less resistance. What can it not do with our judgments and our beliefs? Is there any opinion so bizarre—I leave aside the gross imposture of religions, with which so many great nations and so many able persons have been seen intoxicated; for since that matter lies outside our human reasoning, it is more excusable for anyone to lose his way in it who is not extraordinarily enlightened by divine favor—but among other opinions, are there any so strange that custom has not planted them and established them by law in whatever regions it saw fit?
	Et est tres-iuste cette ancienne exclamation: *Non pudet physicum, id est speculatorem venatorémque naturæ, ab animis consuetudine imbutis quærere testimonium veritatis*?	And this ancient exclamation is very just: *Is it not shameful for a natural philosopher, that is, an observer and hunter of nature, to seek testimony of the truth from minds steeped in custom?*[4]

A CATALOG OF STRANGE CUSTOMS

Every notion, however wild, is somewhere a public custom: a long list of peoples' practices.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
1.23.7	I'estime qu'il ne tombe en l'imagination humaine aucune fantasie si forcenee qui ne rencontre l'exemple de quelque vsage public, et par consequent que nostre raison n'estaye et ne fonde. Il est des peuples où on tourne le doz à celuy qu'on saluë, et ne regarde l'on iamais celuy qu'on veut honorer. Il en est où quand le Roy crache, la plus fauorie des dames de sa Cour tend la main: et en autre nation les plus apparents qui sont autour de luy se baissent à terre, pour amasser en du linge son ordure. Desrobons icy la place d'vn compte.	I believe that no notion so mad can enter the human imagination that it does not find an example in some public practice, and consequently that our reason does not prop up and give a foundation to. There are peoples among whom you turn your back on the person you greet, and never look at the one you wish to honor. There are some among whom, when the king spits, the most favored of the ladies of his court holds out her hand; and in another nation the most eminent persons around him stoop to the ground to gather up his filth in a cloth. Let me steal room here for a story.
1.23.8	Vn Gentil-homme François se mouchoit tousiours de sa main, chose tres-ennemie de nostre vsage, defendant là dessus son faict: et estoit fameux en bonnes rencontres. Il me demanda, quel priuilege auoit ce salle excrement, que nous allassions luy appretant vn beau linge delicat à le receuoir; et puis, qui plus est, à l'empaqueter et serrer	A French gentleman always blew his nose with his hand, a thing very much against our usage, and he defended his practice on this point; he was famous for his witty sallies. He asked me what privilege this dirty excrement had, that we should go and

4 Cicero, On the Nature of the Gods.

FRENCH

soigneusement sur nous. Que cela deuoit faire plus de mal au cœur, que de le voir verser où que ce fust: comme nous faisons toutes nos autres ordures. Ie trouuay, qu'il ne parloit pas du tout sans raison: et m'auoit la coustume osté l'apperceuance de cette estrangeté, laquelle pourtant nous trouuons si hideuse, quand elle est recitee d'vn autre païs.

Les miracles sont, selon l'ignorance en quoy nous sommes de la nature, non selon l'estre de la nature. L'assuefaction endort la veuë de nostre iugement. Les Barbares ne nous sont de rien plus merueilleux que nous sommes à eux: ny auec plus d'occasion, comme chascun aduoüeroit, si chascun sçauoit, apres s'estre promené par ces loingtains exemples, se coucher sur les propres, et les conferer sainement. La raison humaine est vne teinture infuse enuiron de pareil pois à toutes nos opinions et mœurs, de quelque forme qu'elles soient: infinie en matiere, infinie en diuersité. Ie m'en retourne.

1.23.9 Il est des peuples, où sauf sa femme et ses enfans aucun ne parle au Roy que par sarbatane. En vne mesme nation et les vierges montrent à decouuert leurs parties honteuses, et les mariees les couurent et cachent soigneusement. A quoy cette autre coustume qui est ailleurs a quelque relation: la chasteté n'y est en prix que pour le seruice du mariage: car les filles se peuuent abandonner à leur poste, et engroissees se faire auorter par medicamens propres, au veu d'vn chascun.

Et ailleurs si c'est vn marchant qui se marie, tous les marchans conuiez à la nopce, couchent auec l'espousee auant luy: et plus il y en a, plus a elle d'honneur et de recommandation de fermeté et de capacité: si vn officier se marie, il en va de mesme; de mesme si c'est vn noble; et ainsi des autres: sauf si c'est vn laboureur ou quelqu'vn du bas peuple: car lors c'est au Seigneur à faire: et si on ne laisse pas d'y recommander estroitement la loyauté, pendant le mariage.

Il en est, où il se void des bordeaux publics de masles, voire et des mariages: où les femmes vont à la guerre quand et leurs maris, et ont rang, non au combat seulement, mais aussi au commandement. Où non seulement les bagues se portent au nez, aux leures, aux ioues, et aux orteils des pieds: mais des verges d'or bien

ENGLISH

prepare a fine, delicate linen to receive it, and then, what is more, wrap it up and carry it carefully about on our persons. That ought to turn the stomach more, he said, than seeing it dropped anywhere at all, as we do with all our other filth. I found that he was not speaking altogether without reason; custom had taken from me any perception of this strangeness, which we nevertheless find so hideous when it is reported of another country.

Miracles exist according to our ignorance of nature, not according to the being of nature. Habituation puts the eye of our judgment to sleep. Barbarians are no more a marvel to us than we are to them, nor with more cause—as everyone would admit if, after strolling among these far-off examples, each knew how to come back and settle on his own and compare them soundly. Human reason is a dye infused in roughly equal measure into all our opinions and customs, whatever their form: infinite in matter, infinite in diversity. I return to my subject.

There are peoples among whom no one but his wife and children speaks to the king except through a speaking tube. In one and the same nation the virgins show their private parts uncovered, and the married women cover and hide them carefully. To this another custom found elsewhere bears some relation: there chastity is prized only for the purposes of marriage, for girls may give themselves as they please and, when pregnant, may have themselves aborted with suitable drugs in full view of everyone.

And elsewhere, if it is a merchant who marries, all the merchants invited to the wedding sleep with the bride before he does; and the more of them there are, the more honor she has and the greater her reputation for stamina and capacity. If an official marries, it is the same; the same if it is a noble; and so with the rest—unless it is a laborer or someone of the common people, for then it falls to the lord to do it. And yet they do not fail to enjoin strict fidelity during the marriage.

There are some where one sees public brothels of males, and even marriages between them; where the women go to war alongside their husbands and hold rank not only in combat but also in command. Where rings are worn not only in the nose, the lips, the cheeks and the toes, but very heavy

FRENCH

poisantes au trauers des tetins et des fesses. Où en mangeant on s'essuye les doigts aux cuisses, et à la bourse des genitoires, et à la plante des pieds. Où les enfans ne sont pas heritiers, ce sont les freres et nepueux: et ailleurs les nepueux seulement: sauf en la succession du Prince.

Où pour regler la communauté des biens, qui s'y obserue, certains Magistrats souuerains ont charge vniuerselle de la culture des terres, et de la distribution des fruicts, selon le besoing d'vn chacun. Où l'on pleure la mort des enfans, et festoye l'on celle des vieillarts. Où ils couchent en des licts dix ou douze ensemble auec leurs femmes. Où les femmes qui perdent leurs maris par mort violente, se peuuent remarier, les autres non. Où l'on estime si mal de la condition des femmes, que l'on y tuë les femelles qui y naissent, et achepte l'on des voisins, des femmes pour le besoing. Où les maris peuuent repudier sans alleguer aucune cause, les femmes non pour cause quelconque.

Où les maris ont loy de les vendre, si elles sont steriles. Où ils font cuire le corps du trespassé, et puis piler, iusques à ce qu'il se forme comme en bouillie, laquelle ils meslent à leur vin, et la boiuent. Où la plus desirable sepulture est d'estre mangé des chiens: ailleurs des oyseaux. Où l'on croit que les ames heureuses viuent en toute liberté, en des champs plaisans, fournis de toutes commoditez: et que ce sont elles qui font cet echo que nous oyons. Où ils combattent en l'eau, et tirent seurement de leurs arcs en nageant. Où pour signe de subiection il faut hausser les espaules, et baisser la teste: et deschausser ses souliers quand on entre au logis du Roy.

Où les unuques qui ont les femmes religieuses en garde, ont encore le nez et leures à dire, pour ne pouuoir estre aymez: et les prestres se creuent les yeux pour accointer les demons, et prendre les oracles. Où chacun faict vn Dieu de ce qu'il luy plaist, le chasseur d'vn lyon ou d'vn renard, le pescheur de certain poisson: et des idoles de chaque action ou passion humaine: le soleil, la lune, et la terre, sont les Dieux principaux: la forme de iurer, c'est toucher la terre regardant le soleil: et y mange l'on la chair et le poisson crud.

Où le grand serment, c'est iurer le nom de quelque homme trespassé, qui a esté en bonne reputation au païs,

ENGLISH

rods of gold through the nipples and buttocks. Where, while eating, they wipe their fingers on their thighs, on the purse of their genitals and on the soles of their feet. Where children are not the heirs, but brothers and nephews; and elsewhere nephews only, except in the succession of the prince.

Where, to regulate the community of goods that is observed there, certain sovereign magistrates have universal charge of cultivating the land and distributing the produce according to each person's need. Where they mourn the death of children and celebrate that of old men. Where they sleep ten or twelve to a bed together with their wives. Where women who lose their husbands by violent death may remarry, and the others may not. Where they think so poorly of the condition of women that they kill the girls born there and buy women from their neighbors as needed. Where husbands can repudiate their wives without giving any reason, and wives cannot repudiate their husbands for any reason whatever.

Where husbands have the right to sell their wives if they are barren. Where they cook the body of the dead man and then pound it until it turns into a kind of pulp, which they mix into their wine and drink. Where the most desirable burial is to be eaten by dogs; elsewhere, by birds. Where they believe that happy souls live in complete freedom in pleasant fields furnished with every comfort, and that it is they who make the echo we hear. Where they fight in the water and shoot accurately with their bows while swimming. Where, as a sign of submission, one must raise one's shoulders and lower one's head, and take off one's shoes on entering the king's dwelling.

Where the eunuchs who guard the women vowed to religion are also without nose and lips, so that they cannot be loved; and the priests put out their own eyes in order to commune with demons and receive oracles. Where each man makes a god of whatever he pleases—the hunter of a lion or a fox, the fisherman of a certain fish—and idols of every human action or passion; the sun, the moon and the earth are the chief gods; the way to swear an oath is to touch the earth while looking at the sun; and there they eat meat and fish raw.

Where the great oath is to swear by the name of some dead man who was held in good repute in

FRENCH

touchant de la main sa tumbe. Où les estrenes que le Roy enuoye aux Princes ses vassaux, tous les ans, c'est du feu, lequel apporté, tout le vieil feu est esteint: et de ce nouueau sont tenus les peuples voisins venir puiser chacun pour soy, sur peine de crime de leze maiesté. Où, quand le Roy pour s'adonner du tout à la deuotion, se retire de sa charge, ce qui auient souuent, son premier successeur est obligé d'en faire autant: et passe le droict du Royaume au troisiéme successeur.

Où lon diuersifie la forme de la police, selon que les affaires semblent le requerir: on depose le Roy quand il semble bon: et luy substitue lon des anciens à prendre le gouuernail de l'Estat: et le laisse lon par fois aussi és mains de la commune. Où hommes et femmes sont circoncis, et pareillement baptisés. Où le soldat, qui en vn ou diuers combats, est arriué à presenter à son Roy sept testes d'ennemis, est faict noble. Où lon vit soubs cette opinion si rare et insociable de la mortalité des ames. Où les femmes s'accouchent sans pleincte et sans effroy.

Où les femmes en l'vne et l'autre iambe portent des greues de cuiure: et si vn pouil les mord, sont tenues par deuoir de magnanimité de le remordre: et n'osent espouser, qu'elles n'ayent offert à leur Roy, s'il le veut, leur pucellage. Où l'on saluë mettant le doigt à terre: et puis le haussant vers le ciel. Où les hommes portent les charges sur la teste, les femmes sur les espaules: elles pissent debout, les hommes, accroupis. Où ils enuoient de leur sang en signe d'amitié, et encensent comme les Dieux, les hommes qu'ils veulent honnorer. Où non seulement iusques au quatriesme degré, mais en aucun plus esloigné, la parenté n'est soufferte aux mariages.

Où les enfans sont quatre ans à nourrisse, et souuent douze: et là mesme il est estimé mortel de donner à l'enfant à tetter tout le premier iour. Où les peres ont charge du chastiment des masles, et les meres à part, des femelles: et est le chastiment de les fumer pendus par les pieds. Où on faict circoncire les femmes. Où lon mange toute sorte d'herbes sans autre discretion, que de refuser celles qui leur semblent auoir mauuaise senteur. Où tout est ouuert: et les maisons pour belles et riches qu'elles soyent sans porte, sans fenestre, sans coffre qui ferme: et sont les larrons doublement punis qu'ailleurs.

ENGLISH

the country, touching his tomb with one's hand. Where the New Year's gift the king sends every year to the princes who are his vassals is fire; when it is brought, all the old fire is put out, and the neighboring peoples are bound to come and draw from this new fire, each for himself, on pain of high treason. Where, when the king retires from his office to give himself wholly to devotion, which often happens, his first successor is obliged to do the same, and the right to the kingdom passes to the third successor.

Where they vary the form of government as affairs seem to require: they depose the king when it seems good, put elders in his place to take the helm of state, and sometimes also leave it in the hands of the common people. Where men and women are circumcised, and likewise baptized. Where a soldier who, in one battle or several, has managed to present seven enemy heads to his king is made a noble. Where they live under that rare and unsociable belief in the mortality of souls. Where women give birth without complaint and without fear.

Where the women wear copper greaves on both legs, and if a louse bites them they are bound by a duty of magnanimity to bite it back; and they dare not marry until they have offered their virginity to their king, if he wants it. Where people greet one another by touching a finger to the ground and then raising it toward the sky. Where men carry loads on their heads and women on their shoulders; the women urinate standing, the men squatting. Where they send some of their blood as a token of friendship, and burn incense, as to the gods, to the men they wish to honor. Where kinship is a bar to marriage not only up to the fourth degree but at any more distant degree.

Where children are nursed for four years, and often twelve; and in that same place it is thought fatal to give the child the breast at any time on its first day. Where fathers are in charge of punishing the boys, and mothers, separately, the girls; and the punishment is to smoke them while they hang by the feet. Where they circumcise the women. Where they eat every kind of plant with no other discrimination than to refuse those that seem to them to smell bad. Where everything is open, and the houses, however fine and rich, have no doors,

FRENCH

Où ils tuent les pouils auec les dents comme les Magots, et trouuent horrible de les voir escacher soubs les ongles. Où lon ne couppe en toute la vie ny poil ny ongle: ailleurs où lon ne couppe que les ongles de la droicte, celles de la gauche se nourrissent par gentillesse. Où ils nourrissent tout le poil du costé droict, tant qu'il peut croistre: et tiennent raz le poil de l'autre cousté. Et en voisines prouinces, celle icy nourrit le poil de deuant, celle là le poil de derriere: et rasent l'oposite. Où les peres prestent leurs enfans, les maris leurs femmes, à iouyr aux hostes, en payant.

Où on peut honnestement faire des enfans à sa mere, les peres se mesler à leurs filles, et à leurs fils. Où aux assemblees des festins ils s'entreprestent sans distinction de parenté les enfans les vns aux autres. Icy on vit de chair humaine: là c'est office de pieté de tuer son pere en certain aage: ailleurs les peres ordonnent des enfans encore au ventre des meres, ceux qu'ils veulent estre nourriz et conseruez, et ceux qu'ils veulent estre abandonnez et tuez: ailleurs les vieux maris prestent leurs femmes à la ieunesse pour s'en seruir: et ailleurs elles sont communes sans peché: voire en tel païs portent pour marque d'honneur autant de belles houpes frangees au bord de leurs robes, qu'elles ont accointé de masles.

N'a pas faict la coustume encore vne chose publique de femmes à part? leur a elle pas mis les armes à la main? faict dresser des armees, et liurer des batailles? Et ce que toute la philosophie ne peut planter en la teste des plus sages, ne l'apprend elle pas de sa seule ordonnance au plus grossier vulgaire? car nous sçauons des nations entieres, où non seulement la mort estoit mesprisee, mais festoyee: où les enfans de sept ans souffroient à estre foüettez iusques à la mort, sans changer de visage: où la richesse estoit en tel mespris, que le plus chetif citoyen de la ville n'eust daigné baisser le bras pour amasser vne bource d'escus.

Et sçauons des regions tres-fertiles en toutes façons de viures, où toutesfois les plus ordinaires més et les plus sauoureux, c'estoient du pain, du nasitort et de l'eau. Fit elle pas encore ce miracle en Cio, qu'il s'y passa sept cens

ENGLISH

no windows, no chests that lock; and thieves are punished twice as severely as elsewhere.

Where they kill lice with their teeth, like apes, and find it horrible to see them crushed under the fingernails. Where in all their lives they cut neither hair nor nails; elsewhere, where they cut only the nails of the right hand, letting those of the left grow long out of refinement. Where they let all the hair on the right side grow as long as it will, and keep the hair on the other side close-shaven. And in neighboring provinces, one grows the hair in front and the other the hair behind, and each shaves the opposite part. Where fathers lend their children, and husbands their wives, to guests to enjoy, for payment.

Where one may honorably have children by one's mother, and fathers may lie with their daughters and with their sons. Where at gatherings for feasts they lend their children to one another without regard to kinship. Here they live on human flesh; there it is an act of piety to kill one's father at a certain age; elsewhere fathers decide, while the children are still in their mothers' wombs, which they want reared and kept and which they want abandoned and killed; elsewhere old husbands lend their wives to young men to make use of; and elsewhere women are held in common without sin —indeed, in one such country they wear, as a mark of honor, as many fine fringed tassels on the hems of their robes as they have known men.

Has custom not even made a commonwealth of women on their own? Has it not put weapons in their hands, made them raise armies and fight battles? And what all philosophy cannot plant in the heads of the wisest, does custom not teach by its decree alone to the crudest common people? For we know of whole nations where death was not only scorned but celebrated; where children of seven endured being whipped to death without changing expression; where wealth was held in such contempt that the poorest citizen in the city would not have deigned to reach down to pick up a purse full of crowns.[5]

And we know of regions very rich in every kind of food where, nevertheless, the most ordinary and the most savory dishes were bread, cress and water. Did custom not also work this miracle on

5 He is thinking of the legendary Amazons and of the Spartan boys flogged at the altar of Artemis.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
	ans, sans memoire que femme ny fille y eust faict faute à son honneur?	Chios: that seven hundred years passed there without any record of a woman or girl failing in her honor?
1.23.10	Et somme, à ma fantasie, il n'est rien qu'elle ne face, ou qu'elle ne puisse: et auec raison l'appelle Pindarus, à ce qu'on m'a dict, la Royne et Emperiere du monde. Celuy qu'on rencontra battant son pere, respondit, que c'estoit la coustume de sa maison: que son pere auoit ainsi batu son ayeul; son ayeul son bisayeul: et montrant son fils: Cettuy cy me battra quand il sera venu au terme de l'aage où ie suis. Et le pere que le fils tirassoit et sabouloit emmy la ruë, luy commanda de s'arrester à certain huis; car luy, n'auoit trainé son pere que iusques là: que c'estoit la borne des iniurieux traittements hereditaires, que les enfants auoient en vsage faire aux peres en leur famille.	In short, to my mind, there is nothing custom does not do, or cannot do; and Pindar, so I am told, rightly calls it the queen and empress of the world. The man who was found beating his father replied that it was the custom of his house: his father had beaten his grandfather that way, and his grandfather his great-grandfather; and pointing to his son, he said, "This one will beat me when he reaches my age." And the father whom his son was dragging and knocking about in the middle of the street ordered him to stop at a certain doorway, for he himself had dragged his father only that far: that was the limit of the hereditary abuse that the children of their family were in the habit of inflicting on their fathers.[6]
	Par coustume, dit Aristote, aussi souuent que par maladie, des femmes s'arrachent le poil, rongent leurs ongles, mangent des charbons et de la terre: et plus par coustume que par nature les masles se meslent aux masles.	Out of custom, says Aristotle, as often as out of illness, women pull out their hair, bite their nails, and eat coal and earth; and males couple with males more from custom than from nature.

CONSCIENCE BORN OF CUSTOM

What we call the laws of conscience come from custom, which keeps us from reasoning about it.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
1.23.11	Les loix de la conscience, que nous disons naistre de nature, naissent de la coustume: chacun ayant en veneration interne les opinions et mœurs approuuees et receuës autour de luy, ne s'en peut desprendre sans remors, ny s'y appliquer sans applaudissement. Quand ceux de Crete vouloient au temps passé maudire quelqu'vn, ils prioient les Dieux de l'engager en quelque mauuaise coustume. Mais le principal effect de sa puissance, c'est de nous saisir et empieter de telle sorte, qu'à peine soit-il en nous, de nous r'auoir de sa prinse, et de r'entrer en nous, pour discourir et raisonner de ses ordonnances.	The laws of conscience, which we say are born of nature, are born of custom. Each man, holding in inward veneration the opinions and ways approved and accepted around him, cannot break away from them without remorse, nor apply himself to them without self-approval. When the Cretans of old wished to curse someone, they prayed the gods to entangle him in some bad habit. But the principal effect of custom's power is to seize us and grip us so tightly that it is scarcely in our power to free ourselves from its grasp and return to ourselves, to reflect and reason about its decrees.
	De vray, parce que nous les humons auec le laict de nostre naissance, et que le visage du monde se presente en cet estat à nostre premiere veuë, il semble que nous soyons naiz à la condition de suyure ce train. Et les communes imaginations, que nous trouuons en credit autour de	Indeed, because we suck them in with our first milk, and because the face of the world presents itself in that state to our first sight, it seems that we are born on condition of following that course. And the common notions that we find in credit

6 Pindar's line "law is king of all," quoted by Herodotus and Plato, was commonly read as referring to custom.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
	nous, et infuses en nostre ame par la semence de nos peres, il semble que ce soyent les generalles et naturelles. Par où il aduient, que ce qui est hors les gonds de la coustume, on le croid hors les gonds de la raison: Dieu sçait combien desraisonnablement le plus souuent.	around us, infused into our soul with our fathers' seed, seem to be the universal and natural ones. Hence it comes about that whatever is off the hinges of custom is believed to be off the hinges of reason—God knows how unreasonably, most of the time.
1.23.12	Si comme nous, qui nous estudions, auons apprins de faire, chascun qui oid vne iuste sentence, regardoit incontinent par où elle luy appartient en son propre: chascun trouueroit, que cette cy n'est pas tant vn bon mot comme vn bon coup de fouet à la bestise ordinaire de son iugement. Mais on reçoit les aduis de la verité et ses preceptes, comme adressés au peuple, non iamais à soy: et au lieu de les coucher sur ses mœurs, chascun les couche en sa memoire, tres-sottement et tres-inutilement. Reuenons à l'empire de la coustume.	If, as we who study ourselves have learned to do, everyone who hears a sound maxim looked at once to see how it applies to him personally, each would find that this one is not so much a witty saying as a sharp lash of the whip at the habitual stupidity of his own judgment. But people take the counsels and precepts of truth as addressed to the public, never to themselves; and instead of laying them up in their conduct, each lays them up in his memory, very foolishly and very uselessly. Let us return to the empire of custom.
1.23.13	Les peuples nourris à la liberté et à se commander eux mesmes, estiment toute autre forme de police monstrueuse et contre nature. Ceux qui sont duits à la monarchie en font de mesme. Et quelque facilité que leur preste fortune au changement, lors mesme qu'ils se sont auec grandes difficultez deffaitz de l'importunité d'vn maistre, ils courent à en replanter vn nouueau auec pareilles difficultez, pour ne se pouuoir resoudre de prendre en haine la maistrise. C'est par l'entremise de la coustume que chascun est contant du lieu où nature l'a planté: et les *[montagnards]* d'Escosse n'ont que faire de la Touraine, ny les Scythes de la Thessalie.	Peoples brought up in freedom and self-government consider every other form of government monstrous and against nature. Those accustomed to monarchy do the same. And whatever opportunity for change fortune offers them, even when they have rid themselves, with great difficulty, of a troublesome master, they rush to set up a new one with equal difficulty, because they cannot bring themselves to hate mastery. It is through the agency of custom that each man is content with the place where nature has planted him: the Highlanders of Scotland have no use for Touraine, nor the Scythians for Thessaly.
	Darius demandoit à quelques Grecs, pour combien ils voudroient prendre la coustume des Indes, de manger leurs peres trespassez (car c'estoit leur forme, estimans ne leur pouuoir donner plus fauorable sepulture, que dans eux-mesmes) ils luy respondirent que pour chose du monde ils ne le feroient: mais s'estant aussi essayé de persuader aux Indiens de laisser leur façon, et prendre celle de Grece, qui estoit de brusler les corps de leurs peres, il leur fit encore plus d'horreur. Chacun en fait ainsi, d'autant que l'vsage nous desrobbe le vray visage des choses. *Nil adeo magnum, nec tam mirabile quicquam* *Principio, quod non minuant mirarier omnes* *Paulatim.*	Darius asked some Greeks how much they would take to adopt the custom of the Indians and eat their dead fathers (for that was their practice, since they thought they could give them no more favorable burial than within themselves). They answered that they would not do it for anything in the world. But when he also tried to persuade the Indians to give up their way and adopt that of Greece, which was to burn the bodies of their fathers, he horrified them even more. Everyone does likewise, since usage robs us of the true face of things. *Nothing is so great, nothing so marvelous* *At first, that all men do not, little by little,* *Come to marvel at it less.*[7]
1.23.14	Autrefois ayant à faire valoir quelqu'vne de nos obseruations, et receuë auec resoluë authorité bien loing	Once, when I had to justify one of our observances, accepted with firm authority far and wide

FRENCH

autour de nous: et ne voulant point, comme il se fait, l'establir seulement par la force des loix et des exemples, mais questant tousiours iusques à son origine, i'y trouuay le fondement si foible, qu'à peine que ie ne m'en degoustasse, moy, qui auois à la confirmer en autruy. C'est cette recepte, par laquelle Platon entreprend de chasser les des-naturees et preposteres amours de son temps: qu'il estime souueraine et principale: assauoir, que l'opinion publique les condamne: que les Poëtes, que chacun en face de mauuais comptes.

Recepte, par le moyen de laquelle, les plus belles filles n'attirent plus l'amour des peres, ny les freres plus excellents en beauté, l'amour des sœurs. Les fables mesmes de Thyestes, d'Oedipus, de Macareus, ayant, auec le plaisir de leur chant, infus cette vtile creance, en la tendre ceruelle des enfants. De vray, la pudicité est vne belle vertu, et de laquelle l'vtilité est assez connuë: mais de la traitter et faire valoir selon nature, il est autant mal-aysé, comme il est aysé de la faire valoir selon l'vsage, les loix, et les preceptes. Les premieres et vniuerselles raisons sont de difficile perscrutation.

Et les passent noz maistres en escumant, ou en ne les osant pas seulement taster, se iettent d'abordee dans la franchise de la coustume: là ils s'enflent, et triomphent à bon compte. Ceux qui ne se veulent laisser tirer hors cette originelle source, faillent encore plus: et s'obligent à des opinions sauuages, tesmoin Chrysippus: qui sema en tant de lieux de ses escrits, le peu de compte en quoy il tenoit les conionctions incestueuses, quelles qu'elles fussent.

ENGLISH

around us, and did not want merely to establish it, as is usually done, by the force of laws and examples, but kept tracing it back to its origin, I found its foundation so weak that I nearly lost my taste for it—I, who was supposed to confirm it in others. This is the remedy by which Plato undertakes to drive out the unnatural and perverse loves of his time, and which he considers sovereign and principal: namely, that public opinion should condemn them, and that the poets, and everyone, should tell bad stories about them.[8]

A remedy by means of which the most beautiful daughters no longer attract their fathers' love, nor the most handsome brothers their sisters' love, since the very fables of Thyestes, Oedipus and Macareus, along with the pleasure of their song, have instilled this useful belief into the tender brains of children. Indeed, chastity is a fine virtue, and its usefulness is well enough known; but to treat it and justify it according to nature is as hard as it is easy to justify it according to usage, laws and precepts. First and universal reasons are difficult to search out.[9]

And our masters skim over them, or, not even daring to touch them, throw themselves straight into the sanctuary of custom, where they puff themselves up and triumph cheaply. Those who will not let themselves be drawn away from that original source go even further astray and commit themselves to uncouth opinions—witness Chrysippus, who scattered through so many places in his writings how little account he made of incestuous unions, of whatever kind.

LAWS NOBODY CAN READ

Laws sold and kept in a foreign tongue, and two codes of justice and honor, show custom's absurdity.

FRENCH

1.23.15 Qui voudra se deffaire de ce violent preiudice de la coustume, il trouuera plusieurs choses receuës d'vne resolution indubitable, qui n'ont appuy qu'en la barbe chenüe et rides de l'vsage, qui les accompaigne: mais ce masque arraché, rapportant les choses à la verité et à la raison, il sentira son iugement, comme tout bouleuersé, et remis pourtant en bien plus seur estat. Pour exemple,

ENGLISH

Whoever wishes to rid himself of this violent prejudice of custom will find many things accepted with unquestioning resolve that have no support but the gray beard and wrinkles of the usage that goes with them. But once this mask is torn off and things are referred to truth and reason, he will feel his judgment as if turned upside down, and yet set

7 Lucretius, On the Nature of Things. The story of Darius comes from Herodotus.
8 Plato, Laws, Book VIII.
9 Legendary figures guilty of incest: Thyestes with his daughter, Oedipus with his mother, Macareus with his sister Canace.

FRENCH

ie luy demanderay lors, quelle chose peut estre plus estrange, que de voir vn peuple obligé à suiure des loix qu'il n'entendit oncques: attaché en tous ses affaires domesticques, mariages, donations, testaments, ventes, et achapts, à des regles qu'il ne peut sçauoir, n'estans escrites ny publiees en sa langue, et desquelles par necessité il luy faille acheter l'interpretation et l'vsage.

Non selon l'ingenieuse opinion d'Isocrates, qui conseille à son Roy de rendre les trafiques et negociations de ses subiects libres, franches, et lucratiues; et leurs debats et querelles, onereuses, chargees de poisans subsides: mais selon vne opinion prodigieuse, de mettre en trafique, la raison mesme, et donner aux loix cours de marchandise. Ie sçay bon gré à la fortune, dequoy, comme disent nos historiens, ce fut vn Gentil-homme Gascon et de mon pays, qui le premier s'opposa à Charlemaigne, nous voulant donner les loix Latines et imperiales.

1.23.16 Qu'est-il plus farouche que de voir vne nation, où par legitime coustume la charge de iuger se vende; et les iugements soyent payez à purs deniers contans; et où legitimement la iustice soit refusee à qui n'a dequoy la payer: et aye cette marchandise si grand credit, qu'il se face en vne police vn quatriéme estat, de gens manians les procés, pour le ioindre aux trois anciens, de l'Église, de la Noblesse, et du Peuple:

lequel estat ayant la charge des loix et souueraine authorité des biens et des vies, face vn corps à part de celuy de la noblesse: d'où il aduienne qu'il y ayt doubles loix, celles de l'honneur, et celles de la iustice, en plusieurs choses fort contraires: aussi rigoureusement condamnent celles-là vn demanti souffert, comme celles icy vn demanti reuanché: par le deuoir des armes, celuy-là soit degradé d'honneur et de noblesse qui souffre vn' iniure, et par le deuoir ciuil, celuy qui s'en venge encoure vne peine capitale?

qui s'adresse aux loix pour auoir raison d'vne offense faicte à son honneur, il se deshonnore: et qui ne s'y adresse, il en est puny et chastié par les loix: et de ces deux pieces si diuerses, se rapportans toutesfois à vn seul chef, ceux-là ayent la paix, ceux-cy la guerre en charge: ceux-là ayent le gaing, ceux-cy l'honneur: ceux-là le

ENGLISH

back on a much surer footing. For example, I shall then ask him what can be stranger than to see a people obliged to follow laws it never understood; bound in all its domestic affairs—marriages, gifts, wills, sales and purchases—by rules it cannot know, since they are neither written nor published in its own language, and whose interpretation and application it must of necessity buy.

Not according to the ingenious opinion of Isocrates, who advises his king to make the trade and dealings of his subjects free, unhampered and profitable, and their disputes and quarrels costly, burdened with heavy taxes; but according to a monstrous opinion: to make reason itself an article of trade and give laws the currency of merchandise. I am grateful to fortune that, as our historians say, it was a Gascon gentleman from my own region who first opposed Charlemagne when he wanted to give us Latin and imperial laws.[10]

What is more shocking than to see a nation where, by lawful custom, the office of judge is sold and judgments are paid for in ready cash; where justice is lawfully refused to anyone who has not the means to pay for it; and where this merchandise has such credit that there forms within the state a fourth estate, of people who handle lawsuits, to join the three ancient ones of the Church, the Nobility and the People;[11]

an estate which, having charge of the laws and sovereign authority over property and lives, forms a body separate from that of the nobility; with the result that there are two sets of laws, those of honor and those of justice, in many things quite contrary? The former condemn a man who puts up with being called a liar as severely as the latter condemn one who takes revenge for it: by the code of arms, a man who swallows an insult is stripped of honor and nobility, and by civil duty, a man who avenges it incurs capital punishment.

He who goes to the law for satisfaction for an offense to his honor dishonors himself; and he who does not is punished and chastised by the law. And of these two so different parts, which nevertheless answer to a single head, the one has charge of peace, the other of war; the one has gain for its

10 Isocrates (436–338 BC), Athenian orator, in his address To Nicocles, king of Salamis in Cyprus.
11 The sale of judicial offices was established practice in sixteenth-century France; Montaigne himself had sat as a magistrate in the Bordeaux Parlement.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
	sçauoir, ceux-cy la vertu: ceux-là la parole, ceux-cy l'action: ceux-là la iustice, ceux-cy la vaillance: ceux-là la raison, ceux-cy la force: ceux-là la robbe longue, ceux-cy la courte en partage.	share, the other honor; the one knowledge, the other virtue; the one words, the other action; the one justice, the other valor; the one reason, the other force; the one the long robe, the other the short.[12]
1.23.17	Quant aux choses indifferentes, comme vestemens, qui les voudra ramener à leur vraye fin, qui est le seruice et commodité du corps, d'où depend leur grace et bienseance originelle, pour les plus fantasticques à mon gré qui se puissent imaginer, ie luy donray entre autres nos bonnets carrez: cette longue queuë de veloux plissé, qui pend aux testes de nos femmes, auec son attirail bigarré: et ce vain modelle et inutile, d'vn membre que nous ne pouuons seulement honnestement nommer, duquel toutesfois nous faisons montre et parade en public.	As for indifferent things such as clothes, if anyone wants to bring them back to their true purpose, which is the service and comfort of the body, on which their original grace and seemliness depend, then for the most fantastic I think one could imagine, I will offer him, among others, our square caps; that long tail of pleated velvet hanging from our women's heads, with its motley trappings; and that vain and useless model of a member we cannot even decently name, which we nevertheless show off and parade in public.[13]
1.23.18	Ces considerations ne destournent pourtant pas vn homme d'entendement de suiure le stile commun. Ains au rebours, il me semble que toutes façons escartees et particulieres partent plustost de folie, ou d'affectation ambitieuse, que de vraye raison: et que le sage doit au dedans retirer son ame de la presse, et la tenir en liberté et puissance de iuger librement des choses: mais quant au dehors, qu'il doit suiure entierement les façons et formes receuës.	These considerations do not, however, turn a man of understanding away from following the common style. On the contrary, it seems to me that all eccentric and peculiar ways spring from folly or ambitious affectation rather than from true reason; and that the wise man should inwardly withdraw his soul from the crowd and keep it free and able to judge things freely, but outwardly he should follow the accepted fashions and forms entirely.
	La societé publique n'a que faire de nos pensees: mais le demeurant, comme nos actions, nostre trauail, nos fortunes et nostre vie, il la faut prester et abandonner à son seruice et aux opinions communes: comme ce bon et grand Socrates refusa de sauuer sa vie par la desobeissance du magistrat, voire d'vn magistrat tres-iniuste et tres-inique. Car c'est la regle des regles, et generale loy des loix, que chacun obserue celles du lieu où il est: νομοις ἑπεσθαι τοισιν εγχωριοις αλον.	Public society has no business with our thoughts; but the rest—our actions, our labor, our fortunes and our life—we must lend and surrender to its service and to common opinion, as the good and great Socrates refused to save his life by disobeying the magistrate, even a very unjust and very iniquitous magistrate. For it is the rule of rules and the universal law of laws that each should observe those of the place where he is: *It is good to obey the laws of one's country.*[14]

AGAINST CHANGING ACCEPTED LAWS

Changing a received law usually does more harm than good; the novelty of our time proves it.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
1.23.19	En voicy d'vne autre cuuee. Il y a grand doute, s'il se peut trouuer si euident profit au changement d'vne loy receüe	Here is one of another vintage. It is very doubtful whether there can be such evident profit in chan-

12 The long robe was worn by magistrates and lawyers; the short robe stands for the nobility of the sword.
13 The codpiece.
14 Socrates' refusal to escape his death sentence is told in Plato's Crito; the Greek line comes from the ancient collections of verse maxims attributed to Menander.

FRENCH

telle qu'elle soit, qu'il y a de mal à la remuer: d'autant qu'vne police, c'est comme vn bastiment de diuerses pieces ioinctes ensemble d'vne telle liaison, qu'il est impossible d'en esbranler vne que tout le corps ne s'en sente. Le legislateur des Thuriens ordonna, que quiconque voudroit ou abolir vne des vieilles loix, ou en establir vne nouuelle, se presenteroit au peuple la corde au col: afin que si la nouuelleté n'estoit approuuee d'vn chacun, il fust incontinent estranglé. Et celuy de Lacedemone employa sa vie pour tirer de ses citoyens vne promesse asseuree, de n'enfraindre aucune de ses ordonnances.

L'Ephore qui coupa si rudement les deux cordes que Phrinys auoit adiousté à la musique, ne s'esmoie pas, si elle en vaut mieux, ou si les accords en sont mieux remplis: il luy suffit pour les condamner, que ce soit vne alteration de la vieille façon. C'est ce que signifioit cette espee rouillee de la Iustice de Marseille.

1.23.20 Ie suis desgousté de la nouuelleté, quelque visage qu'elle porte; et ay raison, car i'en ay veu des effets tres-dommageables. Celle qui nous presse depuis tant d'ans, elle n'a pas tout exploicté: mais on peut dire auec apparence, que par accident, elle a tout produict et engendré; voire et les maux et ruines, qui se font depuis sans elle, et contre elle: c'est à elle à s'en prendre au nez, *Heu patior telis vulnera facta meis!* Ceux qui donnent le branle à vn Estat, sont volontiers les premiers absorbez en sa ruine. Le fruict du trouble ne demeure guere à celuy qui l'a esmeu; il bat et brouille l'eaue pour d'autres pescheurs.

La liaison et contexture de cette monarchie et ce grand bastiment, ayant esté desmis et dissout, notamment sur ses vieux ans par elle, donne tant qu'on veut d'ouuerture et d'entree à pareilles iniures. La maiesté royalle s'auale plus difficilement du sommet au milieu, qu'elle ne se precipite du milieu à fons. Mais si les inuenteurs sont plus dommageables, les imitateurs sont plus vicieux, de se ietter en des exemples, desquels ils ont senti et puni l'horreur et le mal. Et s'il y a quelque degré d'honneur, mesmes au mal faire, ceux cy doiuent aux autres, la gloire de l'inuention, et le courage du premier effort.

ENGLISH

ging an accepted law, whatever it may be, as there is harm in disturbing it; for a government is like a building made of various parts joined together so closely that it is impossible to shake one without the whole structure feeling it. The lawgiver of the Thurians decreed that anyone who wanted either to abolish one of the old laws or to establish a new one should come before the people with a rope around his neck, so that if the novelty was not approved by everyone, he could be strangled on the spot. And the lawgiver of Sparta spent his life extracting from his citizens a firm promise not to break any of his ordinances.[15]

The ephor who so roughly cut the two strings that Phrynis had added to music does not trouble himself whether music is the better for them or its harmonies the fuller: it is enough for him, to condemn them, that they are a change from the old way. That is what the rusty sword of the court of justice at Marseille signified.[16]

I am sick of novelty, whatever face it wears, and with reason, for I have seen its very harmful effects. The one that has been oppressing us for so many years has not achieved everything; but one may plausibly say that it has, incidentally, produced and engendered everything—even the evils and ruins that have since been wrought without it and against it. It has only itself to blame: *Alas, I suffer wounds made by my own arrows!* Those who set a state in motion are usually the first to be swallowed up in its ruin. The fruits of disorder seldom go to the man who stirred it up; he beats and muddies the water for other fishermen.[17]

Since the bond and fabric of this monarchy, this great building, has been loosened and dissolved by it, especially in its old age, it lies as open as anyone could wish to similar injuries. Royal majesty comes down from the summit to the middle with more difficulty than it plunges from the middle to the bottom. But if the inventors do more harm, the imitators are more wicked, for rushing into examples whose horror and harm they have themselves felt and punished. And if there is any degree of honor even in wrongdoing,

15 Charondas was the lawgiver of Thurii in southern Italy; Lycurgus, the lawgiver of Sparta.
16 Phrynis was a fifth-century BC lyre player; Marseille was said to have used the same rusty sword for executions since its founding, as a sign of unchanging law.
17 Ovid, Heroides. The novelty is the Protestant Reformation and the Wars of Religion that followed.

FRENCH

ENGLISH

the imitators owe the others the glory of invention and the courage of the first attempt.

Toutes sortes de nouuelle desbauche puysent heureusement en cette premiere et fœconde source, les images et patrons à troubler nostre police. On lit en nos loix mesmes, faictes pour le remede de ce premier mal, l'apprentissage et l'excuse de toutes sortes de mauuaises entreprises. Et nous aduient ce que Thucydides dit des guerres ciuiles de son temps, qu'en faueur des vices publiques, on les battisoit de mots nouueaux plus doux pour leur excuse, abastardissant et amollissant leurs vrais titres. C'est pourtant, pour reformer nos consciences et nos creances, *honesta oratio est*.

All kinds of new disorder happily draw from this first and fertile source the models and patterns for disturbing our state. In our very laws, made to remedy this first evil, one reads the apprenticeship and the excuse for every kind of wicked enterprise. And what Thucydides says of the civil wars of his time happens to us: that to favor public vices, people baptized them with new and gentler words to excuse them, debasing and softening their true names. And yet it is all to reform our consciences and our beliefs: *the pretext is honorable.*[18]

1.23.21 Mais le meilleur pretexte de nouuelleté est tres-dangereux. *Adeo nihil motum ex antiquo probabile est.* Si me semble-il, à le dire franchement, qu'il y a grand amour de soy et presomption, d'estimer ses opinions iusques-là, que pour les establir, il faille renuerser vne paix publique, et introduire tant de maux ineuitables, et vne si horrible corruption de mœurs que les guerres ciuiles apportent, et les mutations d'Estat, en chose de tel pois, et les introduire en son pays propre. Est-ce pas mal mesnagé, d'aduancer tant de vices certains et cognus, pour combattre des erreurs contestees et debatables? Est-il quelque pire espece de vices, que ceux qui choquent la propre conscience et naturelle cognoissance?

But the best pretext for novelty is very dangerous. *So true is it that no change from ancient ways deserves approval.* Indeed, it seems to me, to speak frankly, that there is great self-love and presumption in valuing one's opinions so highly that, to establish them, one must overturn public peace and bring in so many inevitable evils and so horrible a corruption of morals as civil wars and changes of state bring with them, in a matter of such weight—and bring them into one's own country. Is it not poor management to promote so many certain and known vices in order to combat disputed and debatable errors? Is there any worse kind of vice than those that offend one's own conscience and natural knowledge?[19]

Le Senat osa donner en payement cette deffaitte, sur le different d'entre luy et le peuple, pour le ministere de leur religion: *Ad deos, id magis quàm ad se pertinere, ipsos visuros, ne sacra sua polluantur*: conformément à ce que respondit l'oracle à ceux de Delphes, en la guerre Medoise, craignans l'inuasion des Perses. Ils demanderent au Dieu, ce qu'ils auoient à faire des tresors sacrez de son temple, ou les cacher, ou les emporter. Il leur respondit, qu'ils ne bougeassent rien, qu'ils se souciassent d'eux: qu'il estoit suffisant pour prouuoir à ce qui luy estoit propre.

The Senate dared to offer this evasion by way of payment in its dispute with the people over the ministry of their religion: *That this concerned the gods more than themselves; the gods would see to it that their rites were not profaned.* This agrees with the oracle's answer to the people of Delphi in the Median War, when they feared the Persian invasion. They asked the god what they should do with the sacred treasures of his temple—hide them or carry them away. He answered that they should move nothing and look after themselves: he was quite able to provide for what belonged to him.[20]

1.23.22 La religion Chrestienne a toutes les marques d'extreme iustice et vtilité: mais nulle plus apparente, que l'exacte recommandation de l'obeïssance du magistrat, et

The Christian religion has all the marks of supreme justice and usefulness, but none more evident than its strict injunction to obey the magis-

18 Terence, The Girl from Andros.
19 Livy, History of Rome.
20 Livy, History of Rome; the Median War is the Persian invasion of Greece in 480 BC.

FRENCH

manutention des polices. Quel merueilleux exemple nous en a laissé la sapience diuine; qui pour establir le salut du genre humain, et conduire cette sienne glorieuse victoire contre la mort et le peché, ne l'a voulu faire qu'à la mercy de nostre ordre politique: et a soubsmis son progrez et la conduicte d'vn si haut effet et si salutaire, à l'aueuglement et iniustice de nos obseruations et vsances: y laissant courir le sang innocent de tant d'esleuz ses fauoriz, et souffrant vne longue perte d'années à meurir ce fruict inestimable?

Il y a grand à dire entre la cause de celuy qui suit les formes et les loix de son pays, et celuy qui entreprend de les regenter et changer. Celuy là allegue pour son excuse, la simplicité, l'obeissance et l'exemple: quoy qu'il face ce ne peut estre malice, c'est pour le plus malheur. *Quis est enim, quem non moueat clarissimis monimentis testata consignatàque antiquitas?* Outre ce que dit Isocrates, que la defectuosité a plus de part à la moderation, que n'a l'exces. L'autre est en bien plus rude party. Car qui se mesle de choisir et de changer, vsurpe l'authorité de iuger: et se doit faire fort, de voir la faute de ce qu'il chasse, et le bien de ce qu'il introduit.

1.23.23 Cette si vulgaire consideration m'a fermy en mon siege: et tenu ma ieunesse mesme, plus temeraire, en bride: de ne charger mes espaules d'vn si lourd faix, que de me rendre respondant d'vne science de telle importance. Et oser en cette cy, ce qu'en sain iugement, ie ne pourroy oser en la plus facile de celles ausquelles on m'auoit instruit, et ausquelles la temerité de iuger est de nul preiudice. Me semblant tres-inique, de vouloir sousmettre les constitutions et obseruances publiques et immobiles, à l'instabilité d'vne priuée fantasie (la raison priuée n'a qu'vne iurisdiction priuée) et entreprendre sur les loix diuines, ce que nulle police ne supporteroit aux ciuiles.

Ausquelles, encore que l'humaine raison aye beaucoup plus de commerce, si sont elles souuerainement iuges de leurs iuges: et l'extreme suffisance sert à expliquer et estendre l'vsage, qui en est receu, non à le destourner et innouer. Si quelques fois la prouidence diuine a passé par dessus les regles, ausquelles elle nous a necessairement astreints: ce n'est pas pour nous en dispenser.

ENGLISH

trate and uphold governments. What a marvelous example of this divine wisdom has left us! To establish the salvation of the human race and carry through its glorious victory over death and sin, it chose to act only at the mercy of our political order, and submitted the progress and conduct of so lofty and so saving an effect to the blindness and injustice of our customs and practices—letting the innocent blood of so many of its chosen favorites flow, and suffering many long years to be lost in ripening this priceless fruit.

There is a great difference between the case of a man who follows the forms and laws of his country and that of one who undertakes to dictate to them and change them. The first pleads as his excuse simplicity, obedience and example; whatever he does cannot be malice; at worst it is misfortune. *For who is there who is not moved by antiquity attested and sealed by the most illustrious monuments?* Besides, as Isocrates says, deficiency has more in common with moderation than excess has. The other is in a much harder position. For whoever takes it upon himself to choose and change usurps the authority to judge, and must be sure that he sees the fault in what he drives out and the good in what he brings in.[21]

This very commonplace consideration has kept me firmly in my seat, and held even my youth, which was more reckless, in check: not to load my shoulders with so heavy a burden as making myself answerable for a science of such importance, and not to dare in this one what, in sound judgment, I could not dare in the easiest of those I had been taught, where rashness of judgment does no harm. For it seems to me very unjust to want to subject public and unchanging institutions and observances to the instability of a private fancy (private reason has only a private jurisdiction), and to attempt against divine laws what no government would tolerate against civil ones.

Although human reason has much more to do with civil laws, they are still the supreme judges of their judges; and the greatest ability serves to explain and extend their accepted use, not to divert it or make innovations. If divine providence has sometimes passed over the rules to which it has

21 Cicero, On Divination.

FRENCH

ENGLISH

necessarily bound us, it is not in order to release us from them.

Ce sont coups de sa main diuine: qu'il nous faut, non pas imiter, mais admirer: et exemples extraordinaires, marques d'vn expres et particulier adueu: du genre des miracles, qu'elle nous offre, pour tesmoignage de sa toute puissance, au dessus de noz ordres et de noz forces: qu'il est folie et impieté d'essayer à representer: et que nous ne deuons pas suiure, mais contempler auec estonnement. Actes de son personnage, non pas du nostre. Cotta proteste bien opportunément: *Quum de religione agitur, T. Coruncanum, P. Scipionem, P. Scœuolam, pontifices maximos, non Zenonem, aut Cleanthem, aut Chrysippum, sequor*.

These are strokes of its divine hand, which we must not imitate but admire; extraordinary examples, marks of an express and particular sanction, of the same kind as the miracles it offers us as testimony to its omnipotence, beyond our orders and our powers; which it is folly and impiety to try to reproduce, and which we must not follow but contemplate with astonishment. They are acts proper to its role, not to ours. Cotta declares very aptly: *When it is a question of religion, I follow Tiberius Coruncanius, Publius Scipio and Publius Scaevola, chief pontiffs, not Zeno, Cleanthes or Chrysippus.*[22]

1.23.24 Dieu le sçache en nostre presente querelle, où il y a cent articles à oster et remettre, grands et profonds articles, combien ils sont qui se puissent vanter d'auoir exactement recogneu les raisons et fondements de l'vn et l'autre party. C'est vn nombre, si c'est nombre, qui n'auroit pas grand moyen de nous troubler. Mais toute cette autre presse où va elle? soubs quelle enseigne se iette elle à quartier? Il aduient de la leur, comme des autres medecines foibles et mal appliquees: les humeurs qu'elle vouloit purger en nous, elle les a eschauffées, exasperees et aigries par le conflit, et si nous est demeurée dans le corps.

Elle n'a sçeu nous purger par sa foiblesse, et nous a cependant affoiblis: en maniere que nous ne la pouuons vuider non plus, et ne receuons de son operation que des douleurs longues et intestines.

God knows, in our present quarrel, where there are a hundred articles to remove and restore—great and deep articles—how many can boast of having precisely grasped the reasons and foundations of either side. It is a number, if it is a number at all, that would hardly be able to trouble us. But all this other crowd—where is it going? Under what banner does it break ranks? Their medicine has fared like other weak and badly administered remedies: the humors it meant to purge from us it has heated, inflamed and soured by the conflict, and it has stayed in our body all the same.

It was too weak to purge us, and meanwhile it has weakened us, so that we cannot void it either, and get nothing from its action but long, intestine pains.

WHEN NECESSITY OVERRIDES THE LAW

In extreme crises it may be wiser to bend the laws than to let violence trample them.

FRENCH

ENGLISH

1.23.25 Si est-ce que la fortune reseruant tousiours son authorité au dessus de nos discours, nous presente aucunes-fois la necessité si vrgente, qu'il est besoin que les loix luy facent quelque place. Et quand on resiste à l'accroissance d'vne innouation qui vient par violence à s'introduire, de se tenir en tout et par tout en bride et en regle contre ceux qui ont la clef des champs, ausquels tout cela est loisible qui peut auancer leur dessein, qui n'ont ny loy ny ordre que de suiure leur aduantage, c'est vne dangereuse obligation et inequalité.

Still, fortune, always keeping its authority above our reasonings, sometimes confronts us with a necessity so urgent that the laws must make some room for it. And when one is resisting the growth of an innovation that is forcing its way in by violence, to keep oneself bridled and bound by rules in everything and everywhere against those who have free rein—to whom anything is permissible that can advance their design, and who have no law or order but to follow their own advantage—is a dangerous obligation and an unequal contest.

22 Cicero, On the Nature of the Gods, where Cotta defends traditional Roman religion against the Stoic philosophers.

FRENCH

Aditum nocendi perfido præstat fides. D'autant que la discipline ordinaire d'vn Estat qui est en sa santé, ne pouruoit pas à ces accidens extraordinaires: elle presuppose vn corps qui se tient en ses principaux membres et offices, et vn commun consentement à son obseruation et obeissance. L'aller legitime, est vn aller froid, poisant et contraint: et n'est pas pour tenir bon, à vn aller licencieux et effrené.

1.23.26 On sçait qu'il est encore reproché à ces deux grands personnages, Octauius et Caton, aux guerres ciuiles, l'vn de Sylla, l'autre de Cæsar, d'auoir plustost laissé encourir toutes extremitez à leur patrie, que de la secourir aux despens de ses loix, et que de rien remuer. Car à la verité en ces dernieres necessitez, où il n'y a plus que tenir, il seroit à l'auanture plus sagement fait, de baisser la teste et prester vn peu au coup, que s'ahurtant outre la possibilité à ne rien relascher, donner occasion à la violance de fouler tout aux pieds: et vaudroit mieux faire vouloir aux loix ce qu'elles peuuent, puis qu'elles ne peuuent ce qu'elles veulent.

Ainsi fit celuy qui ordonna qu'elles dormissent vingt quatre heures: et celuy qui remua pour cette fois vn iour du calendrier: et cet autre qui du mois de Iuin fit le second May. Les Lacedemoniens mesmes, tant religieux obseruateurs des ordonnances de leur païs, estans pressez de leur loy, qui deffendoit d'eslire par deux fois Admiral vn mesme personnage, et de l'autre part leurs affaires requerans de toute necessité, que Lysander prinst de rechef cette charge, ils firent bien vn Aracus Admiral, mais Lysander surintendant de la marine.

Et de mesme subtilité, vn de leurs Ambassadeurs estant enuoyé vers les Atheniens, pour obtenir le changement de quelque ordonnance, et Pericles luy alleguant qu'il estoit deffendu d'oster le tableau, où vne loy estoit vne fois posée, luy conseilla de le tourner seulement, d'autant que cela n'estoit pas deffendu. C'est ce dequoy Plutarque loüe Philopœmen, qu'estant né pour commander, il sçauoit non seulement commander selon les loix, mais aux loix mesmes, quand la necessité publique le requeroit.

ENGLISH

Trust gives the treacherous the opportunity to do harm. For the ordinary discipline of a state in good health does not provide for these extraordinary accidents: it presupposes a body that holds together in its principal members and functions, and a common consent to observe and obey it. The lawful pace is cold, heavy and constrained, and it is not made to hold its own against a licentious and unbridled one.[23]

We know that those two great men, Octavius and Cato, are still reproached—in the civil wars, the one of Sulla, the other of Caesar—for having let their country suffer every extremity rather than help it at the expense of its laws and change anything. For in truth, in these final necessities, where there is nothing left to hold on to, it would perhaps be wiser to bow one's head and yield a little to the blow than, by striving beyond what is possible to concede nothing, to give violence occasion to trample everything underfoot; and it would be better to make the laws will what they can do, since they cannot do what they will.[24]

So did the man who ordered the laws to sleep for twenty-four hours, and the one who moved a day of the calendar just that once, and that other who made the month of June into a second May. Even the Spartans, such scrupulous observers of their country's ordinances, being pressed on one side by their law, which forbade electing the same man admiral twice, and on the other by their affairs, which absolutely required that Lysander take that office again, did indeed make one Aracus admiral —but Lysander superintendent of the navy.[25]

And with the same subtlety, when one of their ambassadors was sent to the Athenians to obtain the change of some ordinance, and Pericles objected that it was forbidden to take down the tablet on which a law had once been set up, the ambassador advised him simply to turn it around, since that was not forbidden. This is what Plutarch praises in Philopoemen: that, being born to command, he knew how to command not only according to the laws but the laws themselves, when public necessity required it.[26]

23 Seneca, Oedipus.
24 Gnaeus Octavius, consul in 87 BC, opponent of Marius and Cinna; Cato the Younger, opponent of Caesar.
25 Agesilaus let the Spartan laws "sleep" for a day after the defeat at Leuctra; Alexander the Great altered the calendar before a battle. Both stories are in Plutarch.

I.24 Different Outcomes of the Same Plan

Diuers euenemens de mesme Conseil
From the Duke of Guise's mercy to a would-be assassin, Montaigne weighs how the same counsel yields different results by fortune.

FRENCH

1.24.1 IAQVES Amiot, grand Aumosnier de France, me recita vn iour cette histoire à l'honneur d'vn Prince des nostres (et nostre estoit-il à tres-bonnes enseignes, encore que son origine fust estrangere) que durant nos premiers troubles au siege de Roüan, ce Prince ayant esté aduerti par la Royne mere du Roy d'vne entreprise qu'on faisoit sur sa vie, et instruit particulierement par ses lettres, de celuy qui la deuoit conduire à chef, qui estoit vn Gentil-homme Angeuin ou Manceau, frequentant lors ordinairement pour cet effet, la maison de ce Prince: il ne communiqua à personne cet aduertissement: mais se promenant l'endemain au mont saincte Catherine, d'où se faisoit nostre baterie à Rouan (car c'estoit au temps que nous la tenions assiegee) ayant à ses costez ledit Seigneur grand Aumosnier et vn autre Euesque, il apperçeut ce Gentil-homme, qui luy auoit esté remarqué, et le fit appeller.

Comme il fut en sa presence, il luy dit ainsi le voyant desia pallir et fremir des alarmes de sa conscience: Monsieur de tel lieu, vous vous doutez bien de ce que ie vous veux, et vostre visage le montre: vous n'auez rien à me cacher: car ie suis instruict de vostre affaire si auant, que vous ne feriez qu'empirer vostre marché, d'essayer à le couurir. Vous sçauez bien telle chose et telle (qui estoyent les tenans et aboutissans des plus secretes pieces de cette menee) ne faillez sur vostre vie à me confesser la verité de tout ce dessein.

Quand ce pauure homme se trouua pris et conuaincu, car le tout auoit esté descouuert à la Royne par l'vn des complices, il n'eut qu'à ioindre les mains et requerir la grace et misericorde de ce Prince; aux pieds duquel il se voulut ietter, mais il l'en garda, suyuant ainsi son propos: Venez çà, vous ay-ie autre-fois fait desplaisir? ay-ie

ENGLISH

Jacques Amyot, Grand Almoner of France, once told me this story to the honor of one of our princes (and ours he was, on very good grounds, even though his family came from abroad). During our first troubles, at the siege of Rouen, this prince was warned by the Queen Mother of a plot against his life. Her letters told him in detail who was to carry it out: a gentleman from Anjou or Maine, who at that time regularly frequented the prince's household for that very purpose. He told no one of this warning. But the next day, while walking on Mont Sainte-Catherine, from which our guns were firing on Rouen (for this was when we were besieging it), with the said Lord Grand Almoner and another bishop at his side, he caught sight of this gentleman, who had been pointed out to him, and had him called over.[1]

When the man came before him, the prince saw him already turning pale and trembling at the alarms of his conscience, and spoke to him thus: "Monsieur de So-and-so, you can well guess what I want with you, and your face shows it. You have nothing to hide from me. I am so fully informed of your business that you would only make your position worse by trying to cover it up. You know very well such and such a thing" (these were the ins and outs of the most secret parts of the plot), "so do not fail, on your life, to confess to me the whole truth of this scheme."

When this poor man found himself caught and convicted (for the whole thing had been revealed to the Queen by one of the accomplices), there was nothing left for him but to clasp his hands and beg the prince's pardon and mercy. He tried to throw himself at the prince's feet, but the prince preven-

26 Philopoemen (c. 253–183 BC), general of the Achaean League.
1 Jacques Amyot (1513–1593) was the translator of Plutarch. The prince is François, Duke of Guise, of the House of Lorraine; Rouen was besieged in 1562, in the first War of Religion, and the Queen Mother was Catherine de' Medici.

FRENCH	ENGLISH
offencé quelqu'vn des vostres par haine particuliere? Il n'y a pas trois semaines que ie vous cognois, quelle raison vous a peu mouuoir à entreprendre ma mort?	ted him and went on: "Come here. Have I ever done you any harm? Have I offended anyone of your family out of private hatred? I have not known you three weeks. What reason could have moved you to undertake my death?"
Le Gentil-homme respondit à cela d'vne voix tremblante, que ce n'estoit aucune occasion particuliere qu'il en eust, mais l'interest de la cause generale de son party, et qu'aucuns luy auoient persuadé que ce seroit vne execution pleine de pieté, d'extirper en quelque maniere que ce fust, vn si puissant ennemy de leur religion. Or, suiuit ce Prince, ie vous veux montrer, combien la religion que ie tiens est plus douce, que celle dequoy vous faictes profession. La vostre vous a conseillé de me tuer sans m'ouir, n'ayant receu de moy aucune offence; et la mienne me commande que ie vous pardonne, tout conuaincu que vous estes de m'auoir voulu tuer sans raison.	The gentleman answered in a trembling voice that he had no private reason of his own. He had acted for the general cause of his party, and certain people had persuaded him that it would be a deed full of piety to root out, by whatever means, so powerful an enemy of their religion. "Well," the prince went on, "I want to show you how much gentler the religion I hold is than the one you profess. Yours has counseled you to kill me without hearing me, though you had received no offense from me. Mine commands me to pardon you, convicted as you are of having tried to kill me without reason.
Allez vous en, retirez vous, que ie ne vous voye plus icy: et si vous estes sage, prenez doresnauant en voz entreprises des conseillers plus gens de bien que ceux là.	Go away, get out, and let me not see you here again. And if you are wise, from now on take advisers in your undertakings who are better men than those."

AUGUSTUS AND CINNA

Augustus pardons the conspirator Cinna on Livia's advice and is never plotted against again.

FRENCH	ENGLISH
1.24.2 L'empereur Auguste estant en la Gaule, reçeut certain auertissement d'vne coniuration que luy brassoit L. Cinna: il delibera de s'en venger, et manda pour cet effect au lendemain le conseil de ses amis: mais la nuict d'entredeux il la passa auec grande inquietude, considerant qu'il auoit à faire mourir un ieune homme de bonne maison, et neueu du grand Pompeius: et produisoit en se pleignant plusieurs diuers discours. Quoy donq, faisoit-il, sera-il dict que ie demeureray en crainte et en alarme, et que ie lairray mon meurtrier se pourmener cependant à son ayse? S'en ira-il quitte, ayant assailly ma teste, que i'ay sauuée de tant de guerres ciuiles, de tant de batailles, par mer et par terre?	The Emperor Augustus, while he was in Gaul, received definite warning of a conspiracy that Lucius Cinna was hatching against him. He resolved to take revenge, and for that purpose summoned a council of his friends for the next day. But he spent the night in between in great anxiety, considering that he would have to put to death a young man of good family, a nephew of the great Pompey. And in his lamenting he turned over many different arguments. "What then," he said, "shall it be said that I am to remain in fear and alarm, and let my murderer stroll about meanwhile at his ease? Shall he go scot-free, after striking at this head of mine, which I have brought safe through so many civil wars, so many battles on sea and land?[2]
et apres auoir estably la paix vniuerselle du monde, sera-il absouz, ayant deliberé non de me meurtrir seulement, mais de me sacrifier? Car la coniuration estoit faicte de le tuer, comme il feroit quelque sacrifice. Apres cela s'estant	And after I have established universal peace in the world, shall he be acquitted, having planned not merely to murder me but to sacrifice me?" For the

2 Montaigne follows Seneca, On Clemency I.9.

FRENCH

tenu coy quelque espace de temps, il recommençoit d'vne voix plus forte, et s'en prenoit à soy-mesme: Pourquoy vis tu, s'il importe à tant de gens que tu meures? n'y aura-il point de fin à tes vengeances et à tes cruautez? Ta vie vaut-elle que tant de dommage se face pour la conseruer? Liuia sa femme le sentant en ces angoisses: Et les conseils des femmes y seront-ils receuz, luy dit elle?

Fais ce que font les medecins, quand les receptes accoustumees ne peuuent seruir, ils en essayent de contraires. Par seuerité tu n'as iusques à cette heure rien profité: Lepidus a suiuy Sauidienus, Murena Lepidus, Cæpio Murena, Egnatius Cæpio. Commence à experimenter comment te succederont la douceur et la clemence. Cinna est conuaincu, pardonne luy; de te nuire desormais, il ne pourra, et profitera à ta gloire. Auguste fut bien ayse d'auoir trouué vn aduocat de son humeur, et ayant remercié sa femme et contremandé ses amis, qu'il auoit assignez au Conseil, commanda qu'on fist venir à luy Cinna tout seul.

Et ayant fait sortir tout le monde de sa chambre, et fait donner vn siege à Cinna, il luy parla en cette maniere: En premier lieu ie te demande Cinna, paisible audience: n'interromps pas mon parler, ie te donray temps et loysir d'y respondre.

Tu sçais Cinna que t'ayant pris au camp de mes ennemis, non seulement t'estant faict mon ennemy, mais estant né tel, ie te sauuay; ie te mis entre mains tous tes biens, et t'ay en fin rendu si accommodé et si aysé, que les victorieux sont enuieux de la condition du vaincu: l'office du sacerdoce que tu me demandas, ie te l'ottroiay, l'ayant refusé à d'autres, desquels les peres auoyent tousiours combatu auec moy: t'ayant si fort obligé, tu as entrepris de me tuer.

A quoy Cinna s'estant escrié qu'il estoit bien esloigné d'vne si meschante pensee: Tu ne me tiens pas Cinna ce que tu m'auois promis, suyuit Auguste: tu m'auois asseuré que ie ne serois pas interrompu: ouy, tu as entrepris de me tuer, en tel lieu, tel iour, en telle compagnie, et de telle façon: et le voyant transi de ces nouuelles, et en silence, non plus pour tenir le marché de se taire, mais de la presse de sa conscience: Pourquoy, adiousta il, le fais tu? Est-ce pour estre Empereur?

ENGLISH

conspirators had planned to kill him while he was performing a sacrifice. After that he kept quiet for some time, then began again in a louder voice and turned on himself: "Why do you live, if it matters to so many people that you should die? Will there be no end to your acts of vengeance and your cruelties? Is your life worth so much damage being done to preserve it?" His wife Livia, sensing his anguish, spoke to him: "And will a woman's advice be heard in this?" she said.

"Do what doctors do: when the usual remedies are of no use, they try the opposite ones. Up to now you have gained nothing by severity. Lepidus has followed Salvidienus, Murena Lepidus, Caepio Murena, Egnatius Caepio. Begin to test how gentleness and clemency will turn out for you. Cinna is convicted: pardon him. He will no longer be able to harm you, and he will add to your glory." Augustus was very glad to have found an advocate who shared his temperament. He thanked his wife, called off the friends he had summoned to the council, and ordered Cinna to be brought to him alone.

He sent everyone out of his room, had a seat given to Cinna, and spoke to him in this way: "First of all, Cinna, I ask you for a quiet hearing. Do not interrupt me; I will give you time and leisure to answer.

You know, Cinna, that when I took you in the camp of my enemies, when you had not merely become my enemy but were born one, I saved you. I put all your property back into your hands, and in the end I have made you so well off and so comfortable that the victors envy the lot of the vanquished. You asked me for the office of priest, and I granted it to you, after refusing it to others whose fathers had always fought on my side. After I had put you so deeply in my debt, you have undertaken to kill me."

At this Cinna cried out that he was far from any such wicked thought. "You are not keeping your promise, Cinna," Augustus went on. "You assured me that I would not be interrupted. Yes, you have undertaken to kill me, in such a place, on such a day, in such company, and in such a manner." And seeing him stunned by this news and silent, no longer to keep his bargain of holding his tongue but under the pressure of his conscience, he added: "Why are you doing it? Is it to be emperor?

FRENCH	ENGLISH
Vrayment il va bien mal à la chose publique, s'il n'y a que moy, qui t'empesche d'arriuer à l'Empire.	Truly the commonwealth is in a very bad way if I am the only one who stands between you and the Empire.
Tu ne peux pas seulement deffendre ta maison, et perdis dernierement vn procés par la faueur d'vn simple libertin. Quoy? n'as tu pas moyen ny pouuoir en autre chose qu'à entreprendre Cæsar? Ie le quitte, s'il n'y a que moy qui empesche tes esperances. Penses-tu, que Paulus, que Fabius, que les Cosseens et Seruiliens te souffrent? et vne si grande trouppe de nobles, non seulement nobles de nom, mais qui par leur vertu honnorent leur noblesse?	You cannot even defend your own house, and you recently lost a lawsuit through the influence of a mere freedman. What? Have you no means or power for anything except attacking Caesar? I will step aside, if I am the only one standing in the way of your hopes. Do you think that Paulus, that Fabius, that the Cossi and the Servilii will put up with you? Or so great a crowd of nobles, noble not only in name but who honor their nobility by their virtue?"
Apres plusieurs autres propos, car il parla à luy plus de deux heures entieres, Or va, luy dit-il, ie te donne, Cinna, la vie à traistre et à parricide, que ie te donnay autresfois à ennemy: que l'amitié commence de ce iourd'huy entre nous: essayons qui de nous deux de meilleure foy, moy t'aye donné ta vie, ou tu l'ayes receuë. Et se despartit d'auec luy en cette maniere. Quelque temps apres il luy donna le consulat, se pleignant dequoy il ne le luy auoit osé demander. Il l'eut depuis pour fort amy, et fut seul faict par luy heritier de ses biens.	After much more talk, for he spoke to him for more than two full hours, he said: "Now go. I give you your life, Cinna, as a traitor and a parricide, as I once gave it to you as an enemy. Let friendship begin between us from this day. Let us see which of us two acts in better faith: I in giving you your life, or you in receiving it." And with that he parted from him. Some time later he gave him the consulship, complaining that Cinna had not dared to ask him for it. From then on Cinna was a close friend to him, and made him the sole heir to his property.
Or depuis cet accident, qui aduint à Auguste au quarantiesme an de son aage, il n'y eut iamais de coniuration ny d'entreprise contre luy, et reçeut vne iuste recompense de cette sienne clemence. Mais il n'en aduint pas de mesmes au nostre: car sa douceur ne le sceut garentir, qu'il ne cheust depuis aux lacs de pareille trahison. Tant c'est chose vaine et friuole que l'humaine prudence: et au trauers de tous nos proiects, de nos conseils et precautions, la fortune maintient tousiours la possession des euenemens.	Now after this incident, which befell Augustus in the fortieth year of his age, there was never again any conspiracy or attempt against him, and he received a just reward for his clemency. But it did not turn out the same for our prince. His gentleness could not save him from falling afterward into the snares of a similar treachery. So vain and frivolous a thing is human prudence. Through all our plans, our counsels and our precautions, Fortune always keeps possession of the outcome.[3]

FORTUNE IN ART, WAR AND COUNSEL

Chance has a large share in medicine, poetry, painting and war, whatever our wisdom plans.

FRENCH	ENGLISH
1.24.3 Nous appellons les medecins heureux, quand ils arriuent à quelque bonne fin: comme s'il n'y auoit que leur art, qui ne se peust maintenir d'elle mesme, et qui eust les fondemens trop frailes, pour s'appuyer de sa propre force: et comme s'il n'y auoit qu'elle, qui ayt besoin que la fortune preste la main à ses operations. Ie croy d'elle tout	We call doctors lucky when they achieve some good result. It is as if theirs were the only art that could not stand on its own, with foundations too frail to rest on its own strength, and as if it were the only one that needs Fortune to lend a hand in its operations. I believe all the worst or all the best

3 The Duke of Guise was assassinated by the Huguenot Poltrot de Méré at the siege of Orléans in 1563.

FRENCH

le pis ou le mieux qu'on voudra: car nous n'auons, Dieu mercy, nul commerce ensemble.

Ie suis au rebours des autres: car ie la mesprise bien tousiours, mais quand ie suis malade, au lieu d'entrer en composition, ie commence encore à la haïr et à la craindre: et respons à ceux qui me pressent de prendre medecine, qu'ils attendent au moins que ie sois rendu à mes forces et à ma santé, pour auoir plus de moyen de soustenir l'effort et le hazart de leur breuuage. Ie laisse faire nature, et presuppose qu'elle se soit pourueue de dents et de griffes, pour se deffendre des assaux qui luy viennent, et pour maintenir cette contexture, dequoy elle fuit la dissolution.

Ie crain au lieu de l'aller secourir, ainsi comme elle est aux prises bien estroites et bien iointes auec la maladie, qu'on secoure son aduersaire au lieu d'elle, et qu'on la recharge de nouueaux affaires.

1.24.4 Or ie dy que non en la medecine seulement, mais en plusieurs arts plus certaines, la fortune y a bonne part. Les saillies poëtiques, qui emportent leur autheur, et le rauissent hors de soy, pourquoy ne les attribuerons nous à son bon heur, puis qu'il confesse luy mesme qu'elles surpassent sa suffisance et ses forces, et les recognoit venir d'ailleurs que de soy, et ne les auoir aucunement en sa puissance: non plus que les orateurs ne disent auoir en la leur ces mouuemens et agitations extraordinaires, qui les poussent au delà de leur dessein?

Il en est de mesmes en la peinture, qu'il eschappe par fois des traits de la main du peintre surpassans sa conception et sa science, qui le tirent luy mesmes en admiration, et qui l'estonnent. Mais la fortune montre bien encores plus euidemment, la part qu'elle a en tous ces ouurages, par les graces et beautez qui s'y treuuent, non seulement sans l'intention, mais sans la cognoissance mesme de l'ouurier. Vn suffisant lecteur descouure souuent és escrits d'autruy, des perfections autres que celles que l'autheur y a mises et apperceuës, et y preste des sens et des visages plus riches.

1.24.5 Quant aux entreprises militaires, chacun void comment la fortune y a bonne part. En nos conseils mesmes et en nos deliberations, il faut certes qu'il y ayt du sort et du bonheur meslé parmy: car tout ce que nostre sagesse peut, ce n'est pas grandchose. Plus elle est aigue et viue, plus elle trouue en soy de foiblesse, et se deffie d'autant plus d'elle mesme.

ENGLISH

of it that anyone likes, for we have, thank God, no dealings with each other.

I am the opposite of other people. I always despise medicine, but when I am ill, instead of coming to terms with it, I begin to hate and fear it as well. And to those who urge me to take medicine, I answer that they should at least wait until I have recovered my strength and health, so that I will be better able to withstand the force and the risk of their potion. I leave it to nature, and assume that she has provided herself with teeth and claws to defend herself from the assaults that come upon her, and to maintain this structure whose dissolution she shuns.

When she is locked in close combat with the disease, I am afraid that people, instead of going to her aid, may aid her adversary, and load her with fresh troubles.

Now I say that Fortune has a large share not only in medicine but in many arts that are more certain. Take the flights of poetry that carry their author away and transport him out of himself. Why should we not attribute them to his good luck? He himself confesses that they surpass his ability and his powers, acknowledges that they come from somewhere other than himself, and admits that they are not at all in his control. In the same way, orators do not claim to control those extraordinary impulses and stirrings that drive them beyond what they intended.

It is the same in painting. Strokes sometimes escape from the painter's hand that surpass his conception and his knowledge, fill him with wonder, and stun him. But Fortune shows still more plainly the share she has in all these works by the graces and beauties found in them not only without the craftsman's intention but even without his knowledge. A capable reader often discovers in other people's writings perfections other than those the author put there or perceived, and lends them richer meanings and aspects.

As for military enterprises, everyone sees how large a share Fortune has in them. Even in our counsels and deliberations there must certainly be some chance and luck mixed in, for all that our wisdom can do is not much. The keener and quicker it is, the more weakness it finds in itself, and the more it distrusts itself.

FRENCH

Ie suis de l'aduis de Sylla: et quand ie me prens garde de pres aux plus glorieux exploicts de la guerre, ie voy, ce me semble, que ceux qui les conduisent, n'y employent la deliberation et le conseil, que par acquit; et que la meilleure part de l'entreprinse, ils l'abandonnent à la fortune; et sur la fiance qu'ils ont à son secours, passent à tous les coups au delà des bornes de tout discours. Il suruient des allegresses fortuites, et des fureurs estrangeres parmy leurs deliberations, qui les poussent le plus souuent à prendre le party le moins fondé en apparence, et qui grossissent leur courage au dessus de la raison.

D'où il est aduenu à plusieurs grands Capitaines anciens, pour donner credit à ces conseils temeraires, d'alleguer à leurs gens, qu'ils y estoyent conuiez par quelque inspiration, par quelque signe et prognostique.

1.24.6 Voyla pourquoy en cette incertitude et perplexité, que nous apporte l'impuissance de voir et choisir ce qui est le plus commode, pour les difficultez que les diuers accidens et circonstances de chaque chose tirent: le plus seur, quand autre consideration ne nous y conuieroit, est à mon aduis de se reietter au party, où il y a plus d'honnesteté et de iustice: et puis qu'on est en doute du plus court chemin, tenir tousiours le droit. Comme en ces deux exemples, que ie vien de proposer, il n'y a point de doubte, qu'il ne fust plus beau et plus genereux à celuy qui auoit receu l'offence, de la pardonner, que s'il eust fait autrement.

S'il en est mes-aduenu au premier, il ne s'en faut pas prendre à ce sien bon dessein: et ne sçait on, quand il eust pris le party contraire, s'il eust eschapé la fin, à laquelle son destin l'appelloit; et si eust perdu la gloire d'vne telle humanité.

ENGLISH

I am of Sulla's opinion. When I look closely at the most glorious exploits of war, I see, or so it seems to me, that those who conduct them use deliberation and counsel only for form's sake. They leave the better part of the enterprise to Fortune, and, trusting in her help, they go at every turn beyond the limits of all reasoning. Chance elations and strange frenzies come upon them in the midst of their deliberations. Most often these drive them to take the course that seems least well-founded, and swell their courage beyond reason.[4]

Hence many great captains of antiquity, to give credit to these rash decisions, told their men that they had been prompted to them by some inspiration, some sign or omen.

We are uncertain and perplexed, because we cannot see and choose what is most advantageous, given the difficulties raised by the various accidents and circumstances of each thing. That is why, in my opinion, the surest course, even if no other consideration drew us to it, is to fall back on the side where there is more honor and justice. And since we are in doubt about the shortest road, we should always keep to the straight one. In the two examples I have just put forward, there is no doubt that it was finer and more generous for the man who had received the offense to pardon it than to do otherwise.

If things went badly for the first of them, we must not blame his good intention. No one knows whether, had he taken the opposite course, he would have escaped the end to which his destiny called him. And in any case he would have lost the glory of such humanity.

TRUST AGAINST CONSPIRACIES

Suspicion torments princes; open trust, as shown by Alexander and Caesar, wins over enemies.

FRENCH

1.24.7 Il se void dans les histoires, force gens, en cette crainte; d'où la plus part ont suiuy le chemin de courir au deuant des coniurations, qu'on faisoit contre eux, par vengeance et par supplices: mais i'en voy fort peu ausquels ce remede ayt seruy; tesmoing tant d'Empereurs Romains. Celuy qui se trouue en ce danger, ne doit pas beaucoup

ENGLISH

We see in the histories many people in this fear, and most of them chose to forestall the conspiracies made against them by vengeance and punishments. But I see very few whom this remedy has served: witness so many Roman emperors. Anyone who finds himself in this danger should

4 Sulla attributed his successes to Fortune rather than to his own planning (Plutarch, Life of Sulla).

FRENCH

esperer ny de sa force, ny de sa vigilance. Car combien est-il mal aisé de se garentir d'vn ennemy, qui est couuert du visage du plus officieux amy que nous ayons? et de cognoistre les volontez et pensemens interieurs de ceux qui nous assistent?

Il a beau employer des nations estrangeres pour sa garde, et estre tousiours ceint d'vne haye d'hommes armez: Quiconque aura sa vie à mespris, se rendra tousiours maistre de celle d'autruy. Et puis ce continuel soupçon, qui met le Prince en doute de tout le monde, luy doit seruir d'vn merueilleux tourment. Pourtant Dion estant aduerty que Callippus espioit les moyens de le faire mourir, n'eut iamais le cœur d'en informer, disant qu'il aymoit mieux mourir que viure en cette misere, d'auoir à se garder non de ses ennemys seulement, mais aussi de ses amis.

Ce qu'Alexandre representa bien plus viuement par effect, et plus roidement, quand ayant eu aduis par vne lettre de Parmenion, que Philippus son plus cher medecin estoit corrompu par l'argent de Darius pour l'empoisonner; en mesme temps qu'il donnoit à lire sa lettre à Philippus, il auala le bruuage qu'il luy auoit presenté. Fut-ce pas exprimer cette resolution, que si ses amis le vouloient tuer, il consentoit qu'ils le peussent faire? Ce Prince est le souuerain patron des actes hazardeux: mais ie ne sçay s'il y a traict en sa vie, qui ayt plus de fermeté que cestui-cy, ny vne beauté illustre par tant de visages.

1.24.8 Ceux qui preschent aux Princes la deffiance si attentiue, soubs couleur de leur prescher leur seurté, leur preschent leur ruine et leur honte. Rien de noble ne se faict sans hazard. I'en sçay vn de courage tres-martial de sa complexion et entreprenant, de qui tous les iours on corrompt la bonne fortune par telles persuasions: Qu'il se resserre entre les siens, qu'il n'entende à aucune reconciliation de ses anciens ennemys, se tienne à part, et ne se commette entre mains plus fortes, quelque promesse qu'on luy face, quelque vtilité qu'il y voye. I'en sçay vn autre, qui a inesperément auancé sa fortune, pour auoir pris conseil tout contraire.

1.24.9 La hardiesse dequoy ils cerchent si auidement la gloire, se represente, quand il est besoin, aussi magnifiquement en

ENGLISH

not put much hope either in his strength or in his vigilance. For how hard is it to protect oneself from an enemy hidden behind the face of the most obliging friend we have? And to know the inner wishes and thoughts of those who attend us?

He may employ foreign nations as his guard and always be surrounded by a hedge of armed men, but in vain: whoever holds his own life in contempt will always make himself master of another's. And then this continual suspicion, which makes the prince doubt everyone, must be an extraordinary torment to him. So Dion, when he was warned that Callippus was looking for ways to have him killed, never had the heart to look into it. He said he would rather die than live in the misery of having to guard himself not only against his enemies but also against his friends.[5]

Alexander showed this much more vividly in action, and more boldly. He was warned by a letter from Parmenio that Philip, his dearest physician, had been bribed with Darius's money to poison him. At the same moment that he handed the letter to Philip to read, he drank down the potion Philip had brought him. Was this not to declare that if his friends wanted to kill him, he consented to their being able to do it? This prince is the supreme model of daring deeds. But I do not know whether there is any act in his life that shows more firmness than this one, or a beauty so illustrious in so many aspects.

Those who preach such watchful distrust to princes, under color of preaching their safety, are preaching their ruin and their shame. Nothing noble is done without risk. I know one prince, of a very martial and enterprising temperament by nature, whose good fortune is spoiled every day by advice of this kind: that he should keep close among his own people, listen to no reconciliation with his old enemies, keep to himself, and never trust himself to stronger hands, whatever promise is made to him and whatever advantage he sees in it. I know another who has unexpectedly advanced his fortune by taking the very opposite advice.

The boldness whose glory they seek so eagerly shows itself, when need be, as magnificently in a

5 Dion, ruler of Syracuse, was murdered at the instigation of his associate Callippus in 354 BC.

FRENCH

pourpoint qu'en armes: en vn cabinet, qu'en vn camp: le bras pendant, que le bras leué. La prudence si tendre et circonspecte, est mortelle ennemye des hautes executions. Scipion sceut, pour pratiquer la volonté de Syphax, quittant son armée, et abandonnant l'Espaigne, douteuse encore sous sa nouuelle conqueste, passer en Afrique, dans deux simples vaisseaux, pour se commettre en terre ennemie, à la puissance d'vn Roy barbare, à vne foy incogneue, sans obligation, sans hostage, sous la seule seureté de la grandeur de son propre courage, de son bon heur, et de la promesse de ses hautes esperances.

Habita fides ipsam plerumque fidem obligat. A vne vie ambitieuse et fameuse, il faut au rebours, prester peu, et porter la bride courte aux souspeçons. La crainte et la deffiance attirent l'offence et la conuient. La plus deffiant de nos Roys establit ses affaires, principalement pour auoir volontairement abandonné et commis sa vie, et sa liberté, entre les mains de ses ennemis: montrant auoir entiere fiance d'eux, afin qu'ils la prinssent de luy.

A ses legions mutinées et armées contre luy, Cæsar opposoit seulement l'authorité de son visage, et la fierté de ses paroles; et se fioit tant à soy et à sa fortune, qu'il ne craingnoit point de l'abandonner et commettre à vne armée seditieuse et rebelle; *Stetit aggere fultus*
Cespitis, intrepidus vultu, meruitque timeri
Nil metuens.

1.24.10 Mais il est bien vray, que cette forte asseurance ne se peut presenter bien entiere, et naifue, que par ceux ausquels l'imagination de la mort, et du pis qui peut aduenir apres tout, ne donne point d'effroy; car de la representer tremblante encore, doubteuse et incertaine, pour le seruice d'vne importante reconciliation, ce n'est rien faire qui vaille. C'est vn excellent moyen de gaigner le cœur et volonté d'autruy, de s'y aller soubsmettre et fier, pourueu que ce soit librement, et sans contrainte d'aucune necessité, et que ce soit en condition, qu'on y porte vne fiance pure et nette; le front au moins deschargé de tout scrupule. Ie vis en mon enfance, vn

ENGLISH

doublet as in armor, in a study as in a camp, with the arm hanging down as with the arm raised. Prudence so delicate and circumspect is the mortal enemy of lofty deeds. To win over Syphax, Scipio was able to leave his army and abandon Spain, still unsettled under his new conquest, and cross to Africa in two plain ships. There he entrusted himself, on enemy soil, to the power of a barbarian king and to a good faith he did not know, without obligation, without hostage, on the sole security of the greatness of his own courage, of his good fortune, and of the promise of his high hopes.[6]

Trust shown usually binds the other's trust in return. For an ambitious and famous life, one must on the contrary give little credit to suspicions and keep them on a short rein. Fear and distrust draw offense and invite it. The most distrustful of our kings set his affairs in order chiefly by voluntarily abandoning and entrusting his life and his liberty into the hands of his enemies. He showed that he had complete trust in them, so that they would come to trust him.[7]

When his legions mutinied and took up arms against him, Caesar set against them nothing but the authority of his face and the pride of his words. He trusted so much in himself and his fortune that he was not afraid to give himself up and entrust himself to a seditious and rebellious army:
He stood, upheld on a mound
of turf, his face unafraid, and earned the right to be feared
by fearing nothing.[8]

But it is quite true that this strong assurance can be shown whole and natural only by those who are not frightened by the thought of death and of the worst that can happen after all. To display it still trembling, doubtful and uncertain, in the service of an important reconciliation, is to do nothing worthwhile. It is an excellent way to win the heart and will of another to go and submit to him and trust him, provided it is done freely, without the constraint of any necessity, and on condition that one brings to it a pure and clear trust, with a brow at least free of all misgiving. In my child-

6 Syphax was a king of Numidia; Scipio's visit to him took place in 206 BC.
7 The Latin is from Livy, XXII.22. The king is Louis XI, who put himself in the power of Charles the Bold at Péronne in 1468.
8 Lucan, Pharsalia V.

FRENCH

Gentil-homme commandant à vne grande ville empressé à l'esmotion d'vn peuple furieux.

Pour esteindre ce commencement du trouble, il print party de sortir d'vn lieu tres-asseuré où il estoit, et se rendre à cette tourbe mutine: d'où mal luy print, et y fut miserablement tué. Mais il ne me semble pas que sa faute fust tant d'estre sorty, ainsi qu'ordinairement on le reproche à sa memoire, comme ce fut d'auoir pris vne voye de soubsmission et de mollesse: et d'auoir voulu endormir cette rage, plustost en suiuant qu'en guidant, et en requerant plustost qu'en remontrant: et estime que vne gracieuse seuerité, auec vn commandement militaire, plein de securité, et de confiance, conuenable à son rang, et à la dignité de sa charge, luy eust mieux succedé, au moins auec plus d'honneur, et de bienseance.

Il n'est rien moins esperable de ce monstre ainsin agité, que l'humanité et la douceur, il receura bien plustost la reuerance et la crainte. Ie luy reprocherois aussi, qu'ayant pris vne resolution plustost braue à mon gré, que temeraire, de se ietter foible et en pourpoint, emmy cette mer tempestueuse d'hommes insensez, il la deuoit aualler toute, et n'abandonner ce personnage. Là où il luy aduint apres auoir recogneu le danger de pres, de saigner du nez: et d'alterer encore depuis cette contenance démise et flatteuse, qu'il auoit entreprinse, en vne contenance effraiee: chargeant sa voix et ses yeux d'estonnement et de penitence: cerchant à conniller et à se desrober, il les enflamma et appella sur soy.

1.24.11 On deliberoit de faire vne montre generalle de diuerses trouppes en armes, (c'est le lieu des vengeances secrettes, et n'est point où en plus grande seureté on les puisse exercer) il y auoit publiques et notoires apparences, qu'il n'y faisoit pas fort bon pour aucuns, ausquels touchoit la principalle et necessaire charge de les recognoistre. Il s'y proposa diuers conseils, comme en chose difficile, et qui auoit beaucoup de poids et de suitte.

Le mien fut, qu'on euitast sur tout de donner aucun tesmoignage de ce doubte, et qu'on s'y trouuast et meslast parmy les files, la teste droicte, et le visage ouuert, et qu'au lieu d'en retrancher aucune chose, à

ENGLISH

hood I saw a gentleman who was in command of a great city hard pressed by the uprising of a furious populace.[9]

To put out this first spark of trouble, he decided to leave a very safe place where he was and go out to this mutinous mob. It went badly for him, and he was miserably killed there. But it does not seem to me that his mistake lay so much in having gone out, as people commonly hold against his memory, as in having taken a path of submission and softness. He tried to lull that rage to sleep by following rather than guiding, and by pleading rather than admonishing. I think that a gracious severity, with a soldierly command full of assurance and confidence, befitting his rank and the dignity of his office, would have served him better, or at least with more honor and propriety.

Nothing is less to be hoped for from this monster, once it is so stirred up, than humanity and gentleness; it will far more readily receive reverence and fear. I would also reproach him for this. He had taken a resolution, brave rather than rash to my mind, to throw himself, weak and in his doublet, into that stormy sea of maddened men; he ought to have seen it through to the end and not abandoned the role. Instead, once he had seen the danger up close, his nerve failed him. He then changed the submissive and flattering bearing he had adopted into a frightened one, loading his voice and his eyes with dismay and remorse. By trying to scuttle off like a rabbit and slip away, he inflamed them and drew them upon himself.

A general review of various troops under arms was being planned. (That is the place for secret acts of vengeance, and there is none where they can be carried out in greater safety.) There were public and notorious signs that things did not bode well for certain persons whose principal and necessary duty it was to inspect the troops. Various counsels were put forward, as happens in a difficult matter with much weight and many consequences.[10]

Mine was that above all we should avoid giving any sign of this suspicion, and should be there and mingle among the ranks with heads high and

9 Tristan de Moneins, the king's lieutenant, was killed at Bordeaux in the salt-tax revolt of 1548.
10 This probably took place at Bordeaux in 1585, when Montaigne was mayor.

FRENCH

quoy les autres opinions visoient le plus, au contraire, l'on sollicitast les Capitaines d'aduertir les soldats de faire leurs salues belles et gaillardes en l'honneur des assistans, et n'espargner leur poudre. Cela seruit de gratification enuers ces trouppes suspectes, et engendra dés lors en auant vne mutuelle et vtile confidence.

1.24.12 La voye qu'y tint Iulius Cæsar, ie trouue que c'est la plus belle, qu'on y puisse prendre. Premierement il essaya par clemence, à se faire aymer de ses ennemis mesmes, se contentant aux coniurations qui luy estoient descouuertes, de declarer simplement qu'il en estoit aduerti. Cela faict, il print vne tres-noble resolution, d'attendre sans effroy et sans solicitude, ce qui luy en pourroit aduenir, s'abandonnant et se remettant à la garde des Dieux et de la fortune. Car certainement c'est l'estat où il estoit quand il fut tué.

1.24.13 Vn estranger ayant dict et publié par tout qu'il pourroit instruire Dionysius Tyran de Syracuse, d'vn moyen de sentir et descouurir en toute certitude, les parties que ses subiets machineroient contre luy, s'il luy vouloit donner vne bonne piece d'argent, Dionysius en estant aduerty, le fit appeller à soy, pour s'esclaircir d'vn art si necessaire à sa conseruation; cet estranger luy dict, qu'il n'y auoit pas d'autre art, sinon qu'il luy fist deliurer vn talent, et se ventast d'auoir apris de luy vn singulier secret. Dionysius trouua cette inuention bonne, et luy fit compter six cens escus.

Il n'estoit pas vray-semblable, qu'il eust donné si grande somme à vn homme incogneu, qu'en recompense d'vn tres-vtile apprentissage, et seruoit cette reputation à tenir ses ennemis en crainte. Pourtant les Princes sagement publient les aduis qu'ils reçoiuent des menées qu'on dresse contre leur vie; pour faire croire qu'ilz sont bien aduertis, et qu'il ne se peut rien entreprendre dequoy ils ne sentent le vent. Le Duc d'Athenes fit plusieurs sottises en l'establissement de sa fresche tyrannie sur Florence: mais cette-cy la plus notable, qu'ayant receu le premier aduis des monopoles que ce peuple dressoit contre luy, par Mattheo dit Morozo, complice d'icelles, il le fit mourir, pour supprimer cet aduertissement, et ne faire sentir, qu'aucun en la ville s'ennuïast de sa domination.

ENGLISH

faces open. Instead of cutting anything out, which was what the other opinions chiefly aimed at, the captains should on the contrary be asked to tell the soldiers to make their salvos fine and lively in honor of the onlookers, and not to spare their powder. This served as a mark of favor toward those suspect troops, and from then on bred a mutual and useful confidence.

The way Julius Caesar took in this matter is, I find, the finest that can be taken. First he tried by clemency to make himself loved even by his enemies. When conspiracies were revealed to him, he was content simply to declare that he had been warned of them. That done, he took a very noble resolve: to await, without fear or anxiety, whatever might come of it, abandoning himself and committing himself to the keeping of the gods and of Fortune. For that was certainly the state he was in when he was killed.

A stranger had announced everywhere that, if Dionysius, tyrant of Syracuse, would give him a good sum of money, he could teach him a way to detect and discover with complete certainty the plots his subjects might devise against him. Dionysius heard of it and had him summoned, to learn about an art so necessary to his preservation. The stranger told him that there was no other art than this: he should have a talent paid out to him and boast of having learned a remarkable secret from him. Dionysius found this a good device and had six hundred crowns counted out to him.

FRENCH

ENGLISH

It was not likely that he would have given so large a sum to an unknown man except as reward for some very useful teaching, and this reputation served to keep his enemies in fear. So princes wisely make public the warnings they receive of plots laid against their lives, to make people believe that they are well informed and that nothing can be undertaken without their getting wind of it. The Duke of Athens committed many follies in establishing his new tyranny over Florence, but this was the most notable. He received the first warning of the conspiracies that people was hatching against him from Matteo di Morozzo, one of the accomplices; and he had him put to death, to suppress the warning and to keep anyone from feeling that there was discontent with his rule in the city.[11]

1.24.14 Il me souuient auoir leu autrefois l'histoire de quelque Romain, personnage de dignité, lequel fuyant la tyrannie du Triumuirat, auoit eschappé mille fois les mains de ceux qui le poursuiuoyent, par la subtilité de ses inuentions. Il aduint vn iour, qu'vne troupe de gens de cheual, qui auoit charge de le prendre, passa tout ioignant vn halier, où il s'estoit tapy, et faillit de le descouurir.

I remember once reading the story of a certain Roman, a man of rank, who, fleeing the tyranny of the Triumvirate, had escaped a thousand times from the hands of his pursuers by the cleverness of his devices. One day a troop of horsemen charged with capturing him passed right by a thicket where he was crouching, and just missed discovering him.

Mais luy sur ce point là, considerant la peine et les difficultez, ausquelles il auoit desia si long temps duré, pour se sauuer des continuelles et curieuses recherches, qu'on faisoit de luy par tout, le peu de plaisir qu'il pouuoit esperer d'vne telle vie, et combien il luy valoit mieux passer vne fois le pas, que demeurer tousiours en cette transe, luy-mesme les r'appella, et leur trahit sa cachette, s'abandonnant volontairement à leur cruauté, pour oster eux et luy d'vne plus longue peine. D'appeller les mains ennemies, c'est vn conseil vn peu gaillard: si croy-ie, qu'encore vaudroit-il mieux le prendre, que de demeurer en la fieure continuelle d'vn accident, qui n'a point de remede.

But at that point he considered the pain and difficulties he had already endured for so long to escape the continual, close searches being made for him everywhere, the little pleasure he could hope for from such a life, and how much better it would be to take the step once and for all than to remain forever in such terror. So he called them back himself and betrayed his hiding place to them, giving himself up willingly to their cruelty, to relieve both them and himself of further trouble. To call for the enemy's hands is a rather bold course; yet I believe it would still be better to take it than to remain in the continual fever of a danger for which there is no remedy.

Mais puis que les prouisions qu'on y peut apporter sont pleines d'inquietude, et d'incertitude, il vaut mieux d'vne belle asseurance se preparer à tout ce qui en pourra aduenir; et tirer quelque consolation de ce qu'on n'est pas asseuré qu'il aduienne.

But since the precautions one can take are full of anxiety and uncertainty, it is better to prepare oneself with fine assurance for whatever may come of it, and to draw some consolation from the fact that one is not sure it will happen.

11 Walter of Brienne, titular Duke of Athens, ruled Florence in 1342–1343 until he was driven out.

I.25 Of Pedantry

Du Pedantisme

Learned pedants stuff their memories but leave their judgment empty; true learning should make us wiser and better.

FRENCH

1.25.1 IE me suis souuent despité en mon enfance, de voir és comedies Italiennes, tousiours vn pedante pour badin, et le surnom de magister, n'auoir guere plus honorable signification parmi nous. Car leur estant donné en gouuernement, que pouuois-ie moins faire que d'estre ialoux de leur reputation? Ie cherchois bien de les excuser par la disconuenance naturelle qu'il y a entre le vulgaire, et les personnes rares et excellentes en iugement, et en sçauoir: d'autant qu'ils vont vn train entierement contraire les vns des autres.

Mais en cecy perdois-ie mon latin: que les plus galans hommes c'estoient ceux qui les auoyent le plus à mespris, tesmoing nostre bon du Bellay: *Mais ie hay par sur tout vn sçauoir pedantesque.* Et est cette coustume ancienne: car Plutarque dit que Grec et Escolier, estoient mots de reproche entre les Romains, et de mespris. Depuis auec l'aage i'ay trouué qu'on auoit vne grandissime raison, et que *magis magnos clericos non sunt magis magnos sapientes*.

Mais d'où il puisse aduenir qu'vne ame riche de la cognoissance de tant de choses, n'en deuienne pas plus viue, et plus esueillée; et qu'vn esprit grossier et vulgaire puisse loger en soy, sans s'amender, les discours et les iugemens des plus excellens esprits, que le monde ait porté, i'en suis encore en doute. A receuoir tant de ceruelles estrangeres, et si fortes, et si grandes, il est necessaire, me disoit vne fille, la premiere de nos Princesses, parlant de quelqu'vn, que la sienne se foule, se contraigne et rappetisse, pour faire place aux autres.

Ie dirois volontiers, que comme les plantes s'estouffent de trop d'humeur, et les lampes de trop d'huile, aussi faict l'action de l'esprit par trop d'estude et de matiere: lequel occupé et embarassé d'vne grande diuersité de choses, perde le moyen de se demesler. Et que cette charge le tienne courbe et croupy. Mais il en va autrement; car nostre ame s'eslargit d'autant plus qu'elle

ENGLISH

In my childhood I was often vexed to see the pedant always cast as the clown in Italian comedies, and the title "magister" hardly more honorable among us. For since I had been put in the charge of such men, what less could I do than be jealous of their reputation? I did try to excuse them by the natural incompatibility between ordinary people and persons rare and excellent in judgment and learning, since the two go entirely opposite ways.

But here my Latin failed me: the finest gentlemen were the very ones who held them most in contempt. Witness our good du Bellay: *But above all I hate pedantic learning.* And this custom is ancient, for Plutarch says that "Greek" and "scholar" were words of reproach and contempt among the Romans. Since then, with age, I have found that people had very good reason, and that *the most great clerks are not the most great wise men*.[1]

But how it can happen that a soul rich in the knowledge of so many things does not become livelier and more awake for it, and that a coarse and common mind can lodge within itself, without being improved, the reasonings and judgments of the most excellent minds the world has produced, I am still in doubt. "To take in so many other people's brains, so strong and so great," a young lady, the first of our princesses, once said to me of someone, "his own must be crushed, cramped and shrunk to make room for the others."

I would readily say that just as plants are stifled by too much moisture and lamps by too much oil, so is the action of the mind by too much study and matter. Occupied and encumbered with a great diversity of things, it would lose the means of disentangling itself, and this load would keep it bent and stooping. But it is otherwise, for our soul ex-

1 Joachim du Bellay, Regrets, sonnet 68. The Latin is a deliberately ungrammatical proverb of the schools.

FRENCH

se remplit. Et aux exemples des vieux temps, il se voit tout au rebours, des suffisans hommes aux maniemens des choses publiques, des grands Capitaines, et grands conseillers aux affaires d'Estat, auoir esté ensemble tressçauans.

1.25.2 Et quant aux Philosophes retirez de toute occupation publique, ils ont esté aussi quelque fois à la verité mesprisez, par la liberté Comique de leur temps, leurs opinions et façons les rendans ridicules. Les voulez vous faire iuges des droits d'vn procés, des actions d'vn homme? Ils en sont bien prests! Ils cerchent encore s'il y a vie, s'il y a mouuement, si l'homme est autre chose qu'vn bœuf: que c'est qu'agir et souffrir, quelles bestes ce sont, que loix et iustice. Parlent-ils du magistrat, ou parlent-ils à luy? c'est d'vne liberté irreuerente et inciuile. Oyent-ils louer vn Prince ou vn Roy? c'est vn pastre pour eux, oisif comme vn pastre, occupé à pressurer et tondre ses bestes: mais bien plus rudement.

En estimez vous quelqu'vn plus grand, pour posseder deux mille arpents de terre? eux s'en moquent, accoustumés d'embrasser tout le monde, comme leur possession. Vous ventez vous de vostre noblesse, pour compter sept ayeulx riches? ils vous estiment de peu, ne conceuant l'image vniuerselle de nature, et combien chascun de nous a eu de predecesseurs, riches, pauures, Roys, valets, Grecs, Barbares. Et quand vous seriez cinquantiesme descendant de Hercules, ils vous trouuent vain, de faire valoir ce present de la fortune. Ainsi les desdeignoit le vulgaire, comme ignorants les premieres choses et communes, et comme presomptueux et insolents.

1.25.3 Mais cette peinture Platonique est bien esloignée de celle qu'il faut à noz hommes. On enuioit ceux-là comme estans au dessus de la commune façon, comme mesprisans les actions publiques, comme ayans dressé vne vie particuliere et inimitable, reglée à certains discours hautains et hors d'vsage: ceux-cy on les desdeigne, comme estans au dessoubs de la commune façon, comme incapables des charges publiques, comme trainans vne vie et des meurs basses et viles apres le vulgaire. *Odi homines ignaua opera, Philosopha sententia.*

1.25.4 Quant à ces Philosophes, dis-ie, comme ils estoient grands en science, ils estoient encore plus grands en

ENGLISH

pands the more it is filled. And in the examples of olden times we see quite the reverse: men capable in the handling of public affairs, great captains and great counselors in affairs of state, were at the same time very learned.

As for the philosophers who withdrew from all public occupation, it is true that they too were sometimes scorned by the comic license of their time, their opinions and ways making them ridiculous. Would you make them judges of the rights of a lawsuit, or of a man's actions? They are just the men for it! They are still inquiring whether there is life, whether there is motion, whether man is anything other than an ox; what acting and suffering are; what sort of beasts law and justice are. Do they speak of the magistrate, or to him? It is with an irreverent and uncivil freedom. Do they hear a prince or a king praised? To them he is a shepherd, idle as a shepherd, busy squeezing and shearing his flock, only far more roughly.

Do you think a man greater for owning two thousand acres of land? They laugh at it, used as they are to embracing the whole world as their possession. Do you boast of your nobility because you can count seven rich ancestors? They think little of you, for not grasping the universal picture of nature, and how many forebears each of us has had: rich, poor, kings, servants, Greeks, barbarians. And were you the fiftieth descendant of Hercules, they would think you vain for making much of this gift of Fortune. So the common people disdained them, as ignorant of the first and most ordinary things, and as presumptuous and insolent.

But this Platonic portrait is far removed from the one that fits our men. Those philosophers were envied as being above the common way, as despising public actions, as having set up a private and inimitable life, ruled by certain lofty and unusual principles. These men of ours are disdained as being beneath the common way, as incapable of public office, as dragging out a low and vile life and low and vile habits in the wake of the common people. *I hate men who are idle in deed and philosophical in speech.*[2]

As for those philosophers, I say, great as they were in learning, they were still greater in every kind of

FRENCH

toute action. Et tout ainsi qu'on dit de ce Geometrien de Syracuse, lequel ayant esté destourné de sa contemplation, pour en mettre quelque chose en pratique, à la deffence de son païs, qu'il mit soudain en train des engins espouuentables, et des effects surpassans toute creance humaine; desdaignant toutefois luy mesme toute cette sienne manufacture, et pensant en cela auoir corrompu la dignité de son art, de laquelle ses ouurages n'estoient que l'apprentissage et le iouet.

Aussi eux, si quelquefois on les a mis à la preuue de l'action, on les a veu voler d'vne aisle si haulte, qu'il paroissoit bien, leur cœur et leur ame s'estre merueilleusement grossie et enrichie par l'intelligence des choses. Mais aucuns voyants la place du gouuernement politique saisie par hommes incapables, s'en sont reculés. Et celuy qui demanda à Crates, iusques à quand il faudroit philosopher, en receut cette responce: Iusques à tant que ce ne soient plus des asniers, qui conduisent noz armées. Heraclitus resigna la Royauté à son frere. Et aux Ephesiens, qui luy reprochoient, qu'il passoit son temps à ioüer auec les enfans deuant le temple: Vaut-il pas mieux faire cecy, que gouuerner les affaires en vostre compagnie?

D'autres ayans leur imagination logée au dessus de la fortune et du monde, trouuerent les sieges de la iustice, et les thrones mesmes des Roys, bas et viles. Et refusa Empedocles la royauté, que les Agrigentins luy offrirent. Thales accusant quelquefois le soing du mesnage et de s'enrichir, on luy reprocha que c'estoit à la mode du renard, pour n'y pouuoir aduenir. Il luy print enuie par passe-temps d'en montrer l'experience, et ayant pour ce coup raualé son sçauoir au seruice du proffit et du gain, dressa vne trafique, qui dans vn an rapporta telles richesses, qu'à peine en toute leur vie, les plus experimentez de ce mestier là, en pouuoient faire de pareilles.

Ce qu'Aristote recite d'aucuns, qui appelloyent et celuy là et Anaxagoras, et leurs semblables, sages et non prudents, pour n'auoir assez de soin des choses plus vtiles: outre ce que ie ne digere pas bien cette difference de mots, cela ne sert point d'excuse à mes gents, et à voir la basse et necessiteuse fortune, dequoy ils se payent, nous aurions plustost occasion de prononcer tous les deux, qu'ils sont, et non sages, et non prudents.

ENGLISH

action. They say of that geometer of Syracuse that, when he was diverted from his contemplation to put some of it into practice in the defense of his country, he at once set going terrifying engines and effects surpassing all human belief. Yet he himself disdained all this handiwork of his, thinking that he had thereby debased the dignity of his art, of which these works were only the apprenticeship and the plaything.[3]

So too with them: whenever they were put to the test of action, they were seen to fly on so lofty a wing that it was plain their hearts and souls had been wonderfully enlarged and enriched by the understanding of things. But some, seeing the seat of political government seized by incapable men, drew back from it. The man who asked Crates how long one must go on philosophizing received this answer: "Until it is no longer donkey drivers who lead our armies." Heraclitus resigned the kingship to his brother. And to the Ephesians, who reproached him for spending his time playing with the children in front of the temple, he said: "Is it not better to do this than to govern affairs in your company?"

Others, with their imagination lodged above Fortune and the world, found the seats of justice, and even the thrones of kings, low and vile. And Empedocles refused the kingship that the people of Agrigentum offered him. When Thales once criticized the concern with household management and getting rich, he was reproached with doing it like the fox, because he could not manage it himself. He took a fancy, as a pastime, to show the contrary by experiment. Lowering his knowledge for once to the service of profit and gain, he set up a business that in one year brought in such riches that the most experienced in that trade could hardly have made as much in their whole lives.

Aristotle reports that some people called both Thales and Anaxagoras, and others like them, wise but not prudent, for not caring enough about the more useful things. Besides the fact that I do not quite digest this distinction between words, it is no excuse for the men I am speaking of. Seeing the low and needy fortune they are content with, we

2 The portrait is from Plato's Theaetetus. The Latin line is from Pacuvius, quoted by Aulus Gellius.
3 Archimedes, who devised engines against the Roman siege of Syracuse in 213–212 BC.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
		would rather have reason to declare both: that they are neither wise nor prudent.

LEARNING WITHOUT JUDGMENT

Schools fill the memory and leave understanding empty; pedants make their pupils worse.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
1.25.5	Ie quitte cette premiere raison, et croy qu'il vaut mieux dire, que ce mal vienne de leur mauuaise façon de se prendre aux sciences: et qu'à la mode dequoy nous sommes instruicts, il n'est pas merueille, si ny les escoliers, ny les maistres n'en deuiennent pas plus habiles, quoy qu'ils s'y facent plus doctes. De vray le soing et la despence de nos peres, ne vise qu'à nous meubler la teste de science: du iugement et de la vertu, peu de nouuelles. Criez d'vn passant à nostre peuple: O le sçauant homme! Et d'vn autre, O le bon homme! Il ne faudra pas à destourner les yeux et son respect vers le premier. Il y faudroit vn tiers crieur: O les lourdes testes!	I give up this first reason, and I think it better to say that this evil comes from their bad way of going about the sciences. Given the way we are taught, it is no wonder if neither pupils nor masters become any more able, though they do become more learned. Indeed, all the care and expense of our fathers aims only at furnishing our heads with knowledge; of judgment and virtue, very little news. Cry out to our people about one passerby, "Oh, what a learned man!" and about another, "Oh, what a good man!" They will not fail to turn their eyes and their respect toward the first. There ought to be a third crier: "Oh, what blockheads!"
1.25.6	Nous nous enquerons volontiers, Sçait-il du Grec ou du Latin? escrit-il en vers ou en prose? mais, s'il est deuenu meilleur ou plus aduisé, c'estoit le principal, et c'est ce qui demeure derriere. Il falloit s'enquerir qui est mieux sçauant, non qui est plus sçauant.	We readily ask, "Does he know Greek or Latin? Does he write in verse or in prose?" But whether he has become better or wiser, which was the main thing, is what gets left behind. We ought to have asked who is better learned, not who is more learned.
1.25.7	Nous ne trauaillons qu'à remplir la memoire, et laissons l'entendement et la conscience vuide. Tout ainsi que les oyseaux vont quelquefois à la queste du grain, et le portent au bec sans le taster, pour en faire bechée à leurs petits: ainsi nos pedantes vont pillotans la science dans les liures, et ne la logent qu'au bout de leurs léures, pour la dégorger seulement, et mettre au vent. C'est merueille combien proprement la sottise se loge sur mon exemple. Est-ce pas faire de mesme, ce que ie fay en la plus part de cette composition? Ie m'en vay escornifflant par-cy par-là, des liures, les sentences qui me plaisent; non pour les garder, car ie n'ay point de gardoire, mais pour les transporter en cettuy-cy; où, à vray dire, elles ne sont non plus miennes, qu'en leur premiere place. Nous ne sommes, ce croy-ie, sçauants, que de la science presente: non de la passée, aussi peu que de la future. Mais qui pis est, leurs escoliers et leurs petits ne s'en nourrissent et alimentent non plus, ains elle passe de main en main, pour cette seule fin, d'en faire parade, d'en entretenir autruy, et d'en faire des comptes, comme vne vaine monnoye inutile à tout autre	We work only to fill the memory, and leave the understanding and the conscience empty. Birds sometimes go in search of grain and carry it in their beaks without tasting it, to feed it to their young. In just the same way our pedants go pilfering knowledge from books and lodge it only on the tips of their lips, merely to spit it out again and scatter it to the wind. It is remarkable how neatly this folly fits my own case. Is not what I am doing in most of this book the very same thing? I go about cadging from books, here and there, the sayings that please me. I do not do it to keep them, for I have no storehouse, but to carry them over into this book, where, to tell the truth, they are no more mine than they were in their first place. We are learned, I believe, only in present knowledge, not in past knowledge, any more than in future. But what is worse, their pupils and their little ones do not feed or nourish themselves on it either. Instead it passes from hand to hand for this sole purpose: to make a show of it, to entertain others with

FRENCH

vsage et emploite, qu'à compter et ietter. Apud alios loqui didicerunt, non ipsi secum.

Non est loquendum, sed gubernandum. *Nature, pour montrer qu'il n'y a rien de sauuage en ce qu'elle conduit, faict naistre souuent és nations moins cultiuées par art, des productions d'esprit, qui luittent les plus artistes productions. Comme sur mon propos, le prouerbe Gascon tiré d'vne chalemie, est-il delicat,* Bouha prou bouha, mas à remuda lous dits qu'em. Souffler prou souffler, mais à remuer les doits, nous en sommes là. Nous sçauons dire, Cicero dit ainsi, voila les meurs de Platon, ce sont les mots mesmes d'Aristote: mais nous que disons nous nous mesmes? que faisons nous? que iugeons nous? Autant en diroit bien vn perroquet.

1.25.8 Cette façon me faict souuenir de ce riche Romain, qui auoit esté soigneux à fort grande despence, de recouurer des hommes suffisans en tout genre de science, qu'il tenoit continuellement autour de luy, affin que quand il escheoit entre ses amis, quelque occasion de parler d'vne chose ou d'autre, ils suppleassent en sa place, et fussent tous prests à luy fournir, qui d'vn discours, qui d'vn vers d'Homere, chacun selon son gibier: et pensoit ce sçauoir estre sien, par ce qu'il estoit en la teste de ses gens. Et comme font aussi ceux, desquels la suffisance loge en leurs somptueuses librairies.

I'en cognoy, à qui quand ie demande ce qu'il sçait, il me demande vn liure pour le montrer: et n'oseroit me dire, qu'il a le derriere galeux, s'il ne va sur le champ estudier en son lexicon que c'est que galeux, et que c'est que derriere.

1.25.9 Nous prenons en garde les opinions et le sçauoir d'autruy, et puis c'est tout: il les faut faire nostres. Nous semblons proprement celuy, qui ayant besoing de feu, en iroit querir chez son voisin, et y en ayant trouué vn beau et grand, s'arresteroit là à se chauffer, sans plus se souuenir d'en raporter chez soy. Que nous sert-il d'auoir la panse pleine de viande, si elle ne se digere, si elle ne se transforme en nous? si elle ne nous augmente et fortifie? Pensons nous que Lucullus, que les lettres rendirent et formerent si grand capitaine sans experience, les eust

ENGLISH

it, and to tell tales with it, like a worthless coin of no other use or employment than counting and casting accounts. They have learned to speak with others, not with themselves.[4]

What matters is not speaking but steering. *Nature, to show that there is nothing uncouth in what she guides, often brings forth, in nations less cultivated by art, productions of the mind that rival the most artful ones. Apropos of my subject, how delicate is the Gascon proverb drawn from a reed pipe:* Bouha prou bouha, mas à remuda lous dits qu'em: "Blow away, blow all you like, but when it comes to moving the fingers, there we are stuck." We know how to say, "Cicero says this," "These are Plato's morals," "These are the very words of Aristotle." But what do we ourselves say? What do we do? What do we judge? A parrot could say as much.[5]

This way of doing things reminds me of that rich Roman who had taken care, at very great expense, to procure men capable in every kind of learning. He kept them continually around him, so that whenever an occasion arose among his friends to speak of one thing or another, they might fill in for him and be all ready to supply him, one with a speech, another with a line of Homer, each in his own field. And he thought this knowledge was his because it was in the heads of his people. So too do those whose ability resides in their sumptuous libraries.[6]

I know one man who, when I ask him what he knows, asks me for a book so that he can show me. He would not dare tell me that he has a mangy backside without going at once to look up in his lexicon what "mangy" is and what "backside" is.

We take the opinions and knowledge of others into our keeping, and that is all. We must make them our own. We are just like the man who, needing fire, went to fetch some from his neighbor's, found a fine big one there, and stayed there warming himself, without remembering to bring any back home. What good does it do us to have our bellies full of food if it is not digested, if it is not transformed into us, if it does not make us bigger and stronger? Do we think that Lucullus, whom letters

4 Cicero, Tusculan Disputations V.
5 The Latin is from Seneca, Letters 108.
6 Calvisius Sabinus, described by Seneca in Letters 27.

FRENCH

prises à nostre mode? Nous nous laissons si fort aller sur les bras d'autruy, que nous aneantissons nos forces.

Me veux-ie armer contre la crainte de la mort? c'est aux despens de Seneca. Veux-ie tirer de la consolation pour moy, ou pour vn autre? ie l'emprunte de Cicero: ie l'eusse prise en moy-mesme, si on m'y eust exercé. Ie n'ayme point cette suffisance relatiue et mendiée. Quand bien nous pourrions estre sçauans du sçauoir d'autruy, au moins sages ne pouuons nous estre que de nostre propre sagesse. μισω σοφιστην, ὁστις ουχ αυτω σοφος. Ex quo Ennius: *Nequidquam sapere sapientem, qui ipse sibi prodesse non quiret. si cupidus, si / Vanus, et Euganea quantumuis vilior agna. Non enim paranda nobis solum, sed fruenda sapientia est.*

1.25.10 Dionysius se moquoit des Grammariens, qui ont soin de s'enquerir des maux d'Vlysses, et ignorent les propres: des musiciens, qui accordent leurs fleutes, et n'accordent pas leurs mœurs: des orateurs qui estudient à dire iustice, non à la faire. Si nostre ame n'en va vn meilleur bransle, si nous n'en auons le iugement plus sain, i'aymerois aussi cher que mon escolier eut passé le temps à ioüer à la paume, au moins le corps en seroit plus allegre. Voyez le reuenir de là, apres quinze ou seize ans employez, il n'est rien si mal propre à mettre en besongne, tout ce que vous y recognoissez d'auantage, c'est que son Latin et son Grec l'ont rendu plus sot et presumptueux qu'il n'estoit party de la maison.

Il en deuoit rapporter l'ame pleine, il ne l'en rapporte que bouffie: et l'a seulement enflée, en lieu de la grossir.

1.25.11 Ces maistres icy, comme Platon dit des Sophistes, leurs germains, sont de tous les hommes, ceux qui promettent d'estre les plus vtiles aux hommes, et seuls entre tous les hommes, qui non seulement n'amendent point ce qu'on leur commet, comme faict vn charpentier et vn masson: mais l'empirent, et se font payer de l'auoir empiré. Si la loy que Protagoras proposoit à ses disciples, estoit suiuie: ou qu'ils le payassent selon son mot, ou qu'ils iurassent au temple, combien ils estimoient le profit qu'ils auoient receu de sa discipline, et selon iceluy satisfissent sa

ENGLISH

shaped into so great a captain without experience, took them in our way? We lean so heavily on others' arms that we destroy our own strength.[7]

Do I want to arm myself against the fear of death? I do it at Seneca's expense. Do I want to draw consolation for myself or for another? I borrow it from Cicero. I would have drawn it from myself if I had been trained to. I do not like this borrowed, begged ability. Even if we could be learned with another's learning, at least we can be wise only with our own wisdom. *I hate the wise man who is not wise for himself.* Hence Ennius: *Vain is the wisdom of the wise man who cannot profit himself. If he is greedy, if / vain, and more worthless than any Euganean lamb. For wisdom is not only to be acquired but to be enjoyed.*[8]

Dionysius mocked the grammarians who take care to inquire into the ills of Ulysses and know nothing of their own; the musicians who tune their flutes and do not tune their morals; the orators who study how to speak of justice, not how to do it. If our soul does not move better for it, if our judgment is not made sounder by it, I would just as soon my pupil had spent the time playing tennis; at least his body would be the nimbler for it. Look at him coming back from school after fifteen or sixteen years spent there: nothing is so unfit to be put to work. All the difference you can see in him is that his Latin and his Greek have made him more foolish and presumptuous than when he left home.[9]

He ought to have brought his soul back full; he brings it back only bloated. He has merely puffed it up instead of enlarging it.

These masters, as Plato says of the Sophists, their first cousins, are of all men the ones who promise to be most useful to men. Yet they alone of all men not only fail to improve what is entrusted to them, as a carpenter or a mason does, but make it worse, and get paid for having made it worse. Protagoras proposed this rule to his pupils: either they paid him his price, or they swore in the temple how much they valued the profit they had received

7 Lucius Licinius Lucullus (1st century BC) learned the art of war from books on his way to the East, according to Cicero.
8 The Greek line is from Euripides, quoted by Cicero, who also quotes Ennius in On Duties III. Then come Juvenal, Satires VIII, and Cicero, On Ends I.
9 Diogenes Laertius tells this of Diogenes the Cynic.

FRENCH

peine: mes pedagogues se trouueroient chouez, s'estans remis au serment de mon experience.

Mon vulgaire Perigordin appelle fort plaisamment *Lettre ferits*, ces sçauanteaux, comme si vous disiez Lettre-ferus, ausquels les lettres ont donné vn coup de marteau, comme on dit. De vray le plus souuent ils semblent estre raualez, mesmes du sens commun. Car le païsant et le cordonnier vous leur voyez aller simplement et naïuement leur train, parlant de ce qu'ils sçauent: ceux-cy pour se vouloir esleuer et gendarmer de ce sçauoir, qui nage en la superficie de leur ceruelle, vont s'embarrassant, et empetrant sans cesse.

Il leur eschappe de belles parolles, mais qu'vn autre les accommode: ils cognoissent bien Galien, mais nullement le malade: ils vous ont des-ia rempli la teste de loix, et si n'ont encore conçeu le neud de la cause: ils sçauent la Theorique de toutes choses, cherchez qui la mette en practique

1.25.12 I'ay veu chez moy vn mien amy, par maniere de passetemps, ayant affaire à vn de ceux-cy, contrefaire vn iargon de Galimatias, propos sans suitte, tissu de pieces rapportées, sauf qu'il estoit souuent entrelardé de mots propres à leur dispute, amuser ainsi tout vn iour ce sot à debattre, pensant tousiours respondre aux obiections qu'on luy faisoit. Et si estoit homme de lettres et de reputation, et qui auoit vne belle robbe.

Vos ô patritius sanguis quos viuere par est / Occipiti cæco, posticæ occurrite sannæ. Qui regardera de bien pres à ce genre de gens, qui s'estend bien loing, il trouuera comme moy, que le plus souuent ils ne s'entendent, ny autruy, et qu'ils ont la souuenance assez pleine, mais le iugement entierement creux: sinon que leur nature d'elle mesme le leur ait autrement façonné. Comme i'ay veu Adrianus Turnebus, qui n'ayant faict autre profession que de lettres, en laquelle c'estoit, à mon opinion, le plus grand homme, qui fust il y a mil ans, n'ayant toutesfois rien de pedantesque que le port de sa robbe, et quelque façon externe, qui pouuoit n'estre pas ciuilisée à la courtisane: qui sont choses de neant.

ENGLISH

from his teaching, and paid him for his trouble accordingly. If that rule were followed, my pedagogues would find themselves left high and dry, if they relied on the oath of my experience.

My Périgord common folk very amusingly call these smatterers *Lettre ferits*, as you might say "letter-struck": men whom letters have hit with a hammer, as the saying goes. Truly, most of the time they seem to have sunk below even common sense. For the peasant and the shoemaker, you see them going about their business simply and naturally, speaking of what they know. These men, wanting to raise themselves up and swagger with this knowledge that floats on the surface of their brains, keep getting themselves tangled up and bogged down.

Fine words escape them, but let someone else put them to use. They know Galen well, but not the patient at all. They have already filled your head with laws, and yet they have not grasped the crux of the case. They know the theory of everything; go and find someone to put it into practice.[10]

I once saw a friend of mine at my house, by way of pastime, deal with one of these men by putting on a gibberish jargon: talk with no thread to it, a fabric of patched-together pieces, except that it was often larded with terms proper to their disputes. In this way he kept the fool amused and arguing for a whole day, the man always thinking he was answering the objections put to him. And yet he was a man of letters and of reputation, and he wore a fine gown.

You of patrician blood, whose lot is to live with no eyes in the back of your head, / turn round and face the mockery behind you. Whoever looks very closely at this kind of people, and it is a widespread kind, will find, as I do, that most often they understand neither themselves nor anyone else, and that their memories are full enough but their judgment entirely hollow—unless their nature has of itself fashioned it otherwise. So it was with Adrianus Turnebus, as I saw. He professed nothing but letters, and in that field he was, in my opinion, the greatest man there has been in a thousand years; yet he had nothing of the pedant about him except the way he wore his gown and a certain outward

10 Galen (2nd century AD) was the Greek physician whose works were still the authority in Montaigne's day.

FRENCH

ENGLISH

manner that was perhaps not polished in the courtier's fashion. These are things of no account.[11]

Et hay nos gens qui supportent plus mal-aysement vne robbe qu'vne ame de trauers: et regardent à sa reuerence, à son maintien et à ses bottes, quel homme il est. Car au dedans c'estoit l'ame la plus polie du monde. Ie l'ay souuent à mon escient ietté en propos eslongnez de son vsage, il y voyoit si cler, d'vne apprehension si prompte, d'vn iugement si sain, qu'il sembloit, qu'il n'eust iamais faict autre mestier que la guerre, et affaires d'Estat. Ce sont natures belles et fortes: *queis arte benigna / Et meliore luto finxit præcordia Titan,* qui se maintiennent au trauers d'vne mauuaise institution. Or ce n'est pas assez que nostre institution ne nous gaste pas, il faut qu'elle nous change en mieux.

And I hate people who find a gown worn askew harder to tolerate than a soul askew, and who judge what sort of man someone is by his bow, his bearing and his boots. For within, his was the most polished soul in the world. I often deliberately drew him into talk far removed from his own field, and he saw into it so clearly, with so quick an apprehension and so sound a judgment, that it seemed he had never followed any other trade than war and affairs of state. These are fine, strong natures, *whose hearts the Titan fashioned with kindly art / and of a better clay*, which hold their own through a bad education. Now it is not enough that our education should not spoil us; it must change us for the better.[12]

1.25.13 Il y a aucuns de noz Parlemens, quand ils ont à receuoir des officiers, qui les examinent seulement sur la science: les autres y adioustent encores l'essay du sens, en leur presentant le iugement de quelque cause. Ceux-cy me semblent auoir vn beaucoup meilleur stile. Et encore que ces deux pieces soyent necessaires, et qu'il faille qu'elles s'y trouuent toutes deux: si est-ce qu'à la verité celle du sçauoir est moins prisable, que celle du iugement; cette-cy se peut passer de l'autre, et non l'autre de cette cy. Car comme dict ce vers Grec, ως ουδεν ἡ μαθησις, ην μη νους παρη. A quoy faire la science, si l'entendement n'y est?

Some of our Parlements, when they have to admit officers, examine them only on their learning; others also add a test of their sense by giving them some case to judge. The latter seem to me to have a much better method. And although both these parts are necessary, and both must be present, still in truth learning is less to be prized than judgment. Judgment can do without learning, but not learning without judgment. For as the Greek verse says, *Learning is nothing, unless there is a mind to go with it.* What use is learning if understanding is not there?[13]

Pleust à Dieu que pour le bien de nostre iustice ces compagnies là se trouuassent aussi bien fournies d'entendement et de conscience, comme elles sont encore de science. *Non vitæ, sed scholæ discimus.* Or il ne faut pas attacher le sçauoir à l'ame, il l'y faut incorporer: il ne l'en faut pas arrouser, il l'en faut teindre; et s'il ne la change, et meliore son estat imparfaict, certainement il vaut beaucoup mieux le laisser là. C'est vn dangereux glaiue, et qui empesche et offence son maistre s'il est en main foible, et qui n'en sçache l'vsage: *vt fuerit melius non didicisse.*

Would to God that, for the good of our justice, those bodies were as well furnished with understanding and conscience as they still are with learning! *We learn not for life but for school.* Now learning must not be attached to the soul; it must be incorporated into it. The soul must not be sprinkled with it; it must be dyed in it. And if learning does not change the soul and improve its imperfect state, it is certainly much better to leave it alone. It is a dangerous sword, which hampers and wounds its master if it is in a weak hand that does not know how to use it: *so that it would have been better never to have learned.*[14]

1.25.14

11 Persius, Satires I. Adrien Turnèbe (1512–1565) was a French classical scholar and royal professor in Paris.
12 Juvenal, Satires XIV; the Titan is Prometheus, said to have shaped humans from clay.
13 The Greek line is preserved in Stobaeus's anthology.
14 The first quotation is from Seneca, Letters 106; the second from Cicero, Tusculan Disputations II.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
	A l'aduenture est ce la cause, que et nous, et la Theologie ne requerons pas beaucoup de science aux femmes, et que François Duc de Bretaigne filz de Iean V. comme on luy parla de son mariage auec Isabeau fille d'Escosse, et qu'on luy adiousta qu'elle auoit esté nourrie simplement et sans aucune instruction de lettres, respondit, qu'il l'en aymoit mieux, et qu'vne femme estoit assez sçauante, quand elle sçauoit mettre difference entre la chemise et le pourpoint de son mary.	Perhaps this is the reason why both we and theology do not require much learning of women. And it is why Francis, Duke of Brittany, son of John V, when they spoke to him of his marriage to Isabella, a daughter of Scotland, and added that she had been brought up simply and without any instruction in letters, replied that he loved her the better for it, and that a woman was learned enough when she could tell the difference between her husband's shirt and his doublet.[15]
1.25.15	Aussi ce n'est pas si grande merueille, comme on crie, que nos ancestres n'ayent pas faict grand estat des lettres, et qu'encores auiourd'huy elles ne se trouuent que par rencontre aux principaux conseils de nos Roys: et si cette fin de s'en enrichir, qui seule nous est auiourd'huy proposée par le moyen de la Iurisprudence, de la Medecine, du pedantisme, et de la Theologie encore, ne les tenoit en credit, vous les verriez sans doubte aussi marmiteuses qu'elles furent onques. Quel dommage, si elles ne nous apprennent ny à bien penser, ny à bien faire? *Postquam docti prodierunt, boni desunt.* Toute autre science, est dommageable à celuy qui n'a la science de la bonté.	So it is not such a great wonder, whatever people cry, that our ancestors did not set much store by letters, and that even today they are found only by chance in the chief councils of our kings. And if the aim of growing rich by them, which is the only one held out to us today through jurisprudence, medicine, pedantry, and theology too, did not keep them in credit, you would doubtless see them as wretched as they ever were. And what a loss would that be, if they teach us neither to think well nor to act well? *Since the learned have appeared, the good have vanished.* All other knowledge is harmful to the man who lacks the knowledge of goodness.[16]
1.25.16	Mais la raison que ie cherchoys tantost, seroit elle point aussi de là, que nostre estude en France n'ayant quasi autre but que le proufit, moins de ceux que nature a faict naistre à plus genereux offices que lucratifs, s'adonnants aux lettres, ou si courtement (retirez auant que d'en auoir pris appetit, à vne profession qui n'a rien de commun auec les liures) il ne reste plus ordinairement, pour s'engager tout à faict à l'estude, que les gents de basse fortune, qui y questent des moyens à viure? Et de ces gents-là, les ames estans et par nature, et par institution domestique et exemple, du plus bas aloy, rapportent faucement le fruit de la science.	But might not the reason I was looking for a moment ago also come from this? Since our study in France has hardly any aim but profit, fewer of those whom nature has born for nobler offices than lucrative ones devote themselves to letters, or else they do so only briefly (withdrawn, before they have acquired a taste for them, into a profession that has nothing in common with books). And so there ordinarily remain, to commit themselves wholly to study, only people of low fortune, who are hunting in it for a means of living. And since the souls of such people are of the basest alloy, both by nature and by their home upbringing and example, they yield a false fruit of learning.
	Car elle n'est pas pour donner iour à l'ame qui n'en a point: ny pour faire voir vn aueugle. Son mestier est, non de luy fournir de veuë, mais de la luy dresser, de luy regler ses allures, pourueu qu'elle aye de soy les pieds, et les iambes droites et capables. C'est vne bonne drogue que la science, mais nulle drogue n'est assés forte, pour se preseruer sans alteration et corruption, selon le vice	For learning is not meant to give light to a soul that has none, nor to make a blind man see. Its business is not to furnish the soul with sight but to train its sight, to regulate its gait, provided it has, of its own, feet and legs that are straight and capable. Learning is a good drug; but no drug is strong enough to keep itself free of alteration and

15 Francis I, Duke of Brittany (1414–1450), married Isabella Stuart, daughter of James I of Scotland, in 1442.
16 Seneca, Letters 95.

FRENCH	ENGLISH
du vase qui l'estuye. Tel a la veuë claire, qui ne l'a pas droitte: et par consequent void le bien, et ne le suit pas: et void la science, et ne s'en sert pas.	corruption, according to the defect of the vessel that holds it. A man may have clear sight who does not have straight sight; and so he sees the good and does not follow it, and sees knowledge and does not use it.
La principale ordonnance de Platon en sa republique, c'est donner à ses citoyens selon leur nature, leur charge. Nature peut tout, et fait tout. Les boiteux sont mal propres aux exercices du corps, et aux exercices de l'esprit les ames boiteuses. Les bastardes et vulgaires sont indignes de la philosophie. Quand nous voyons vn homme mal chaussé, nous disons que ce n'est pas merueille, s'il est chaussetier. De mesme il semble, que l'experience nous offre souuent, vn medecin plus mal medeciné, vn Theologien moins reformé, et coustumierement vn sçauant moins suffisant qu'vn autre.	Plato's chief ordinance in his Republic is to give his citizens their duties according to their nature. Nature can do everything and does everything. The lame are ill fitted for bodily exercises, and lame souls for exercises of the mind. Spurious and common souls are unworthy of philosophy. When we see a man badly shod, we say it is no wonder if he is a hosier. In the same way, experience often seems to offer us a doctor worse doctored than others, a theologian less reformed, and, as a rule, a learned man less competent.
Aristo Chius auoit anciennement raison de dire, que les philosophes nuisoient aux auditeurs: d'autant que la plus part des ames ne se trouuent propres à faire leur profit de telle instruction: qui, si elle ne se met à bien, se met à mal: ασωτους *ex Aristippi, acerbos ex Zenonis schola exire*.	Aristo of Chios was right, long ago, to say that philosophers harmed their listeners, since most souls are not fitted to profit from such instruction, which, if it does not turn to good, turns to ill: *that profligates came out of the school of Aristippus, and harsh men out of Zeno's*.[17]

TEACHING VIRTUE, PERSIAN AND SPARTAN

The Persians and Spartans taught their children virtue and action rather than letters.

FRENCH	ENGLISH
1.25.17 En cette belle institution que Xenophon preste aux Perses, nous trouuons qu'ils apprenoient la vertu à leurs enfans, comme les autres nations font les lettres. Platon dit que le fils aisné en leur succession royale, estoit ainsi nourry. Apres sa naissance, on le donnoit, non à des femmes, mais à des eunuches de la premiere authorité autour des Roys, à cause de leur vertu. Ceux-cy prenoient charge de luy rendre le corps beau et sain: et apres sept ans le duisoient à monter à cheual, et aller à la chasse. Quand il estoit arriué au quatorziesme, ils le deposoient entre les mains de quatre: le plus sage, le plus iuste, le plus temperant, le plus vaillant de la nation.	In that fine education which Xenophon lends the Persians, we find that they taught their children virtue as other nations teach letters. Plato says that the eldest son, in their royal succession, was brought up as follows. After his birth he was given not to women but to eunuchs of the highest authority about the kings, on account of their virtue. These took charge of making his body handsome and healthy, and after the age of seven they trained him to ride and to hunt. When he reached his fourteenth year, they placed him in the hands of four men: the wisest, the most just, the most temperate and the most valiant in the nation.[18]
Le premier luy apprenoit la religion: le second, à estre tousiours veritable: le tiers, à se rendre maistre des cupidités: le quart, à ne rien craindre.	The first taught him religion; the second, to be always truthful; the third, to master his desires; the fourth, to fear nothing.
1.25.18	

17 Aristo of Chios was a Stoic philosopher of the 3rd century BC; the quotation is from Cicero, On the Nature of the Gods III. Aristippus founded the pleasure-seeking Cyrenaic school, Zeno the Stoic school.
18 Xenophon's Cyropaedia is an idealized account of the education of Cyrus the Great; the passage on the royal heir is from Plato's Alcibiades I.

FRENCH

C'est chose digne de tres-grande consideration, que en cette excellente police de Lycurgus, et à la verité monstrueuse par sa perfection, si songneuse pourtant de la nourriture des enfans, comme de sa principale charge, et au giste mesmes des Muses, il s'y face si peu de mention de la doctrine: comme si cette genereuse ieunesse desdaignant tout autre ioug que de la vertu, on luy aye deu fournir, au lieu de nos maistres de science, seulement des maistres de vaillance, prudence et iustice. Exemple que Platon a suiuy en ses loix.

La façon de leur discipline, c'estoit leur faire des questions sur le iugement des hommes, et de leurs actions: et s'ils condamnoient et loüoient, ou ce personnage, ou ce faict, il falloit raisonner leur dire, et par ce moyen ils aiguisoient ensemble leur entendement, et apprenoient le droit.

Astyages en Xenophon, demande à Cyrus compte de sa derniere leçon; C'est, dit-il, qu'en nostre escole vn grand garçon ayant vn petit saye, le donna à l'vn de ses compagnons de plus petite taille, et luy osta son saye qui estoit plus grand: nostre precepteur m'ayant fait iuge de ce different, ie iugeay qu'il falloit laisser les choses en cet estat, et que l'vn et l'autre sembloit estre mieux accommodé en ce point: sur quoy il me remontra que i'auois mal fait: car ie m'estois arresté à considerer la bien seance, et il falloit premierement auoir proueu à la iustice, qui vouloit que nul ne fust forcé en ce qui luy appartenoit.

Et dit qu'il en fut fouëté, tout ainsi que nous sommes en nos villages, pour auoir oublié le premier aoriste de τυπτω. Mon regent me feroit vne belle harangue *in genere demonstratiuo*, auant qu'il me persuadast que son escole vaut cette-là.

1.25.19 Ils ont voulu coupper chemin: et puis qu'il est ainsi que les sciences, lors mesmes qu'on les prent de droit fil, ne peuuent que nous enseigner la prudence, la preud'hommie et la resolution, ils ont voulu d'arriuée mettre leurs enfans au propre des effects, et les instruire non par ouïr dire, mais par l'essay de l'action, en les formant et moulant vifuement, non seulement de preceptes et parolles, mais principalement d'exemples et d'œuures: afin que ce ne fust pas vne science en leur ame, mais sa complexion et habitude: que ce ne fust pas vn

ENGLISH

It is a thing well worth considering that in that excellent government of Lycurgus—truly monstrous in its perfection—so careful of the rearing of children as its principal charge, and in the very home of the Muses, there is so little mention of learning. It is as if, since those noble youths disdained every yoke but that of virtue, they had to be given, instead of our masters of learning, only masters of valor, prudence and justice. Plato followed this example in his Laws.

Their method of teaching was to put questions to the children about how to judge men and their actions; and if they condemned or praised this person or that deed, they had to give reasons for what they said. By this means they sharpened their understanding and learned what was right, both at once.

Astyages, in Xenophon, asks Cyrus to give an account of his last lesson. "It was this," he says. "In our school a big boy who had a small tunic gave it to one of his companions who was smaller, and took from him his tunic, which was bigger. Our tutor made me judge of this dispute, and I judged that things should be left as they were, since each seemed better suited that way. Whereupon he showed me that I had done wrong; for I had stopped at considering what was fitting, whereas I should first have attended to justice, which required that no one be forced in what belonged to him."[19]

And he says he was whipped for it, just as we are in our villages for having forgotten the first aorist of τυπτω. My schoolmaster would have to make me a fine speech *in the demonstrative genre* before he persuaded me that his school is as good as that one.[20]

They wanted to take a shortcut. And since it is the case that the sciences, even when taken straight, can only teach us prudence, integrity and resolution, they chose to put their children from the outset into the thick of action, and to instruct them not by hearsay but by trying out action, forming and molding them in a lively way, not only with precepts and words but chiefly with examples and deeds. The aim was that this should be not a know-

19 Astyages, king of the Medes, was Cyrus's grandfather (Xenophon, Cyropaedia I).
20 τυπτω ("I strike") was the model verb in Greek grammars. The demonstrative genre is the oratory of praise and blame.

FRENCH

acquest, mais vne naturelle possession. A ce propos, on demandoit à Agesilaus ce qu'il seroit d'aduis, que les enfans apprinsent: Ce qu'ils doiuent faire estans hommes, respondit-il.

Ce n'est pas merueille, si vne telle institution a produit des effects si admirables.

1.25.20 On alloit, dit-on, aux autres villes de Grece chercher des Rhetoriciens, des Peintres, et des Musiciens: mais en Lacedemone des legislateurs, des magistrats, et Empereurs d'armée: à Athenes on aprenoit à bien dire, et icy à bien faire: là à se desmesler d'vn argument sophistique, et à rabattre l'imposture des mots captieusement entrelassez; icy à se desmesler des appats de la volupté, et à rabattre d'vn grand courage les menasses de la fortune et de la mort: ceux-là s'embesongnoient apres les parolles, ceux-cy apres les choses: là c'estoit vne continuelle exercitation de la langue, icy vne continuelle exercitation de l'ame.

Parquoy il n'est pas estrange, si Antipater leur demandant cinquante enfans pour ostages, ils respondirent tout au rebours de ce que nous ferions, qu'ils aymoient mieux donner deux fois autant d'hommes faicts; tant ils estimoient la perte de l'education de leur pays. Quand Agesilaus conuie Xenophon d'enuoyer nourrir ses enfans à Sparte, ce n'est pas pour y apprendre la Rhetorique, ou Dialectique: mais pour apprendre, ce dit-il, la plus belle science qui soit, asçauoir la science d'obeir et de commander.

1.25.21 Il est tres-plaisant, de voir Socrates, à sa mode se moquant de Hippias, qui luy recite, comment il a gaigné, specialement en certaines petites villettes de la Sicile, bonne somme d'argent, à regenter: et qu'à Sparte il n'a gaigné pas vn sol. Que ce sont gents idiots, qui ne sçauent ny mesurer ny compter: ne font estat ny de Grammaire ny de rythme: s'amusans seulement à sçauoir la suitte des Roys, establissement et decadence des Estats, et tels fatras de comptes. Et au bout de cela, Socrates luy faisant aduouër par le menu, l'excellence de leur forme de gouuernement publique, l'heur et vertu de leur vie priuée, luy laisse deuiner la conclusion de l'inutilité de ses arts.

ENGLISH

ledge in their soul but its very constitution and habit; not an acquisition but a natural possession. On this subject, Agesilaus was asked what he thought children should learn. "What they should do when they are men," he answered.

It is no wonder if such an education produced such admirable results.

People went, they say, to the other cities of Greece to look for rhetoricians, painters and musicians, but to Lacedaemon for lawgivers, magistrates and generals. At Athens they learned to speak well, and here to act well. There they learned to disentangle themselves from a sophistical argument and to beat down the imposture of words cunningly interwoven; here, to disentangle themselves from the lures of pleasure and to beat down with great courage the threats of fortune and of death. Those busied themselves with words, these with things. There it was a continual exercise of the tongue; here, a continual exercise of the soul.[21]

So it is not strange that when Antipater demanded fifty children of them as hostages, they answered, quite the reverse of what we would do, that they would rather give twice as many grown men—so highly did they value the loss of their country's education. When Agesilaus invites Xenophon to send his children to be brought up in Sparta, it is not for them to learn rhetoric or dialectic there, but to learn, as he says, the finest knowledge there is: namely, the knowledge of how to obey and how to command.[22]

It is very amusing to see Socrates, in his way, mocking Hippias, who tells him how he has earned a good sum of money by teaching, especially in certain little towns in Sicily, and that at Sparta he did not earn a penny. The Spartans, he says, are simple, unlettered people who know neither how to measure nor how to count, who set no store by grammar or by rhythm, and amuse themselves only with knowing the succession of kings, the founding and decline of states, and such a jumble of tales. And at the end of all this Socrates, making him admit point by point the excellence of their form of public government and the happiness and virtue of their private life, leaves

21 Lacedaemon is Sparta.
22 Antipater was the Macedonian general who became regent after the death of Alexander the Great.

FRENCH

ENGLISH

him to guess the conclusion: the uselessness of his own arts.[23]

1.25.22 Les exemples nous apprennent, et en cette martiale police, et en toutes ses semblables, que l'estude des sciences amollit et effemine les courages, plus qu'il ne les fermit et aguerrit. Le plus fort Estat, qui paroisse pour le present au monde, est celuy des Turcs, peuples egalement duicts à l'estimation des armes, et mespris des lettres. Ie trouue Rome plus vaillante auant qu'elle fust sçauante. Les plus belliqueuses nations en nos iours, sont les plus grossieres et ignorantes. Les Scythes, les Parthes, Tamburlan, nous seruent à cette preuue.

Examples teach us, both in this martial state and in all those like it, that the study of the sciences softens and enfeebles hearts more than it strengthens and toughens them. The strongest state that appears in the world at present is that of the Turks, peoples trained alike to esteem arms and to despise letters. I find Rome more valiant before it became learned. The most warlike nations of our day are the crudest and most ignorant. The Scythians, the Parthians, Tamburlaine, serve us as proof of this.[24]

Quand les Gots rauagerent la Grece, ce qui sauua toutes les librairies d'estre passées au feu, ce fut vn d'entre eux, qui sema cette opinion, qu'il failloit laisser ce meuble entier aux ennemis: propre à les destourner de l'exercice militaire, et amuser à des occupations sedentaires et oysiues. Quand nostre Roy, Charles huictieme, quasi sans tirer l'espee du fourreau, se veid maistre du Royaume de Naples, et d'vne bonne partie de la Toscane, les Seigneurs de sa suitte, attribuerent cette inesperee facilité de conqueste, à ce que les Princes et la noblesse d'Italie s'amusoient plus à se rendre ingenieux et sçauans, que vigoureux et guerriers.

When the Goths ravaged Greece, what saved all the libraries from being put to the fire was one of them who spread the opinion that these goods should be left intact for the enemy, as being apt to divert them from military exercise and keep them amused with sedentary and idle occupations. When our king, Charles VIII, almost without drawing his sword from its scabbard, found himself master of the kingdom of Naples and a good part of Tuscany, the lords of his retinue attributed this unhoped-for ease of conquest to the fact that the princes and nobility of Italy amused themselves more with becoming clever and learned than vigorous and warlike.[25]

23 The dialogue is Plato's Hippias Major; Hippias of Elis was a sophist famous for his fees.
24 Tamburlaine is Timur (1336–1405), the Central Asian conqueror.
25 The Goths raided Athens in AD 267. Charles VIII invaded Italy in 1494–1495.

I.26 Of the Education of Children

De l'Institution des enfans, à Madame Diane de Foix, Contesse de Gurson
Writing to a noblewoman, Montaigne outlines an education that trains judgment and character rather than memory or rote learning.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
1.26.1	IE ne vis iamais pere, pour bossé ou teigneux que fust son fils, qui laissast de l'aduoüer: non pourtant, s'il n'est du tout enyuré de cet' affection, qu'il ne s'apperçoiue de sa defaillance: mais tant y a qu'il est sien. Aussi moy, ie voy mieux que tout autre, que ce ne sont icy que resueries d'homme, qui n'a gousté des sciences que la crouste premiere en son enfance, et n'en a retenu qu'vn general et informe visage: vn peu de chaque chose, et rien du tout, à la Françoise. Car en somme, ie sçay qu'il y a vne Medecine, vne Iurisprudence, quatre parties en la Mathematique, et grossierement ce à quoy elles visent.	I never saw a father, however hunchbacked or scabby his son might be, who would refuse to acknowledge him. Not that he fails to perceive the boy's defect, unless he is utterly drunk with that affection; but the fact remains that the boy is his. So I too see better than anyone that these are only the musings of a man who in his childhood tasted only the outer crust of the sciences, and has kept only a general, shapeless picture of them: a little of everything and nothing at all, in the French manner. For in short, I know that there is such a thing as medicine, and jurisprudence, and that mathematics has four parts, and roughly what they aim at.[1]
	Et à l'aduenture encore sçay-ie la pretention des sciences en general, au seruice de nostre vie: mais d'y enfoncer plus auant, de m'estre rongé les ongles à l'estude d'Aristote monarque de la doctrine moderne, ou opiniatré apres quelque science, ie ne l'ay iamais faict: ny n'est art dequoy ie peusse peindre seulement les premiers lineaments. Et n'est enfant des classes moyennes, qui ne se puisse dire plus sçauant que moy: qui n'ay seulement pas dequoy l'examiner sur sa premiere leçon. Et si l'on m'y force, ie suis contraint assez ineptement, d'en tirer quelque matiere de propos vniuersel, sur quoy i'examine son iugement naturel: leçon, qui leur est autant incognue, comme à moy la leur.	And perhaps I also know what the sciences in general claim to do in the service of our life. But as for plunging in deeper, gnawing my nails over the study of Aristotle, monarch of modern learning, or stubbornly pursuing some science—I have never done it. Nor is there any art of which I could sketch even the first outlines. There is no child in the middle forms who could not call himself more learned than I, who do not even know enough to examine him on his first lesson. And if I am forced to, I am obliged, rather ineptly, to draw from it some matter of general discussion, on which I examine his natural judgment: a lesson as unknown to them as theirs is to me.
1.26.2	Ie n'ay dressé commerce auec aucun liure solide, sinon Plutarche et Seneque, où ie puyse comme les Danaïdes, remplissant et versant sans cesse. I'en attache quelque chose à ce papier, à moy, si peu que rien. L'histoire, c'est mon gibier en matiere de liures, ou la poësie, que i'ayme d'vne particuliere inclination: car, comme disoit Cleanthes, tout ainsi que la voix contrainte dans l'étroit canal d'vne trompette sort plus aigue et plus forte: ainsi	I have struck up an acquaintance with no solid book except Plutarch and Seneca, from whom I draw like the Danaids, endlessly filling and pouring out. Something of it sticks to this paper; to me, next to nothing. History is my quarry in the matter of books, or poetry, which I love with a particular inclination. For, as Cleanthes said, just as the voice forced through the narrow channel of a

1 The four parts are the medieval quadrivium: arithmetic, geometry, music and astronomy.

FRENCH	ENGLISH
me semble il que la sentence pressee aux pieds nombreux de la poësie, s'eslance bien plus brusquement, et me fiert d'vne plus viue secousse.	trumpet comes out sharper and stronger, so it seems to me that a thought pressed into the measured feet of poetry springs forth much more abruptly and strikes me with a livelier jolt.[2]
1.26.3 Quant aux facultez naturelles qui sont en moy, dequoy c'est icy l'essay, ie les sens flechir sous la charge: mes conceptions et mon iugement ne marche qu'à tastons, chancelant, bronchant et chopant: et quand ie suis allé le plus auant que ie puis, si ne me suis-ie aucunement satisfaict. Ie voy encore du païs au delà: mais d'vne veüe trouble, et en nuage, que ie ne puis demesler.	As for the natural faculties that are in me, of which this is the trial, I feel them bending under the load. My conceptions and my judgment move only by groping, staggering, stumbling and tripping; and when I have gone as far as I can, I am still not at all satisfied. I can see more country beyond, but with a dim and clouded sight that I cannot clear.
Et entreprenant de parler indifferemment de tout ce qui se presente à ma fantasie, et n'y employant que mes propres et naturels moyens, s'il m'aduient, comme il faict souuent, de rencontrer de fortune dans les bons autheurs ces mesmes lieux, que i'ay entrepris de traiter, comme ie vien de faire chez Plutarque tout presentement, son discours de la force de l'imagination: à me recognoistre au prix de ces gens là, si foible et si chetif, si poisant et si endormy, ie me fay pitié, ou desdain à moy mesmes. Si me gratifie-ie de cecy, que mes opinions ont cet honneur de rencontrer souuent aux leurs, et que ie vays au moins de loing apres, disant que voire.	I undertake to speak indiscriminately of whatever comes into my fancy, using only my own natural means. And if I happen, as I often do, to come across by chance in the good authors those very topics I have undertaken to treat—as I have just now done in Plutarch, with his discussion of the power of the imagination—then, seeing myself so weak and puny, so heavy and sluggish compared with those men, I feel pity or disdain for myself. Still, I please myself with this: that my opinions have the honor of often coinciding with theirs, and that I at least follow behind at a distance, saying "Quite so."
Aussi que i'ay cela, que chacun n'a pas, de cognoistre l'extreme difference d'entre-eux et moy: et laisse ce neant-moins courir mes inuentions ainsi foibles et basses, comme ie les ay produites, sans en replastrer et recoudre les defaux que cette comparaison m'y a descouuert.	Also, I have this, which not everyone has: I recognize the extreme difference between them and me. And nonetheless I let my inventions run on, weak and lowly as they are, just as I produced them, without plastering over and patching up the defects this comparison has revealed to me.
1.26.4 Il faut auoir les reins bien fermes pour entreprendre de marcher front à front auec ces gens là. Les escriuains indiscrets de nostre siecle, qui parmy leurs ouurages de neant, vont semant des lieux entiers des anciens autheurs, pour se faire honneur, font le contraire. Car cett' infinie dissemblance de lustres rend vn visage si pasle, si terni, et si laid à ce qui est leur, qu'ils y perdent beaucoup plus qu'ils n'y gaignent. C'estoient deux contraires fantasies. Le Philosophe Chrysippus mesloit à ses liures, non les passages seulement, mais des ouurages entiers d'autres autheurs: et en vn la Medee d'Eurypides: et disoit Apollodorus, que, qui en retrancheroit ce qu'il y auoit d'estranger, son papier demeureroit en blanc.	You need a very strong back to undertake to march abreast of those men. The indiscreet writers of our century, who go sowing whole passages of the ancient authors among their worthless works to do themselves honor, do the opposite. For this infinite difference in brilliance makes what is their own look so pale, so tarnished and so ugly that they lose much more than they gain. There were two contrary notions on this. The philosopher Chrysippus mixed into his books not just passages but whole works of other authors, in one of them the Medea of Euripides; and Apollodorus said that if you cut out everything borrowed, his paper would be left blank.[3]

2 The Danaids, daughters of Danaus, were condemned in the underworld to fill a leaking jar forever. Cleanthes was a Stoic philosopher; the saying is reported by Seneca, Letters 108.

FRENCH

Epicurus au rebours, en trois cents volumes qu'il laissa, n'auoit pas mis vne seule allegation.

1.26.5 Il m'aduint l'autre iour de tomber sur vn tel passage: I'auois trainé languissant apres des parolles Françoises, si exangues, si descharnees, et si vuides de matiere et de sens, que ce n'estoient voirement que parolles Françoises: au bout d'vn long et ennuyeux chemin, ie vins à rencontrer vne piece haute, riche et esleuee iusques aux nües: si i'eusse trouué la pente douce, et la montee vn peu alongee, cela eust esté excusable: c'estoit vn precipice si droit et si coupé que des six premieres parolles ie cogneuz que ie m'enuolois en l'autre monde: de là ie descouuris la fondriere d'où ie venois, si basse et si profonde, que ie n'eus oncques puis le cœur de m'y raualer.

Si i'estoffois l'vn de mes discours de ces riches despouilles, il esclaireroit par trop la bestise des autres. Reprendre en autruy mes propres fautes, ne me semble non plus incompatible, que de reprendre, comme ie fay souuent, celles d'autruy en moy. Il les faut accuser par tout, et leur oster tout lieu de franchise. Si sçay ie, combien audacieusement i'entreprens moy-mesmes à tous coups, de m'egaler à mes larrecins, d'aller pair à pair quand et eux: non sans vne temeraire esperance, que ie puisse tromper les yeux des iuges à les discerner. Mais c'est autant par le benefice de mon application, que par le benefice de mon inuention et de ma force.

Et puis, ie ne luitte point en gros ces vieux champions là, et corps à corps: c'est par reprinses, menues et legeres attaintes. Ie ne m'y aheurte pas: ie ne fay que les taster: et ne vay point tant, comme ie marchande d'aller. Si ie leur pouuoy tenir palot, ie serois honneste homme: car ie ne les entreprens, que par où ils sont les plus roides.

De faire ce que i'ay decouuert d'aucuns, se couurir des armes d'autruy, iusques à ne montrer pas seulement le bout de ses doigts: conduire son dessein (comme il est aysé aux sçauans en vne matiere commune) sous les inuentions anciennes, rappiecees par cy par là: à ceux qui les veulent cacher et faire propres, c'est premierement iniustice et lascheté, que n'ayans rien en leur vaillant, par où se produire, ils cherchent à se presenter par vne valeur purement estrangere: et puis, grande sottise, se

ENGLISH

Epicurus, on the contrary, in the three hundred volumes he left, had not put a single quotation.

The other day I happened to come upon such a passage. I had been dragging along languidly after French words so bloodless, so fleshless, so empty of matter and sense, that they really were nothing but French words. At the end of a long and tedious road I came upon a piece that was lofty, rich and raised to the clouds. If I had found the slope gentle and the climb a little gradual, it would have been excusable; but it was a precipice so sheer and so abrupt that from the first six words I knew I was flying off into another world. From there I saw the bog I had come from, so low and so deep that I never afterward had the heart to go down into it again.

If I stuffed one of my discourses with these rich spoils, it would show up the stupidity of the others all too clearly. To reprove my own faults in others seems to me no more inconsistent than to reprove, as I often do, the faults of others in myself. They must be denounced everywhere, and every sanctuary taken from them. Yet I know how boldly I myself try at every turn to match my thefts, to keep pace with them side by side, not without a rash hope that I may deceive the eyes of the judges who would tell them apart. But this is as much thanks to my skill in applying them as to my invention and my strength.

And then, I do not wrestle with those old champions wholesale and body to body. It is by bouts, with slight and light touches. I do not charge into them; I only feel them out. And I don't so much advance as haggle about advancing. If I could hold my own against them, I would be a man of some worth; for I take them on only where they are stiffest.

As for doing what I have found some people do—covering themselves in other men's armor until not even their fingertips show, and carrying out their design (as is easy for the learned in a common subject) under ancient inventions patched together here and there—for those who want to hide these borrowings and make them their own, it is first of all injustice and cowardice. Having nothing of their own worth showing, they seek to present

3 The anecdote comes from Diogenes Laertius.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
	contentant par piperie de s'acquerir l'ignorante approbation du vulgaire, se descrier enuers les gents d'entendement, qui hochent du nez cette incrustation empruntee: desquels seuls la louange a du poids. De ma part il n'est rien que ie vueille moins faire.	themselves by a merit wholly foreign to them. And then it is great foolishness: contenting themselves with winning by trickery the ignorant approval of the common crowd, they discredit themselves with men of understanding, who turn up their noses at this borrowed incrustation—and theirs is the only praise that has any weight. For my part, there is nothing I would less wish to do.
	Ie ne dis les autres, sinon pour d'autant plus me dire. Cecy ne touche pas les centons, qui se publient pour centons: et i'en ay veu de tres-ingenieux en mon temps: entre-autres vn, sous le nom de Capilupus: outre les anciens. Ce sont des esprits, qui se font veoir, et par ailleurs, et par là, comme Lipsius en ce docte et laborieux tissu de ses Politiques.	I speak of others only in order to speak all the more of myself. This does not concern centos that are published as centos; and I have seen some very ingenious ones in my time, among others one under the name of Capilupus, not to mention the ancients. These are minds that show themselves both elsewhere and in this, as Lipsius does in that learned and laborious web, his Politics.[4]
1.26.6	Quoy qu'il en soit, veux-ie dire, et quelles que soient ces inepties, ie n'ay pas deliberé de les cacher, non plus qu'vn mien pourtraict chauue et grisonnant, où le peintre auroit mis non vn visage parfaict, mais le mien. Car aussi ce sont icy mes humeurs et opinions: ie les donne, pour ce qui est en ma creance, non pour ce qui est à croire. Ie ne vise icy qu'à decouurir moy-mesmes, qui seray par aduenture autre demain, si nouuel apprentissage me change. Ie n'ay point l'authorité d'estre creu, ny ne le desire, me sentant trop mal instruit pour instruire autruy.	Be that as it may, I mean to say, and whatever these absurdities may be, I have not resolved to hide them, any more than I would a portrait of myself, bald and graying, in which the painter had put not a perfect face but mine. For these too are my own temperament and opinions. I give them as what I believe, not as what is to be believed. My only aim here is to reveal myself, who may be different tomorrow if some new learning changes me. I have no authority to be believed, nor do I wish for it, feeling myself too ill instructed to instruct others.

TO THE COUNTESS OF GURSON

Montaigne offers his one notion on educating her expected son.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
1.26.7	Quelcun doncq' ayant veu l'article precedant, me disoit chez moy l'autre iour, que ie me deuoys estre vn petit estendu sur le discours de l'institution des enfans. Or Madame si i'auoy quelque suffisance en ce subiect, ie ne pourroy la mieux employer que d'en faire vn present à ce petit homme, qui vous menasse de faire tantost vne belle sortie de chez vous (vous estes trop genereuse pour commencer autrement que par vn masle).	Someone, then, having seen the preceding chapter, told me at my house the other day that I should have expanded a little on the subject of the education of children. Now, Madame, if I had any competence in this subject, I could put it to no better use than to make a present of it to that little man who threatens soon to make a fine exit from your premises (you are too generous to begin otherwise than with a male).[5]
	Car ayant eu tant de part à la conduite de vostre mariage, i'ay quelque droit et interest à la grandeur et prosperité de tout ce qui en viendra: outre ce que l'ancienne	For having had so large a part in arranging your marriage, I have some right and interest in the

4 A cento is a work stitched together from lines of other authors. Lelio Capilupi (1497–1560) wrote centos from Virgil; Justus Lipsius's Politics (1589) is woven largely of quotations.

5 The essay is addressed to Diane de Foix, Countess of Gurson, then expecting her first child.

FRENCH

possession que vous auez sur ma seruitude, m'oblige assez à desirer honneur, bien et aduantage à tout ce qui vous touche. Mais à la verité ie n'y entens sinon cela, que la plus grande difficulté et importance de l'humaine science semble estre en cet endroit, où il se traitte de la nourriture et institution des enfans. Tout ainsi qu'en l'agriculture, les façons, qui vont deuant le planter, sont certaines et aysees, et le planter mesme.

Mais depuis que ce qui est planté, vient à prendre vie: à l'esleuer, il y a vne grande varieté de façons, et difficulté: pareillement aux hommes, il y a peu d'industrie à les planter: mais depuis qu'ils sont naiz, on se charge d'vn soing diuers, plein d'embesoignement et de crainte, à les dresser et nourrir. La montre de leurs inclinations est si tendre en ce bas aage, et si obscure, les promesses si incertaines et fauces, qu'il est mal-aisé d'y establir aucun solide iugement. Voyez Cimon, voyez Themistocles et mille autres, combien ils se sont disconuenuz à eux mesmes.

Les petits des ours, et des chiens, montrent leur inclination naturelle; mais les hommes se iettans incontinent en des accoustumances, en des opinions, en des loix, se changent ou se deguisent facilement. Si est-il difficile de forcer les propensions naturelles. D'où il aduient que par faute d'auoir bien choisi leur route, pour neant se trauaille on souuent, et employe lon beaucoup d'aage, à dresser des enfans aux choses, ausquelles ils ne peuuent prendre pied. Toutesfois en cette difficulté mon opinion est, de les acheminer tousiours aux meilleures choses et plus profitables; et qu'on se doit peu appliquer à ces legeres diuinations et prognostiques, que nous prenons des mouuemens de leur enfance. Platon en sa republique, me semble leur donner trop d'autorité.

1.26.8 Madame c'est vn grand ornement que la science, et vn vtil de merueilleux seruice, notamment aux personnes esleuees en tel degré de fortune, comme vous estes. A la verité elle n'a point son vray vsage en mains viles et basses. Elle est bien plus fiere, de prester ses moyens à conduire vne guerre, à commander vn peuple, à pratiquer l'amitié d'vn Prince, ou d'vne nation estrangere, qu'à dresser vn argument dialectique, ou à plaider vn appel, ou ordonner vne masse de pillules.

ENGLISH

greatness and prosperity of all that comes of it; besides which, the long-standing claim you have on my service obliges me well enough to wish honor, good and advantage to all that concerns you. But in truth I understand nothing about it except this: that the greatest difficulty and importance in human knowledge seems to lie in the area that deals with the rearing and education of children. Just as in agriculture the tasks that come before planting are sure and easy, and so is the planting itself,

but once what has been planted comes to life, there is a great variety of methods, and great difficulty, in raising it; so too with men: there is little skill in planting them, but once they are born, we take on a manifold care, full of bustle and fear, in training and rearing them. The signs of their inclinations are so faint at that early age, and so obscure, and the promises so uncertain and deceptive, that it is hard to base any solid judgment on them. Look at Cimon, look at Themistocles and a thousand others: how unlike their early selves they turned out![6]

The young of bears and dogs show their natural inclination; but men, throwing themselves straight into habits, opinions and laws, easily change or disguise themselves. Yet it is hard to force natural propensities. Hence it happens that, for want of having chosen their road well, people often toil in vain and spend many years training children for things in which they cannot get a footing. Nevertheless, in this difficulty, my opinion is that we should always steer them toward the best and most profitable things, and pay little attention to those trivial divinations and prognostications we draw from the movements of their childhood. Plato, in his Republic, seems to me to give them too much authority.

Madame, learning is a great ornament and a tool of marvelous service, notably to persons raised to such a degree of fortune as yours. In truth it does not find its true use in base and low hands. It is much prouder to lend its means to conducting a war, governing a people, or cultivating the friendship of a prince or a foreign nation, than to constructing a dialectical argument, pleading an appeal, or prescribing a mass of pills.

6 Cimon and Themistocles, Athenian statesmen of the 5th century BC, were both notorious for their dissolute youth.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
	Ainsi Madame, par ce que ie croy que vous n'oublierez pas cette partie en l'institution des vostres, vous qui en auez sauouré la douceur, et qui estes d'vne race lettree (car nous auons encore les escrits de ces anciens Comtes de Foix, d'où Monsieur le Comte vostre mary et vous, estes descendus: et François Monsieur de Candale, vostre oncle, en faict naistre tous les iours d'autres, qui estendront la cognoissance de cette qualité de vostre famille, à plusieurs siecles) ie vous veux dire là dessus vne seule fantasie, que i'ay contraire au commun vsage. C'est tout ce que ie puis conferer à vostre seruice en cela.	So, Madame, since I believe you will not forget this part in the education of your children—you who have tasted its sweetness and who come of a lettered race (for we still have the writings of those ancient Counts of Foix from whom the Count your husband and you are descended; and your uncle François, Monsieur de Candale, brings forth others every day, which will spread the knowledge of this quality of your family for many centuries)—I want to tell you one notion of mine on this subject, which runs contrary to common practice. That is all I can contribute to your service in this matter.[7]
1.26.9	La charge du gouuerneur, que vous luy donrez, du chois duquel depend tout l'effect de son institution, elle a plusieurs autres grandes parties, mais ie n'y touche point, pour n'y sçauoir rien apporter qui vaille: et de cet article, sur lequel ie me mesle de luy donner aduis, il m'en croira autant qu'il y verra d'apparence.	The duties of the tutor you will give him, on whose choice the whole effect of his education depends, have many other important parts; but I do not touch on them, since I could contribute nothing of value there. And on the one point on which I take it upon myself to advise him, he will believe me as far as he finds it plausible.

A WELL-MADE HEAD

The tutor should make the pupil judge for himself, weigh every opinion, and make what he learns his own.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
	A vn enfant de maison, qui recherche les lettres, non pour le gaing (car vne fin si abiecte, est indigne de la grace et faueur des Muses, et puis elle regarde et depend d'autruy) ny tant pour les commoditez externes, que pour les sienes propres, et pour s'en enrichir et parer au dedans, ayant plustost enuie d'en reussir habil'homme, qu'homme sçauant, ie voudrois aussi qu'on fust soigneux de luy choisir vn conducteur, qui eust plustost la teste bien faicte, que bien pleine: et qu'on y requist tous les deux, mais plus les mœurs et l'entendement que la science: et qu'il se conduisist en sa charge d'vne nouuelle maniere.	Consider a child of good family who seeks letters not for gain (for so abject an aim is unworthy of the grace and favor of the Muses, and besides, it looks to others and depends on them), nor so much for outward advantages as for his own, to enrich and adorn himself inwardly with them, wanting to turn out an able man rather than a learned one. For such a child I would also want care to be taken to choose a guide with a well-made rather than a well-filled head; that both be required of him, but more character and understanding than learning; and that he conduct himself in his charge in a new way.
1.26.10	On ne cesse de criailler à nos oreilles, comme qui verseroit dans vn antonnoir; et nostre charge ce n'est que redire ce qu'on nous a dit. Ie voudrois qu'il corrigeast cette partie; et que de belle arriuee, selon la portee de l'ame, qu'il a en main, il commençast à la mettre sur la montre, luy faisant gouster les choses, les choisir, et discerner d'elle mesme. Quelquefois luy ouurant le	People never stop bawling into our ears, as though pouring into a funnel, and our task is only to repeat what we have been told. I would want the tutor to correct this practice. From the very start, according to the capacity of the mind in his hands, he should begin to put it through its paces, letting it taste things, choose them and discern them by

7 François de Foix-Candale (1512–1594), bishop of Aire, translated Euclid and Hermes Trismegistus; her husband was Louis de Foix, Count of Gurson.

FRENCH

chemin, quelquefois le luy laissant ouurir. Ie ne veux pas qu'il inuente, et parle seul: ie veux qu'il escoute son disciple parler à son tour. Socrates, et depuis Arcesilaus, faisoient premierement parler leurs disciples, et puis ils parloient à eux.

Obest plerumque ijs, qui discere volunt, auctoritas eorum, qui docent. Il est bon qu'il le face trotter deuant luy, pour iuger de son train: et iuger iusques à quel point il se doibt raualler, pour s'accommoder à sa force. A faute de cette proportion, nous gastons tout. Et de la sçauoir choisir, et s'y conduire bien mesurément, c'est vne des plus ardues besongnes que ie sache. Et est l'effect d'vne haute ame et bien forte, sçauoir condescendre à ses allures pueriles, et les guider. Ie marche plus ferme et plus seur, à mont qu'à val.

1.26.11 Ceux qui, comme nostre vsage porte, entreprenent d'vne mesme leçon et pareille mesure de conduite, regenter plusieurs esprits de si diuerses mesures et formes: ce n'est pas merueille, si en tout vn peuple d'enfants, ils en rencontrent à peine deux ou trois, qui rapportent quelque iuste fruit de leur discipline. Qu'il ne luy demande pas seulement compte des mots de sa leçon, mais du sens et de la substance. Et qu'il iuge du profit qu'il aura fait, non par le tesmoignage de sa memoire, mais de sa vie.

Que ce qu'il viendra d'apprendre, il le luy face mettre en cent visages, et accommoder à autant de diuers subiets, pour voir s'il l'a encore bien pris et bien faict sien, prenant l'instruction à son progrez, des paidagogismes de Platon. C'est tesmoignage de crudité et indigestion que de regorger la viande comme on l'a auallee: l'estomach n'a pas faict son operation, s'il n'a faict changer la façon et la forme, à ce qu'on luy auoit donné à cuire. Nostre ame ne branle qu'à credit, liee et contrainte à l'appetit des fantasies d'autruy, serue et captiuee soubs l'authorité de leur leçon. On nous a tant assubiectis aux cordes, que nous n'auons plus de franches alleures: nostre vigueur et liberté est esteinte.

Nunquam tutelæ suæ fiunt. Ie vy priuément à Pise vn honneste homme, mais si Aristotelicien, que le plus general de ses dogmes est: Que la touche et regle de

ENGLISH

itself: sometimes opening the way for it, sometimes letting it open the way for itself. I do not want him to think up everything and do all the talking; I want him to listen to his pupil speak in his turn. Socrates, and later Arcesilaus, first had their pupils speak, and then they spoke to them.[8]

The authority of those who teach is often an obstacle to those who want to learn. It is good that he should make the boy trot ahead of him, to judge his pace and judge how far he must come down to adapt himself to the boy's strength. For want of this proportion we spoil everything. And to know how to find it and keep within it with good measure is one of the hardest tasks I know. It is the work of a lofty and very strong soul to know how to come down to a child's gait and guide it. I walk more firmly and surely uphill than down.[9]

Those who, as our custom has it, undertake to school many minds of such different capacities and forms with the same lesson and the same measure of guidance—no wonder if, in a whole crowd of children, they scarcely find two or three who bear any proper fruit from their teaching. Let the tutor ask his pupil for an account not only of the words of his lesson but of its sense and substance. And let him judge the profit the boy has made not by the testimony of his memory but by that of his life.

Let him have the boy put what he has just learned into a hundred shapes and adapt it to as many different subjects, to see whether he has really grasped it and made it his own, taking guidance for the boy's progress from Plato's methods of teaching. It is a sign of rawness and indigestion to throw up food just as it was swallowed. The stomach has not done its work if it has not changed the condition and form of what was given it to cook. Our soul moves only on credit, bound and constrained to the appetite of other men's notions, enslaved and captive under the authority of their teaching. We have been held so long in leading strings that we no longer have a free gait. Our vigor and liberty are extinguished.

They never become their own guardians. At Pisa I knew well a decent man, but such an Aristotelian

8 Arcesilaus (3rd century BC) headed Plato's Academy and turned it toward skepticism.
9 Cicero, On the Nature of the Gods I.

FRENCH

toutes imaginations solides, et de toute verité, c'est la conformité à la doctrine d'Aristote: que hors de là, ce ne sont que chimeres et inanité: qu'il a tout veu et tout dict. Cette sienne proposition, pour auoir esté vn peu trop largement et iniquement interpretee, le mit autrefois et tint long temps en grand accessoire à l'inquisition à Rome.

1.26.12 Qu'il luy face tout passer par l'estamine, et ne loge rien en sa teste par simple authorité, et à credit. Les principes d'Aristote ne luy soyent principes, non plus que ceux des Stoiciens ou Epicuriens. Qu'on luy propose cette diuersité de iugemens, il choisira s'il peut: sinon il en demeurera en doubte. *Che non men che saper dubbiar m'aggrada.* Car s'il embrasse les opinions de Xenophon et de Platon, par son propre discours, ce ne seront plus les leurs, ce seront les siennes. Qui suit vn autre, il ne suit rien: il ne trouue rien: voire il ne cerche rien. *Non sumus sub rege, sibi quisque se vindicet.* Qu'il sache, qu'il sçait, au moins. Il faut qu'il imboiue leurs humeurs, non qu'il apprenne leurs preceptes.

Et qu'il oublie hardiment s'il veut, d'où il les tient, mais qu'il se les sache approprier. La verité et la raison sont communes à vn chacun, et ne sont non plus à qui les a dites premierement, qu'à qui les dit apres. Ce n'est non plus selon Platon, que selon moy: puis que luy et moy l'entendons et voyons de mesme. Les abeilles pillotent deçà delà les fleurs, mais elles en font apres le miel, qui est tout leur; ce n'est plus thin, ny mariolaine. Ainsi les pieces empruntees d'autruy, il les transformera et confondra, pour en faire vn ouurage tout sien: à sçauoir son iugement, son institution, son trauail et estude ne vise qu'à le former.

Qu'il cele tout ce dequoy il a esté secouru, et ne produise que ce qu'il en a faict. Les pilleurs, les emprunteurs, mettent en parade leurs bastiments, leurs achapts, non pas ce qu'ils tirent d'autruy. Vous ne voyez pas les espices d'vn homme de parlement: vous voyez les alliances qu'il a gaignees, et honneurs à ses enfants. Nul ne met en compte publique sa recette: chacun y met son acquest.

ENGLISH

that the most general of his dogmas is this: that the touchstone and rule of all solid ideas and of all truth is conformity to the teaching of Aristotle; that outside of it there is nothing but chimeras and emptiness; that Aristotle saw everything and said everything. This proposition of his, for having been interpreted a little too broadly and unfairly, once landed him, and long kept him, in serious trouble with the Inquisition in Rome.[10]

Let him make the boy pass everything through a sieve, and lodge nothing in his head on mere authority and trust. Let Aristotle's principles not be principles to him, any more than those of the Stoics or Epicureans. Let this diversity of judgments be set before him: he will choose if he can; if not, he will remain in doubt. *For doubting pleases me no less than knowing.* For if he embraces the opinions of Xenophon and Plato by his own reasoning, they will no longer be theirs; they will be his. Whoever follows another follows nothing. He finds nothing—indeed, he seeks nothing. *We are not under a king; let each man claim his own freedom.* Let him at least know that he knows. He must absorb their temperament, not learn their precepts.[11]

And let him boldly forget, if he likes, where he got them, but let him know how to make them his own. Truth and reason are common to everyone, and belong no more to the one who said them first than to the one who says them after. It is no more according to Plato than according to me, since he and I understand it and see it alike. The bees plunder the flowers here and there, but afterward they make of them honey, which is all their own; it is no longer thyme or marjoram. So he will transform and blend the pieces borrowed from others to make a work all his own: namely, his judgment. His education, his labor and his study aim only at forming it.

Let him conceal everything that has helped him, and show only what he has made of it. Plunderers and borrowers put their buildings and their purchases on display, not what they take from others. You do not see the fees a member of the Parlement receives; you see the alliances he has gained and the honors for his children. No one makes public

10 Seneca, Letters 33. The Aristotelian was probably Girolamo Borro, a professor at Pisa.
11 Dante, Inferno XI; the Latin is Seneca, Letters 33.

FRENCH

ENGLISH

his receipts; everyone makes public his acquisitions.[12]

1.26.13 Le guain de nostre estude, c'est en estre deuenu meilleur et plus sage. C'est, disoit Epicharmus, l'entendement qui voyt et qui oyt: c'est l'entendement qui approfite tout, qui dispose tout, qui agit, qui domine et qui regne: toutes autres choses sont aueugles, sourdes et sans ame. Certes nous le rendons seruile et coüard, pour ne luy laisser la liberté de rien faire de soy. Qui demanda iamais à son disciple ce qu'il luy semble de la Rhetorique et de la Grammaire, de telle ou telle sentence de Ciceron? On nous les placque en la memoire toutes empennees, comme des oracles, où les lettres et les syllabes sont de la substance de la chose.

The gain from our study is to have become better and wiser by it. It is the understanding, said Epicharmus, that sees and hears; it is the understanding that profits by everything, disposes everything, acts, dominates and reigns; all other things are blind, deaf and soulless. Truly, we make it servile and cowardly by not leaving it the freedom to do anything by itself. Who ever asked his pupil what he thinks of rhetoric and grammar, or of this or that saying of Cicero? They are stuck into our memory fully fledged, like oracles in which the letters and syllables are the substance of the thing.[13]

Sçauoir par cœur n'est pas sçauoir: c'est tenir ce qu'on a donné en garde à sa memoire. Ce qu'on sçait droittement, on en dispose, sans regarder au patron, sans tourner les yeux vers son liure. Fascheuse suffisance, qu'vne suffisance pure liuresque! Ie m'attens qu'elle serue d'ornement, non de fondement: suiuant l'aduis de Platon, qui dit, la fermeté, la foy, la sincerité, estre la vraye philosophie: les autres sciences, et qui visent ailleurs, n'estre que fard.

To know by heart is not to know; it is to retain what we have given our memory to keep. What we know rightly we can make use of without looking at the model, without turning our eyes to our book. A sorry competence, a purely bookish competence! I expect it to serve as ornament, not as foundation, following the opinion of Plato, who says that steadfastness, faith and sincerity are the true philosophy, and that the other sciences, which aim elsewhere, are mere cosmetics.

Ie voudrois que le Paluël ou Pompee, ces beaux danseurs de mon temps, apprinsent des caprioles à les voir seulement faire, sans nous bouger de nos places, comme ceux-cy veulent instruire nostre entendement, sans l'esbranler: ou qu'on nous apprinst à manier vn cheual, ou vne pique, ou vn luth, ou la voix, sans nous y exercer: comme ceux icy nous veulent apprendre à bien iuger, et à bien parler, sans nous exercer à parler ny à iuger. Or à cet apprentissage tout ce qui se presente à nos yeux, sert de liure suffisant: la malice d'vn page, la sottise d'vn valet, vn propos de table, ce sont autant de nouuelles matieres.

I would like to see Paluel or Pompey, those fine dancers of my day, teach us capers just by our watching them, without our stirring from our seats—the way these people want to train our understanding without setting it in motion. Or to see us taught to handle a horse, a pike, a lute or our voice without practicing—the way these people want to teach us to judge well and speak well without exercising us in speaking or judging. Now for this apprenticeship, everything that comes before our eyes is book enough: a page's prank, a valet's blunder, a remark at table—these are so much new material.[14]

THE WORLD AS SCHOOLBOOK

Travel, company and histories train the judgment; the great world is the pupil's mirror.

FRENCH

ENGLISH

1.26.14 A cette cause le commerce des hommes y est merueilleusement propre, et la visite des pays estrangers:

For this purpose, mixing with men is marvelously suited, and so is visiting foreign countries—not

12 Judges in the Parlements were paid fees (épices) by the litigants.
13 Epicharmus was a Sicilian comic poet of the 5th century BC.

FRENCH

non pour en rapporter seulement, à la mode de nostre noblesse Françoise, combien de pas a *Santa rotonda*, ou la richesse de calessons de la *Signora Liuia*, ou comme d'autres, combien le visage de Neron, de quelque vieille ruyne de là, est plus long ou plus large, que celuy de quelque pareille medaille.

Mais pour en rapporter principalement les humeurs de ces nations et leurs façons: et pour frotter et limer nostre ceruelle contre celle d'autruy, ie voudrois qu'on commençast à le promener dés sa tendre enfance: et premierement, pour faire d'vne pierre deux coups, par les nations voisines, où le langage est plus esloigné du nostre, et auquel si vous ne la formez de bon'heure, la langue ne se peut plier.

1.26.15 Aussi bien est-ce vne opinion receuë d'vn chacun, que ce n'est pas raison de nourrir vn enfant au giron de ses parens. Cette amour naturelle les attendrit trop, et relasche, voire les plus sages: ils ne sont capables ny de chastier ses fautes, ny de le voir nourry grossierement comme il faut, et hasardeusement. Ils ne le sçauroient souffrir reuenir suant et poudreux de son exercice, boire chaud, boire froid, ny le voir sur vn cheual rebours, ny contre vn rude tireur le floret au poing, ou la premiere harquebuse.

Car il n'y a remede, qui en veut faire vn homme de bien, sans doubte il ne le faut espargner en cette ieunesse: et faut souuent choquer les regles de la medecine: *Vitámque sub dio et trepidis agat / In rebus.* Ce n'est pas assez de luy roidir l'ame, il luy faut aussi roidir les muscles; elle est trop pressee, si elle n'est secondee; et a trop à faire, de seule fournir à deux offices. Ie sçay combien ahanne la mienne en compagnie d'vn corps si tendre, si sensible, qui se laisse si fort aller sur elle.

Et apperçoy souuent en ma leçon, qu'en leurs escrits, mes maistres font valoir pour magnanimité et force de courage, des exemples, qui tiennent volontiers plus de l'espessissure de la peau et durté des os.

1.26.16 I'ay veu des hommes, des femmes et des enfans, ainsi nays, qu'une bastonade leur est moins qu'à moy vne chiquenaude; qui ne remuent ny langue ny sourcil, aux coups qu'on leur donne. Quand les athletes contrefont les Philosophes en patience, c'est plustost vigueur de nerfs

ENGLISH

merely to bring back, in the fashion of our French nobility, how many paces *Santa Rotonda* measures, or how rich *Signora Livia*'s drawers are, or, like others, how much longer or wider Nero's face is on some old ruin there than on some similar medal,[15]

but chiefly to bring back the temperament and ways of those nations, and to rub and polish our brains against those of others. I would have him taken traveling from his tender childhood; and first, to kill two birds with one stone, among the neighboring nations whose language is farthest from ours, to which the tongue cannot bend unless you train it early.

Besides, everyone holds that it is not right to bring up a child in his parents' lap. That natural love makes them too tender and too lax, even the wisest of them. They are capable neither of punishing his faults nor of seeing him brought up roughly, as he should be, and among risks. They could not bear to see him come back sweaty and dusty from his exercise, drinking hot, drinking cold, nor see him on a restive horse, or foil in hand against a tough fencer, or with his first arquebus.

For there is no help for it: whoever wants to make a good man of him must certainly not spare him in his youth, and must often go against the rules of medicine: *Let him live under the open sky / and amid dangers.* It is not enough to toughen his soul; we must also toughen his muscles. The soul is too hard pressed if it is not seconded, and has too much to do in meeting two duties alone. I know how much mine labors in company with a body so tender and so sensitive, which leans so heavily on it.[16]

And in my reading I often notice that my masters, in their writings, cite as magnanimity and strength of courage examples that have more to do with thickness of skin and hardness of bones.

I have seen men, women and children so made that a beating is less to them than a flick of the finger is to me, and who move neither tongue nor eyebrow at the blows they are given. When athletes imitate the philosophers in endurance, it is

14 Paluel and Pompey (Pompeo Diobono) were celebrated dancing masters at the French court.
15 Santa Rotonda is the Pantheon in Rome.
16 Horace, Odes III.2.

FRENCH

que de cœur. Or l'accoustumance à porter le trauail, est accoustumance à porter la douleur: *labor collum obducit dolori*. Il le faut rompre à la peine, et aspreté des exercices, pour le dresser à la peine, et aspreté de la dislocation, de la colique, du caustere: et de la geaule aussi, et de la torture. Car de ces derniers icy, encore peut-il estre en prinse, qui regardent les bons, selon le temps, comme les meschants. Nous en sommes à l'espreuue.

Quiconque combat les loix, menace les gents de bien d'escourgees et de la corde. Et puis, l'authorité du gouuerneur, qui doit estre souueraine sur luy, s'interrompt et s'empesche par la presence des parents. Ioint que ce respect que la famille luy porte, la cognoissance des moyens et grandeurs de sa maison, ce ne sont à mon opinion pas legeres incommoditez en cet aage.

1.26.17 En cette escole du commerce des hommes, i'ay souuent remarqué ce vice, qu'au lieu de prendre cognoissance d'autruy, nous ne trauaillons qu'à la donner de nous: et sommes plus en peine d'emploiter nostre marchandise, que d'en acquerir de nouuelle. Le silence et la modestie sont qualitez tres-commodes à la conuersation. On dressera cet enfant à estre espargnant et mesnager de sa suffisance, quand il l'aura acquise, à ne se formalizer point des sottises et fables qui se diront en sa presence: car c'est vne inciuile importunité de choquer tout ce qui n'est pas de nostre appetit. Qu'il se contente de se corriger soy mesme. Et ne semble pas reprocher à autruy, tout ce qu'il refuse à faire: ny contraster aux mœurs publiques.

Licet sapere sine pompa, sine inuidia. Fuie ces images regenteuses du monde, et inciuiles: et cette puerile ambition, de vouloir paroistre plus fin, pour estre autre; et comme si ce fust marchandise malaizee, que reprehensions et nouuelletez, vouloir tirer de là, nom de quelque peculiere valeur. Comme il n'affiert qu'aux grands Poëtes, d'vser des licences de l'art: aussi n'est-il supportable, qu'aux grandes ames et illustres de se priuilegier au dessus de la coustume.

Si quid Socrates et Aristippus contra morem et consuetudinem fecerunt, idem sibi ne arbitretur licere: magnis enim illi et diuinis bonis hanc licentiam assequebantur. On luy apprendra de n'entrer en discours et contestation, que là

ENGLISH

strength of sinew rather than of heart. Now, being used to bearing toil is being used to bearing pain: *toil grows a callus against pain*. The boy must be broken in to the hardship and harshness of exercise, to train him for the hardship and harshness of dislocation, colic and cautery—and of prison too, and of torture. For these last may also catch him, since, as times go, they threaten the good as well as the wicked. We are living through it.[17]

Whoever fights the laws threatens good men with the whip and the rope. And then, the tutor's authority, which ought to be sovereign over the boy, is interrupted and hampered by the presence of the parents. Besides, the respect the household pays him and his awareness of the wealth and greatness of his house are, in my opinion, no slight drawbacks at that age.

In this school of human dealings I have often noticed a fault: instead of getting to know others, we work only at making ourselves known, and we take more trouble to sell off our own goods than to acquire new ones. Silence and modesty are very useful qualities in conversation. This child will be trained to be sparing and thrifty with his ability once he has acquired it, and not to take offense at the foolish remarks and tall tales told in his presence; for it is a rude nuisance to attack everything that is not to our taste. Let him be content to correct himself, and not seem to reproach others for everything he declines to do himself, nor set himself against public customs.

One may be wise without ostentation and without arousing envy. Let him shun those schoolmasterly and uncivil poses toward the world, and that childish ambition of wanting to seem cleverer by being different. Let him not, as if fault-finding and novelties were wares hard to come by, try to win from them a name for some special merit. Just as only great poets are entitled to use the licenses of their art, so only great and illustrious souls may be allowed to grant themselves privileges above custom.[18]

If Socrates and Aristippus did anything contrary to custom and usage, let him not think the same is permitted to him; for they earned this license by great and

17 Cicero, Tusculan Disputations II.
18 Seneca, Letters 103.

FRENCH

où il verra vn champion digne de sa lute: et là mesmes à n'emploier pas tous les tours qui luy peuuent seruir, mais ceux-là seulement qui luy peuuent le plus seruir. Qu'on le rende delicat au chois et triage de ses raisons, et aymant la pertinence, et par consequent la briefueté. Qu'on l'instruise sur tout à se rendre, et à quitter les armes à la verité, tout aussi tost qu'il l'apperceura: soit qu'elle naisse és mains de son aduersaire, soit qu'elle naisse en luy-mesmes par quelque rauisement.

Car il ne sera pas mis en chaise pour dire vn rolle prescript, il n'est engagé à aucune cause, que par ce qu'il l'appreuue. Ny ne sera du mestier, où se vend à purs deniers contans, la liberté de se pouuoir repentir et recognoistre. *Neque, vt omnia, quæ præscripta et imperata sint, defendat, necessitate vlla cogitur.*

1.26.18 Si son gouuerneur tient de mon humeur, il luy formera la volonté à estre tres-loyal seruiteur de son Prince, et tres-affectionné, et tres-courageux: mais il luy refroidira l'enuie de s'y attacher autrement que par vn deuoir publique. Outre plusieurs autres inconuenients, qui blessent nostre liberté, par ces obligations particulieres, le iugement d'vn homme gagé et achetté, ou il est moins entier et moins libre, ou il est taché et d'imprudence et d'ingratitude. Vn pur courtisan ne peut auoir ny loy ny volonté, de dire et penser que fauorablement d'vn maistre, qui parmi tant de milliers d'autres subiects, l'a choisi pour le nourrir et eleuer de sa main. Cette faueur et vtilité corrompent non sans quelque raison, sa franchise, et l'esblouissent.

Pourtant void on coustumierement, le langage de ces gens là, diuers à tout autre langage, en vn estat, et de peu de foy en telle matiere.

1.26.19 Que sa conscience et sa vertu reluisent en son parler, et n'ayent que la raison pour conduite. Qu'on luy face entendre, que de confesser la faute qu'il descouurira en son propre discours, encore qu'elle ne soit apperceuë que par luy, c'est vn effet de iugement et de sincerité, qui sont les principales parties qu'il cherche. Que l'opiniatrer et

ENGLISH

divine qualities. He will be taught not to enter into discussion and dispute except where he sees a champion worthy of wrestling with him; and even there not to use every move that might serve him, but only those that can serve him best. Let him be made fastidious in choosing and sorting his arguments, and fond of relevance, and therefore of brevity. Above all, let him be taught to surrender and lay down his arms to truth as soon as he perceives it, whether it springs up in his opponent's hands or within himself through some second thought.[19]

For he will not be set up in a professor's chair to recite a prescribed part; he is committed to no cause except because he approves of it. Nor will he belong to the trade in which the freedom to change one's mind and admit one's mistakes is sold for ready cash. *Nor is he forced by any necessity to defend everything that has been prescribed and commanded.*[20]

If his tutor is of my temperament, he will shape his will to be a very loyal servant of his prince, very devoted and very brave; but he will cool in him any desire to attach himself to the prince otherwise than by public duty. Besides several other drawbacks of such private obligations, which wound our freedom, the judgment of a man who is hired and bought is either less whole and less free, or else tainted with both imprudence and ingratitude. A pure courtier can have neither the right nor the will to speak or think anything but favorably of a master who, among so many thousands of other subjects, has chosen him to nourish and raise up with his own hand. This favor and advantage corrupt his frankness, not without some reason, and dazzle it.

That is why we commonly see the language of such people differ from all other language in a state, and deserve little trust in such matters.

Let his conscience and his virtue shine in his speech, and have only reason as their guide. Let him be made to understand that to confess a fault he discovers in his own argument, even if no one but himself has noticed it, is an effect of judgment and sincerity, which are the chief qualities he is

19 Cicero, On Duties I.41.
20 Cicero, Academica II.3.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
	contester, sont qualitez communes: plus apparentes aux plus basses ames. Que se r'aduiser et se corriger, abandonner vn mauuais party, sur le cours de son ardeur, ce sont qualitez rares, fortes, et philosophiques.	seeking. That obstinacy and contentiousness are common qualities, most visible in the basest souls. That to think again and correct oneself, to abandon a bad position in the very heat of one's ardor—these are rare, strong and philosophical qualities.
1.26.20	On l'aduertira, estant en compagnie, d'auoir les yeux par tout: car ie trouue que les premiers sieges sont communement saisis par les hommes moins capables, et que les grandeurs de fortune ne se trouuent gueres meslees à la suffisance. I'ay veu ce pendant qu'on s'entretenoit au bout d'vne table, de la beauté d'vne tapisserie, ou du goust de la maluoisie, se perdre beaucoup de beaux traicts à l'autre bout. Il sondera la portee d'vn chacun: vn bouuier, un masson, vn passant, il faut tout mettre en besongne, et emprunter chacun selon sa marchandise: car tout sert en mesnage: la sottise mesmes, et foiblesse d'autruy luy sera instruction. A contreroller les graces et façons d'vn chacun, il s'engendrera enuie des bonnes, et mespris des mauuaises.	He will be advised, when in company, to keep his eyes everywhere; for I find that the chief seats are commonly taken by the least capable men, and that greatness of fortune is seldom found combined with ability. I have seen, while people at one end of a table talked about the beauty of a tapestry or the taste of the malmsey, many fine sayings lost at the other end. He will sound out the depth of each person: a cowherd, a mason, a passer-by. He must put everything to use, and borrow from each according to his wares, for everything is useful in a household; even other people's stupidity and weakness will be instruction to him. By observing the graces and manners of each person, he will breed in himself a desire for the good ones and a contempt for the bad.
1.26.21	Qu'on luy mette en fantasie vne honneste curiosité de s'enquerir de toutes choses: tout ce qu'il y aura de singulier autour de luy, il le verra: vn bastiment, vne fontaine, vn homme, le lieu d'vne bataille ancienne, le passage de Cæsar ou de Charlemaigne. *Quæ tellus sit lenta gelu, quæ putris ab æstu, / Ventus in Italiam quis bene vela ferat.* Il s'enquerra des mœurs, des moyens et des alliances de ce Prince, et de celuy-là. Ce sont choses tres-plaisantes à apprendre, et tres-vtiles à sçauoir.	Let a decent curiosity be put into his head to inquire into all things. Whatever is remarkable around him, he will see: a building, a fountain, a man, the site of an ancient battle, the places where Caesar or Charlemagne passed. *What land is stiff with frost, what land crumbles in the heat, / What wind bears sails well to Italy.* He will inquire into the customs, the resources and the alliances of this prince and that. These are things very pleasant to learn and very useful to know.[21]
1.26.22	En cette practique des hommes, i'entens y comprendre, et principalement, ceux qui ne viuent qu'en la memoire des liures. Il praticquera par le moyen des histoires, ces grandes ames des meilleurs siecles. C'est vn vain estude qui veut: mais qui veut aussi c'est vn estude de fruit estimable: et le seul estude, comme dit Platon, que les Lacedemoniens eussent reserué à leur part. Quel profit ne fera-il en cette part là, à la lecture des vies de nostre Plutarque?	In this frequenting of men I mean to include—and principally—those who live only in the memory of books. By means of histories he will frequent those great souls of the best ages. It is a vain study if you like; but, if you like, it is also a study of inestimable fruit, and, as Plato says, the only study the Lacedaemonians had kept for themselves. What profit will he not draw in this field from reading the Lives of our Plutarch?[22]
	Mais que mon guide se souuienne où vise sa charge; et qu'il n'imprime pas tant à son disciple, la date de la ruine de Carthage, que les mœurs de Hannibal et de Scipion: ny tant où mourut Marcellus, que pourquoy il fut indigne de	But let my guide remember what his charge is aiming at, and let him not imprint on his pupil so much the date of the destruction of Carthage as the characters of Hannibal and Scipio; nor so

21 Propertius, Elegies IV.3.

22 Plato, Hippias Major. Montaigne read Plutarch in Jacques Amyot's French translation, hence "our Plutarch."

FRENCH

son deuoir, qu'il mourust là. Qu'il ne luy apprenne pas tant les histoires, qu'à en iuger. C'est à mon gré, entre toutes, la matiere à laquelle nos esprits s'appliquent de plus diuerse mesure. I'ay leu en Tite Liue cent choses que tel n'y a pas leu. Plutarche y en a leu cent; outre ce que i'y ay sçeu lire: et à l'aduenture outre ce que l'autheur y auoit mis.

A d'aucuns c'est vn pur estude grammairien: à d'autres, l'anatomie de la Philosophie, par laquelle les plus abstruses parties de nostre nature se penetrent. Il y a dans Plutarque beaucoup de discours estendus tres-dignes d'estre sçeus: car à mon gré c'est le maistre ouurier de telle besongne: mais il y en a mille qu'il n'a que touché simplement: il guigne seulement du doigt par où nous irons, s'il nous plaist, et se contente quelquefois de ne donner qu'vne atteinte dans le plus vif d'vn propos. Il les faut arracher de là, et mettre en place marchande.

Comme ce sien mot, Que les habitans d'Asie seruoient à vn seul, pour ne sçauoir prononcer vne seule syllable, qui est, Non, donna peut estre, la matiere, et l'occasion à la Boœtie, de sa Seruitude volontaire. Cela mesme de luy voir trier vne legiere action en la vie d'vn homme, ou vn mot, qui semble ne porter pas cela, c'est vn discours. C'est dommage que les gens d'entendement, ayment tant la briefueté: sans doubte leur reputation en vaut mieux, mais nous en valons moins. Plutarque ayme mieux que nous le vantions de son iugement, que de son sçauoir: il ayme mieux nous laisser desir de soy, que satieté.

Il sçauoit qu'és choses bonnes mesmes on peut trop dire, et que Alexandridas reprocha iustement, à celuy qui tenoit aux Ephores des bons propos, mais trop longs: O estranger, tu dis ce qu'il faut, autrement qu'il ne faut. Ceux qui ont le corps gresle, le grossissent d'embourrures: ceux qui ont la matiere exile, l'enflent de paroles.

1.26.23 Il se tire vne merueilleuse clarté pour le iugement humain, de la frequentation du monde. Nous sommes tous contraints et amoncellez en nous, et auons la veuë racourcie à la longueur de nostre nez. On demandoit à

ENGLISH

much where Marcellus died as why it was unworthy of his duty that he died there. Let him teach him not so much the histories as how to judge them. In my opinion, of all subjects this is the one to which our minds apply themselves in the most varying measure. I have read in Livy a hundred things that another man has not read there. Plutarch read a hundred there beyond what I could read, and perhaps beyond what the author had put there.[23]

For some it is a purely grammatical study; for others, the anatomy of philosophy, by which the most hidden parts of our nature are penetrated. In Plutarch there are many extended discussions well worth knowing, for in my opinion he is the master craftsman of that kind of work; but there are a thousand that he has merely touched on. He just points with his finger the way we are to go, if we like, and is sometimes content to give a single thrust at the very heart of a subject. We must pull these out of there and put them on the market.

Like that saying of his, that the inhabitants of Asia served a single man because they could not pronounce a single syllable, namely "No"—which perhaps gave La Boétie the matter and the occasion for his Voluntary Servitude. The mere fact of seeing him pick out a slight action in a man's life, or a word that seems not to carry such weight, is a discourse in itself. It is a pity that men of understanding are so fond of brevity: no doubt their reputation is the better for it, but we are the worse. Plutarch would rather we praised him for his judgment than for his learning; he would rather leave us wanting more of him than sated.[24]

He knew that even in good things one can say too much, and that Alexandridas was right to reproach a man who was making good but overlong speeches to the ephors: "Stranger, you say what you should, otherwise than you should." Those with thin bodies fill them out with padding; those with slender matter puff it out with words.[25]

Human judgment draws a marvelous clarity from frequenting the world. We are all cramped and huddled up within ourselves, and our sight is shortened to the length of our nose. Socrates was

23 The Roman general Marcellus was killed in 208 BC in an ambush while rashly scouting in person, though he was consul.
24 La Boétie's Discourse on Voluntary Servitude, an attack on tyranny written in his youth.
25 The ephors were the five chief magistrates of Sparta.

FRENCH

Socrates d'où il estoit, il ne respondit pas, d'Athenes, mais, du monde. Luy qui auoit l'imagination plus plaine et plus estanduë, embrassoit l'vniuers, comme sa ville, iettoit ses cognoissances, sa societé et ses affections à tout le genre humain: non pas comme nous, qui ne regardons que sous nous. Quand les vignes gelent en mon village, mon prebstre en argumente l'ire de Dieu sur la race humaine, et iuge que la pepie en tienne des-ia les Cannibales.

A voir nos guerres ciuiles, qui ne crie que cette machine se bouleuerse, et que le iour du iugement nous prent au collet: sans s'auiser que plusieurs pires choses se sont veuës, et que les dix mille parts du monde ne laissent pas de galler le bon temps cependant? Moy, selon leur licence et impunité, admire de les voir si douces et molles. A qui il gresle sur la teste, tout l'hemisphere semble estre en tempeste et orage. Et disoit le Sauoïard, que si ce sot de Roy de France, eut sçeu bien conduire sa fortune, il estoit homme pour deuenir maistre d'hostel de son Duc. Son imagination ne conceuoit autre plus esleuee grandeur, que celle de son maistre.

Nous sommes insensiblement touts en cette erreur: erreur de grande suitte et preiudice. Mais qui se presente comme dans vn tableau, cette grande image de nostre mere nature, en son entiere maiesté: qui lit en son visage, vne si generale et constante varieté: qui se remarque là dedans, et non soy, mais tout vn royaume, comme vn traict d'vne pointe tres-delicate, celuy-là seul estime les choses selon leur iuste grandeur.

1.26.24 Ce grand monde, que les vns multiplient encore comme especes soubs vn genre, c'est le miroüer, où il nous faut regarder, pour nous cognoistre de bon biais. Somme ie veux que ce soit le liure de mon escolier. Tant d'humeurs, de sectes, de iugemens, d'opinions, de loix, et de coustumes, nous apprennent à iuger sainement des nostres, et apprennent nostre iugement à recognoistre son imperfection et sa naturelle foiblesse: qui n'est pas vn legier apprentissage. Tant de remuements d'estat, et changements de fortune publique, nous instruisent à ne faire pas grand miracle de la nostre.

Tant de noms, tant de victoires et conquestes enseuelies soubs l'oubliance, rendent ridicule l'esperance

ENGLISH

asked where he came from; he did not answer "Athens," but "the world." He, whose imagination was fuller and broader, embraced the universe as his city, and cast his knowledge, his fellowship and his affections over the whole human race—not like us, who look only at what lies under our feet. When the vines freeze in my village, my priest argues from it the wrath of God upon the human race, and judges that the Cannibals must already be parched with thirst.

Seeing our civil wars, who does not cry out that the whole machine is being turned upside down and that the Day of Judgment has us by the collar—without reflecting that many worse things have been seen, and that ten thousand parts of the world go on having a merry time all the while? As for me, considering how lawless and unpunished these wars are, I marvel to see them so mild and soft. When it hails on a man's head, the whole hemisphere seems to be in tempest and storm. And the Savoyard said that if that fool of a King of France had known how to manage his fortune well, he was the sort of man who might have become his Duke's steward. His imagination could conceive no greater height than his master's.

We are all imperceptibly in this error—an error of great consequence and harm. But whoever pictures to himself, as in a painting, that great image of our mother nature in her full majesty; whoever reads in her face so universal and constant a variety; whoever sees himself in it—and not himself only, but a whole kingdom—as a dot made with a very fine point: he alone judges things at their true size.

This great world, which some multiply further, like species under one genus, is the mirror in which we must look at ourselves to know ourselves from the right angle. In short, I want it to be my pupil's book. So many temperaments, sects, judgments, opinions, laws and customs teach us to judge our own soundly, and teach our judgment to recognize its imperfection and its natural weakness—which is no small apprenticeship. So many upheavals of state and changes of public fortune teach us not to make a great wonder of our own.

So many names, so many victories and conquests buried in oblivion, make ridiculous the hope of

FRENCH

d'eterniser nostre nom par la prise de dix argoulets, et d'vn pouillier, qui n'est cognu que de sa cheute. L'orgueil et la fiereté de tant de pompes estrangeres, la maiesté si enflee de tant de cours et de grandeurs, nous fermit et asseure la veüe, à soustenir l'esclat des nostres, sans siller les yeux. Tant de milliasses d'hommes enterrez auant nous, nous encouragent à ne craindre d'aller trouuer si bonne compagnie en l'autre monde: ainsi du reste. Nostre vie, disoit Pythagoras, retire à la grande et populeuse assemblee des ieux Olympiques.

Les vns exercent le corps, pour en acquerir la gloire des ieux: d'autres y portent des marchandises à vendre, pour le gain. Il en est, et qui ne sont pas les pires, lesquels n'y cherchent aucun fruict, que de regarder comment et pourquoy chasque chose se faict: et estre spectateurs de la vie des autres hommes, pour en iuger et regler la leur.

1.26.25 Aux exemples se pourront proprement assortir tous les plus profitables discours de la philosophie, à laquelle se doiuent toucher les actions humaines, comme à leur regle. On luy dira, *quid fas optare, quid asper*
Vtile nummus habet, patriæ charisque propinquis
Quantum elargiri deceat, quem te Deus esse
Iussit, et humana qua parte locatus es in re,
Quid sumus, aut quidnam victuri gignimur: Que c'est que scauoir et ignorer, qui doit estre le but de l'estude: que c'est que vaillance, temperance, et iustice: ce qu'il y a à dire entre l'ambition et l'auarice: la seruitude et la subiection, la licence et la liberté: à quelles marques on congnoit le vray et solide contentement: iusques où il faut craindre la mort, la douleur et la honte.

Et quo quemque modo fugiátque ferátque laborem. Quels ressors nous meuuent, et le moyen de tant diuers branles en nous. Car il me semble que les premiers discours, dequoy on luy doit abreuuer l'entendement, ce doiuent estre ceux, qui reglent ses mœurs et son sens, qui luy apprendront à se cognoistre, et à sçauoir bien mourir et bien viure.

1.26.26 Entre les arts liberaux, commençons par l'art qui nous faict libres. Elles seruent toutes voirement en quelque maniere à l'instruction de nostre vie, et à son vsage:

ENGLISH

immortalizing our name by capturing ten light horsemen and some henhouse of a fort known only from its fall. The pride and arrogance of so many foreign pageants, the swollen majesty of so many courts and grandeurs, steady and strengthen our gaze to bear the brilliance of our own without blinking. So many millions of men buried before us encourage us not to fear going to join such good company in the other world. And so with the rest. Our life, said Pythagoras, resembles the great and crowded assembly of the Olympic Games.

Some exercise their bodies there to win glory in the games; others bring goods to sell, for profit. There are some—and not the worst—who seek no other fruit there than to watch how and why each thing is done, and to be spectators of other men's lives in order to judge and regulate their own.

With these examples may fittingly be matched all the most profitable discourses of philosophy, by which human actions must be measured as by their rule. He will be told *what it is right to wish for, what use*
Hard coin has, how much it is fitting to bestow
On one's country and dear kin, what God has ordered
You to be, and in what part of human affairs you are placed,
What we are, and for what life we are born: what it is to know and not to know, which should be the aim of study; what valor, temperance and justice are; what difference there is between ambition and greed, servitude and subjection, license and liberty; by what marks one recognizes true and solid contentment; how far one should fear death, pain and disgrace.[26]

And how he may avoid or bear each hardship. What springs move us, and the cause of so many different stirrings in us. For it seems to me that the first discourses with which his understanding should be steeped must be those that regulate his conduct and his sense, that will teach him to know himself, and to know how to die well and to live well.[27]

Among the liberal arts, let us begin with the art that makes us free. They all serve in some way, it is true, to instruct our life and its use, as all other

26 Persius, Satires III.
27 Virgil, Aeneid III.459.

FRENCH

comme toutes autres choses y seruent en quelque maniere aussi. Mais choisissons celle qui y sert directement et professoirement. Si nous sçauions restraindre les appartenances de nostre vie à leurs iustes et naturels limites, nous trouuerions, que la meilleure part des sciences, qui sont en vsage, est hors de nostre vsage. Et en celles mesmes qui le sont, qu'il y a des estendues et enfonceures tres-inutiles, que nous ferions mieux de laisser là: et suiuant l'institution de Socrates, borner le cours de nostre estude en icelles, où faut l'vtilité.

sapere aude,
Incipe: Viuendi qui rectè prorogat horam,
Rusticus expectat dum defluat amnis, at ille
Labitur, et labetur in omne volubilis æuum. C'est vne grande simplesse d'aprendre à nos enfans, *Quid moueant pisces, animosáque signa leonis,*
Lotus et Hesperia quid capricornus aqua; la science des astres et le mouuement de la huictiesme sphere, auant que les leurs propres. τι πλειαδεσσι καμοι,
τι δ'αστρασιν βοωτεω. Anaximenes escriuant à Pythagoras: De quel sens puis ie m'amuser aux secrets des estoilles, ayant la mort ou la seruitude touiours presente aux yeux? Car lors les Roys de Perse preparoient la guerre contre son pays. Chacun doit dire ainsin.

Estant battu d'ambition, d'auarice, de temerité, de superstition: et ayant au dedans tels autres ennemis de la vie: iray-ie songer au bransle du monde?

1.26.27 Apres qu'on luy aura appris ce qui sert à le faire plus sage et meilleur, on l'entretiendra que c'est que Logique, Physique, Geometrie, Rhetorique: et la science qu'il choisira, ayant desia le iugement formé, il en viendra bien tost à bout. Sa leçon se fera tantost par deuis, tantost par liure: tantost son gouuerneur luy fournira de l'autheur mesme propre à cette fin de son institution: tantost il luy en donnera la moelle, et la substance toute maschee.

Et si de soy mesme il n'est assez familier des liures, pour y trouuer tant de beaux discours qui y sont, pour l'effect de son dessein, on luy pourra ioindre quelque homme de

ENGLISH

things also serve it in some way. But let us choose the one that serves it directly and expressly. If we knew how to confine what pertains to our life within its just and natural limits, we would find that most of the sciences in use are of no use to us; and that even in those that are, there are stretches and depths quite useless, which we would do better to leave alone, and, following Socrates' teaching, stop the course of our study in them where usefulness ends.

Dare to be wise;
Begin! He who postpones the hour of living rightly
Is the rustic waiting for the river to run by; but it
Glides on, and will glide on, rolling, through all time.
It is great foolishness to teach our children *What influence the Fishes have, and the fiery signs of the Lion,*
And Capricorn, bathed in the Hesperian sea, the science of the stars and the movement of the eighth sphere, before their own. *What are the Pleiades to me,*
What the stars of Boötes? Anaximenes, writing to Pythagoras: "What sense can I have in amusing myself with the secrets of the stars, when I have death or slavery always before my eyes?" For at that time the kings of Persia were preparing war against his country. Everyone ought to say the same.[28]

Beset by ambition, greed, rashness and superstition, and having within me other such enemies of life, shall I go dreaming about the motion of the world?

After he has been taught what serves to make him wiser and better, he will be told what logic, physics, geometry and rhetoric are; and whatever science he chooses, his judgment being already formed, he will soon master it. His lessons will be given sometimes by conversation, sometimes by books. Sometimes his tutor will provide him with the very author suited to this purpose of his education; sometimes he will give him its marrow and substance all ready chewed.

And if the tutor is not himself familiar enough with books to find in them all the fine discourses they contain for the purpose of his design, some

28 Horace, Epistles I.2; Propertius, Elegies IV.1; and a Greek line attributed to Anacreon. The eighth sphere was the sphere of the fixed stars in the old astronomy.

FRENCH

lettres, qui à chaque besoing fournisse les munitions qu'il faudra, pour les distribuer et dispenser à son nourrisson. Et que cette leçon ne soit plus aisee, et naturelle que celle de Gaza, qui y peut faire doute? Ce sont là preceptes espineux et mal plaisans, et des mots vains et descharnez, où il n'y a point de prise, rien qui vous esueille l'esprit: en cette cy l'ame trouue où mordre, où se paistre. Ce fruict est plus grand sans comparaison, et si sera plustost meury.

ENGLISH

man of letters can be joined to him to supply, at each need, the ammunition required, for him to distribute and dispense to his charge. And who can doubt that this lesson is easier and more natural than Gaza's? That is all thorny, unpleasant precepts and empty, fleshless words, with nothing to take hold of, nothing to wake up your mind; in this one the mind finds something to bite on and feed on. This fruit is incomparably greater, and yet it will ripen sooner.[29]

PHILOSOPHY'S CHEERFUL FACE

Philosophy is not grim but gay, and its virtue is reached by pleasant, easy paths.

FRENCH

1.26.28 C'est grand cas que les choses en soyent là en nostre siecle, que la philosophie soit iusques aux gens d'entendement, vn nom vain et fantastique, qui se treuue de nul vsage, et de nul pris par opinion et par effect. Ie croy que ces ergotismes en sont cause, qui ont saisi ses auenues. On a grand tort de la peindre inaccessible aux enfans, et d'vn visage renfroigné, sourcilleux et terrible: qui me l'a masquee de ce faux visage pasle et hideux? Il n'est rien plus gay, plus gaillard, plus enioué, et à peu que ie ne die follastre. Elle ne presche que feste et bon temps. Vne mine triste et transie, montre que ce n'est pas là son giste.

Demetrius le Grammairien rencontrant dans le temple de Delphes vne troupe de Philosophes assis ensemble, il leur dit: Ou ie me trompe, ou à vous voir la contenance si paisible et si gaye, vous n'estes pas en grand discours entre vous. A quoy l'vn d'eux, Heracleon le Megarien, respondit: C'est à faire à ceux qui cherchent si le futur du verbe βαλλω a double λ, ou qui cherchent la deriuation des comparatifs χειρον et βελτιον, et des superlatifs χειριστον et βελτιστον, qu'il faut rider le front s'entretenant de leur science: mais quant aux discours de la philosophie, ils ont accoustumé d'esgayer et resiouïr ceux qui les traictent, non les renfroigner et contrister.

Deprendas animi tormenta latentis in ægro
Corpore, deprendas et gaudia, sumit vtrumque
Inde habitum facies. L'ame qui loge la philosophie, doit par

ENGLISH

It is a strange thing that matters have come to such a pass in our age that philosophy, even for men of understanding, is an empty and fanciful name, of no use and no value, both in opinion and in fact. I think the cause is all that logic-chopping which has taken over its approaches. It is very wrong to portray it as inaccessible to children, with a frowning, beetle-browed and terrifying face. Who has masked it for me with this false face, pale and hideous? There is nothing more cheerful, more lively, more sprightly, and I would almost say more frolicsome. It preaches nothing but feasting and good times. A sad and downcast look shows that it does not dwell there.

Demetrius the grammarian, coming upon a group of philosophers sitting together in the temple at Delphi, said to them: "Either I am mistaken, or, judging by your peaceful and cheerful faces, you are not engaged in any deep discussion." To which one of them, Heracleon of Megara, replied: "It is for those who inquire whether the future of the verb βαλλω has a double λ, or who seek the derivation of the comparatives χειρον and βελτιον and the superlatives χειριστον and βελτιστον, to furrow their brows while discussing their science. But as for the discussions of philosophy, they usually cheer and delight those who engage in them, not make them frown and grow sad."[30]

You can detect the torments of the mind concealed in a sick
Body, and you can detect its joys; the face takes on

29 Theodore Gaza (c. 1400–1475), Greek scholar whose Greek grammar was a standard school text.
30 βαλλω means "I throw"; χειρον and βελτιον mean "worse" and "better," χειριστον and βελτιστον "worst" and "best."

FRENCH

sa santé rendre sain encores le corps: elle doit faire luyre iusques au dehors son repos, et son aise: doit former à son moule le port exterieur, et l'armer par consequent d'vne gratieuse fierté, d'vn maintien actif, et allaigre, et d'vne contenance contante et debonnaire. La plus expresse marque de la sagesse, c'est vne esiouissance constante: son estat est comme des choses au dessus de la lune, tousiours serein. C'est *Baroco* et *Baralipton*, qui rendent leurs supposts ainsi crotez et enfumez; ce n'est pas elle, ils ne la cognoissent que par ouyr dire. Comment?

elle faict estat de sereiner les tempestes de l'ame, et d'apprendre la faim et les fiebures à rire: non par quelques Epicycles imaginaires, mais par raisons naturelles et palpables. Elle a pour son but, la vertu: qui n'est pas, comme dit l'eschole, plantée à la teste d'vn mont coupé, rabotteux et inaccessible. Ceux qui l'ont approchée, la tiennent au rebours, logée dans vne belle plaine fertile et fleurissante: d'où elle void bien souz soy toutes choses; mais si peut on y arriuer, qui en sçait l'addresse, par des routtes ombrageuses, gazonnées, et doux fleurantes; plaisamment, et d'vne pante facile et polie, comme est celle des voutes celestes.

Pour n'auoir hanté cette vertu supreme, belle, triumphante, amoureuse, delicieuse pareillement et courageuse, ennemie professe et irreconciliable d'aigreur, de desplaisir, de crainte, et de contrainte, ayant pour guide nature, fortune et volupté pour compagnes: ils sont allez selon leur foiblesse, faindre cette sotte image, triste, querelleuse, despite, menaceuse, mineuse, et la placer sur vn rocher à l'escart, emmy des ronces: fantosme à estonner les gents.

1.26.29 Mon gouuerneur qui cognoist deuoir remplir la volonté de son disciple, autant ou plus d'affection, que de reuerence enuers la vertu, luy sçaura dire, que les poëtes suiuent les humeurs communes: et luy faire toucher au doigt, que les Dieux ont mis plustost la sueur aux aduenues des cabinetz de Venus que de Pallas. Et quand il commencera de se sentir, luy presentant Bradamant ou Angelique, pour maistresse à ioüir: et d'vne beauté naïue, actiue, genereuse, non hommasse, mais virile, au prix d'vne beauté molle, affettée, delicate, artificielle; l'vne

ENGLISH

either
Look from that source. The soul that houses philosophy must by its health make even the body healthy. It must make its repose and its ease shine out even on the outside; it must shape the outward bearing to its own mold, and so arm it with a gracious pride, an active and lively demeanor, and a contented and kindly countenance. The surest sign of wisdom is a constant cheerfulness; its state is like that of things above the moon, always serene. It is *Baroco* and *Baralipton* that make their followers so mud-spattered and smoke-begrimed; it is not philosophy; they know it only by hearsay. What?[31]

It makes it its business to calm the storms of the soul, and to teach hunger and fevers to laugh—not by some imaginary epicycles, but by natural and palpable reasons. Its aim is virtue, which is not, as the schools say, planted on the top of a steep, rugged and inaccessible mountain. Those who have approached her hold, on the contrary, that she dwells on a fine plain, fertile and flowering, from which she sees all things well beneath her; yet anyone who knows the way can get there by shady, grassy, sweet-smelling paths, pleasantly, by an easy and smooth slope, like that of the vaults of heaven.

Because they have never frequented this supreme virtue—beautiful, triumphant, loving, delightful and courageous alike, the professed and irreconcilable enemy of sourness, displeasure, fear and constraint, with nature for her guide and fortune and pleasure for her companions—they have gone and, in their weakness, invented this foolish image, sad, quarrelsome, sullen, threatening, scowling, and set it on a rock apart, among brambles: a phantom to stun people.

My tutor, who knows he must fill his pupil's will with as much love for virtue as reverence, or more, will be able to tell him that the poets follow common temperaments, and make him see plainly that the gods have put sweat on the approaches to the chambers of Venus rather than of Pallas. And when he begins to feel his manhood, he will present him with Bradamante or Angelica as a mistress to enjoy: a natural, active, generous

31 Juvenal, Satires IX. Baroco and Baralipton were mnemonic names for forms of the syllogism in scholastic logic.

FRENCH

trauestie en garçon, coiffée d'vn morrion luisant: l'autre vestue en garce, coiffée d'vn attiffet emperlé: il iugera masle son amour mesme, s'il choisit tout diuersement à cet effeminé pasteur de Phrygie.

1.26.30 Il luy fera cette nouuelle leçon, que le prix et hauteur de la vraye vertu, est en la facilité, vtilité et plaisir de son exercice: si esloigné de difficulté, que les enfans y peuuent comme les hommes, les simples comme les subtilz. Le reglement c'est son vtil, non pas la force. Socrates son premier mignon, quitte à escient sa force, pour glisser en la naïueté et aisance de son progrés. C'est la mere nourrice des plaisirs humains. En les rendant iustes, elle les rend seurs et purs. Les moderant, elle les tient en haleine et en appetit.

Retranchant ceux qu'elle refuse, elle nous aiguise enuers ceux qu'elle nous laisse: et nous laisse abondamment tous ceux que veut nature: et iusques à la satieté, sinon iusques à la lasseté; maternellement: si d'aduenture nous ne voulons dire, que le regime, qui arreste le beuueur auant l'yuresse, le mangeur auant la crudité, le paillard auant la pelade, soit ennemy de noz plaisirs. Si la fortune commune luy faut, elle luy eschappe; ou elle s'en passe, et s'en forge vne autre toute sienne: non plus flottante et roulante: elle sçait estre riche, et puissante, et sçauante, et coucher en des matelats musquez. Elle aime la vie, elle aime la beauté, la gloire, et la santé.

Mais son office propre et particulier, c'est sçauoir vser de ces biens là regléement, et les sçauoir perdre constamment: office bien plus noble qu'aspre, sans lequel tout cours de vie est desnaturé, turbulent et difforme: et y peut-on iustement attacher ces escueils, ces haliers, et ces monstres.

1.26.31 Si ce disciple se rencontre de si diuerse condition, qu'il aime mieux ouyr vne fable, que la narration d'vn beau voyage, ou vn sage propos, quand il l'entendra. Qui au son du tabourin, qui arme la ieune ardeur de ses compagnons, se destourne à vn autre, qui l'appelle au ieu

ENGLISH

beauty, not mannish but manly, set against a soft, affected, delicate, artificial beauty; the one disguised as a boy, wearing a shining helmet, the other dressed as a girl, in a pearl-studded headdress. He will judge his love itself manly if he chooses quite differently from that soft shepherd of Phrygia.[32]

He will give him this new lesson: that the value and height of true virtue lie in the ease, usefulness and pleasure of its exercise, which is so far from difficult that children can manage it as well as men, the simple as well as the subtle. Measure is its instrument, not force. Socrates, her first favorite, deliberately gives up force, to glide into the naturalness and ease of her progress. She is the nursing mother of human pleasures. By making them just, she makes them safe and pure. By moderating them, she keeps them fresh and keen.

By cutting out those she rejects, she sharpens our appetite for those she leaves us; and she leaves us, abundantly, all those that nature wants, and to the point of satiety, if not of weariness—like a mother. Unless perhaps we mean to say that the regimen that stops the drinker before drunkenness, the eater before indigestion, the lecher before he loses his hair, is an enemy of our pleasures. If common fortune fails her, she escapes it, or does without it, and forges another wholly her own, no longer fluctuating and unstable. She knows how to be rich and powerful and learned, and to sleep on musk-scented mattresses. She loves life; she loves beauty, glory and health.[33]

But her proper and particular office is to know how to use these goods with moderation, and how to lose them with constancy—an office far more noble than harsh, without which every course of life is unnatural, turbulent and deformed; and to that kind of life one may rightly attach those reefs, those thickets and those monsters.

Suppose this pupil turns out to be of such a different disposition that he would rather hear a fairy tale than the account of a fine voyage or a wise discourse when he hears one; that at the sound of the drum that arms the young ardor of his compan-

32 Bradamante and Angelica are heroines of Ariosto's Orlando Furioso. The Phrygian shepherd is Paris, who awarded the prize of beauty to Venus.
33 Loss of hair was a common symptom of syphilis.

FRENCH

des batteleurs. Qui par souhait ne trouue plus plaisant et plus doux, reuenir poudreux et victorieux d'un combat, que de la paulme ou du bal, auec le prix de cet exercice: ie n'y trouue autre remede, sinon qu'on le mette patissier dans quelque bonne ville: fust il fils d'vn Duc: suiuant le precepte de Platon, qu'il faut colloquer les enfans, non selon les facultez de leur pere, mais selon les facultez de leur ame.

Puis que la Philosophie est celle qui nous instruict à viure, et que l'enfance y a sa leçon, comme les autres aages, pourquoy ne la luy communique lon? *Vdum et molle lutum est, nunc nunc properandus, et acri / Fingendus sine fine rota.* On nous apprent à viure, quand la vie est passée. Cent escoliers ont pris la verolle auant que d'estre arriuez à leur leçon d'Aristote de la temperance. Cicero disoit, que quand il viuroit la vie de deux hommes, il ne prendroit pas le loisir d'estudier les Poëtes Lyriques. Et ie trouue ces ergotistes plus tristement encores inutiles.

Nostre enfant est bien plus pressé: il ne doit au paidagogisme que les premiers quinze ou seize ans de sa vie: le demeurant est deu à l'action. Employons vn temps si court aux instructions necessaires. Ce sont abus, ostez toutes ces subtilitez espineuses de la Dialectique, dequoy nostre vie ne se peut amender, prenez les simples discours de la philosophie, sçachez les choisir et traitter à point, ils sont plus aisez à conceuoir qu'vn conte de Boccace. Vn enfant en est capable au partir de la nourrisse, beaucoup mieux que d'apprendre à lire ou escrire. La philosophie a des discours pour la naissance des hommes, comme pour la decrepitude.

1.26.32 Ie suis de l'aduis de Plutarque, qu'Aristote n'amusa pas tant son grand disciple à l'artifice de composer syllogismes, ou aux principes de Geometrie, comme à l'instruire des bons preceptes, touchant la vaillance, proüesse, la magnanimité et temperance, et l'asseurance de ne rien craindre: et auec cette munition, il l'enuoya encores enfant subiuguer l'empire du monde à tout 30000. hommes de pied, 4000. cheuaulx, et quarante deux mille escuz seulement. Les autres arts et sciences, dit-il, Alexandre les honoroit bien, et loüoit leur excellence et gentilesse, mais pour plaisir qu'il y prist, il n'estoit pas

ENGLISH

ions, he turns aside to another drum that calls him to the tumblers' show; that by his own wish he does not find it more pleasant and sweet to come back dusty and victorious from a battle than from tennis or a ball with the prize for that exercise. I see no other remedy than to apprentice him to a pastry cook in some good town, were he the son of a duke—following Plato's precept that children should be placed not according to their father's faculties but according to the faculties of their soul.

Since it is philosophy that teaches us to live, and since childhood has its lesson there like the other ages, why is it not imparted to children? *The clay is moist and soft: now, now we must hurry, and shape it / Without end on the swift wheel.* We are taught to live when life is over. A hundred schoolboys have caught the pox before getting to their lesson on Aristotle's temperance. Cicero said that even if he lived the lives of two men, he would not take the time to study the lyric poets. And I find these logic-choppers even more sadly useless.[34]

Our child is in much more of a hurry: he owes to schooling only the first fifteen or sixteen years of his life; the rest is owed to action. Let us use so short a time for the necessary teachings. These are abuses: get rid of all those thorny subtleties of dialectic, which cannot make our lives any better; take the simple discourses of philosophy, know how to choose them and handle them aptly; they are easier to grasp than a tale of Boccaccio. A child is capable of them as soon as he leaves his nurse, much more than of learning to read or write. Philosophy has discourses for the birth of men as well as for their decrepitude.

I am of Plutarch's opinion, that Aristotle did not occupy his great pupil so much with the craft of composing syllogisms or with the principles of geometry as with instructing him in good precepts concerning valor, prowess, magnanimity and temperance, and the assurance that fears nothing. And with this provision he sent him off, still a boy, to subdue the empire of the world with only 30,000 foot soldiers, 4,000 horse and forty-two thousand crowns. The other arts and sciences, he says, Alexander honored well enough, and praised

34 Persius, Satires III.

FRENCH

facile à se laisser surprendre à l'affection de les vouloir exercer.

Petite hinc iuuenésque senésque / Finem animo certum, miserique viatica canis. C'est ce que disoit Epicurus au commencement de sa lettre à Meniceus: Ny le plus ieune refuie à philosopher, ny le plus vieil s'y lasse. Qui fait autrement, il semble dire, ou qu'il n'est pas encores saison d'heureusement viure: ou qu'il n'en est plus saison. Pour tout cecy, ie ne veux pas qu'on emprisonne ce garçon, ie ne veux pas qu'on l'abandonne à la colere et humeur melancholique d'vn furieux maistre d'escole: ie ne veux pas corrompre son esprit, à le tenir à la gehenne et au trauail, à la mode des autres, quatorze ou quinze heures par iour, comme vn portefaiz.

Ny ne trouueroys bon, quand par quelque complexion solitaire et melancholique, on le verroit adonné d'vne application trop indiscrette à l'estude des liures, qu'on la luy nourrist. Cela les rend ineptes à la conuersation ciuile, et les destourne de meilleures occupations. Et combien ay-ie veu de mon temps, d'hommes abestis, par temeraire auidité de science? Carneades s'en trouua si affollé, qu'il n'eut plus le loisir de se faire le poil et les ongles. Ny ne veux gaster ses meurs genereuses par l'inciuilité et barbarie d'autruy. La sagesse Françoise a esté anciennement en prouerbe, pour vne sagesse qui prenoit de bon'heure, et n'auoit gueres de tenue.

A la verité nous voyons encores qu'il n'est rien si gentil que les petits enfans en France: mais ordinairement ils trompent l'esperance qu'on en a conceuë, et hommes faicts, on n'y voit aucune excellence. I'ay ouy tenir à gens d'entendement, que ces colleges où on les enuoie, dequoy ils ont foison, les abrutissent ainsin.

1.26.33 Au nostre, vn cabinet, vn iardin, la table, et le lict, la solitude, la compagnie, le matin et le vespre, toutes heures luy seront vnes: toutes places luy seront estude: car la philosophie, qui, comme formatrice des iugements et des meurs, sera sa principale leçon, a ce priuilege, de se mesler par tout. Isocrates l'orateur estant prié en vn festin de parler de son art, chacun trouue qu'il eut raison de respondre: Il n'est pas maintenant temps, de ce que ie sçay faire, et ce dequoy il est maintenant temps, ie ne le

ENGLISH

their excellence and refinement; but for all the pleasure he took in them, he was not easily caught by a desire to practice them.

Seek here, young and old, / A sure goal for your mind, and provision for wretched gray hairs. That is what Epicurus said at the beginning of his letter to Menoeceus: "Let neither the youngest shrink from philosophizing nor the oldest grow weary of it." Whoever does otherwise seems to be saying either that it is not yet the season for living happily, or that it is no longer the season. For all that, I do not want this boy imprisoned; I do not want him abandoned to the anger and melancholy temper of a raging schoolmaster; I do not want to corrupt his mind by keeping him on the rack and at hard labor, as others do, fourteen or fifteen hours a day, like a porter.[35]

Nor would I think it right, if through some solitary and melancholy disposition he were seen to be given to the study of books with too immoderate an application, that this should be encouraged in him. It makes them unfit for civil conversation and turns them away from better occupations. And how many men have I seen in my time made stupid by a reckless greed for learning? Carneades was so crazed by it that he no longer had time to trim his hair and nails. Nor do I want to spoil his noble manners by the incivility and barbarism of others. French wisdom was proverbial in ancient times as a wisdom that took hold early and had hardly any staying power.

In truth we still see that there is nothing so delightful as little children in France; but as a rule they disappoint the hopes placed in them, and as grown men they show no excellence. I have heard men of understanding maintain that it is these colleges they are sent to, of which there are plenty, that brutalize them so.

For our boy, a study, a garden, the table and the bed, solitude and company, morning and evening, all hours will be the same, all places will be his schoolroom; for philosophy, which, as the shaper of judgment and manners, will be his principal lesson, has the privilege of mixing in everywhere. When Isocrates the orator was asked at a banquet to speak about his art, everyone agrees he was

35 Persius, Satires V.

FRENCH

sçay pas faire. Car de presenter des harangues ou des disputes de rhetorique, à vne compagnie assemblée pour rire et faire bonne chere, ce seroit vn meslange de trop mauuais accord.

Et autant en pourroit-on dire de toutes les autres sciences. Mais quant à la philosophie, en la partie où elle traicte de l'homme et de ses deuoirs et offices, ç'a esté le iugement commun de tous les sages, que pour la douceur de sa conuersation, elle ne deuoit estre refusée, ny aux festins, ny aux ieux. Et Platon l'ayant inuitée à son conuiue, nous voyons comme elle entretient l'assistence d'vne façon molle, et accommodée au temps et au lieu, quoy que ce soit de ses plus hauts discours et plus salutaires. *Æquè pauperibus prodest, locupletibus æquè, / Et neglecta æquè pueris senibúsque nocebit.*

1.26.34 Ainsi sans doubte il choumera moins, que les autres. Mais comme les pas que nous employons à nous promener dans vne galerie, quoy qu'il y en ait trois fois autant, ne nous lassent pas, comme ceux que nous mettons à quelque chemin dessigné: aussi nostre leçon se passant comme par rencontre, sans obligation de temps et de lieu, et se meslant à toutes noz actions, se coulera sans se faire sentir. Les ieux mesmes et les exercices seront vne bonne partie de l'estude: la course, la lucte, la musique, la danse, la chasse, le maniement des cheuaux et des armes. Ie veux que la bien-seance exterieure, et l'entre-gent, et la disposition de la personne se façonne quant et quant l'ame.

Ce n'est pas vne ame, ce n'est pas vn corps qu'on dresse, c'est vn homme, il n'en faut pas faire à deux. Et comme dit Platon, il ne faut pas les dresser l'vn sans l'autre, mais les conduire également, comme vne couple de cheuaux attelez à mesme timon. Et à l'oüir semble il pas prester plus de temps et de solicitude, aux exercices du corps: et estimer que l'esprit s'en exerce quant et quant, et non au contraire?

1.26.35 Au demeurant, cette institution se doit conduire par vne seuere douceur, non comme il se fait. Au lieu de conuier les enfans aux lettres, on ne leur presente à la verité, qu'horreur et cruauté. Ostez moy la violence et la force; il n'est rien à mon aduis qui abatardisse et estourdisse si fort vne nature bien née. Si vous auez enuie qu'il craigne

ENGLISH

right to answer: "This is not the time for what I know how to do, and what this is the time for, I do not know how to do." For to offer speeches or rhetorical disputations to a company gathered to laugh and make merry would be far too discordant a mixture.

And as much could be said of all the other sciences. But as for philosophy, in the part that deals with man and his duties and obligations, it has been the common judgment of all the wise that, because of the pleasantness of its company, it should be refused neither at banquets nor at games. And when Plato invited it to his Symposium, we see how it entertains the gathering in a gentle manner suited to the time and place, though these are among its loftiest and most salutary discourses. *It benefits the poor and the rich alike; / Neglected, it will harm young and old alike.*[36]

In this way, no doubt, he will be idle less than the others. But just as the steps we take strolling in a gallery, even if there are three times as many, do not tire us like those we spend on some set journey, so our lesson, happening as if by chance, bound to no time or place and mingling with all our actions, will slip by without being felt. Even games and exercises will be a good part of his study: running, wrestling, music, dancing, hunting, the handling of horses and arms. I want his outward decorum, his social ease and his bodily bearing to be fashioned along with his soul.

It is not a soul, it is not a body that we are training: it is a man; we must not make two of him. And as Plato says, we must not train one without the other, but drive them equally, like a pair of horses harnessed to the same shaft. And to hear him, does he not seem to give more time and care to bodily exercises, and to think that the mind gets its exercise along with them, and not the other way around?

For the rest, this education must be conducted with a stern gentleness, not as it is now done. Instead of inviting children to letters, they are in truth offered nothing but horror and cruelty. Away with violence and force! There is nothing, in my opinion, that so debases and stupefies a well-born

36 Horace, Epistles I.1.

FRENCH

la honte et le chastiement, ne l'y endurcissez pas. Endurcissez le à la sueur et au froid, au vent, au soleil et aux hazards qu'il luy faut mespriser.

Ostez luy toute mollesse et delicatesse au vestir et coucher, au manger et au boire: accoustumez le à tout: que ce ne soit pas vn beau garçon et dameret, mais vn garçon vert et vigoureux. Enfant, homme, vieil, i'ay tousiours creu et iugé de mesme. Mais entre autres choses, cette police de la plus part de noz colleges, m'a tousiours despleu. On eust failly à l'aduenture moins dommageablement, s'inclinant vers l'indulgence. C'est vne vraye geaule de ieunesse captiue. On la rend desbauchée, l'en punissant auant qu'elle le soit. Arriuez y sur le point de leur office; vous n'oyez que cris, et d'enfans suppliciez, et de maistres enyurez en leur cholere.

Quelle maniere, pour esueiller l'appetit enuers leur leçon, à ces tendres ames, et craintiues, de les y guider d'vne troigne effroyable, les mains armées de fouets? Inique et pernicieuse forme. Ioint ce que Quintilian en a tres-bien remarqué, que cette imperieuse authorité, tire des suittes perilleuses: et nommément à nostre façon de chastiement. Combien leurs classes seroient plus decemment ionchées de fleurs et de feuillées, que de tronçons d'osiers sanglants? l'y feroy pourtraire la ioye, l'allegresse, et Flora, et les Graces: comme fit en son eschole le philosophe Speusippus. Où est leur profit, que là fust aussi leur esbat. On doit ensucrer les viandes salubres à l'enfant: et enfieller celles qui luy sont nuisibles.

C'est merueille combien Platon se montre soigneux en ses loix, de la gayeté et passetemps de la ieunesse de sa cité: et combien il s'arreste à leurs courses, ieux, chansons, saults et danses: desquelles il dit, que l'antiquité a donné la conduitte et le patronnage aux Dieux mesmes, Apollon, aux Muses et Minerue. Il s'estend à mille preceptes pour ses gymnases. Pour les sciences lettrées, il s'y amuse fort peu: et semble ne recommander particulierement la poësie, que pour la musique.

1.26.36 Toute estrangeté et particularité en noz mœurs et conditions est euitable, comme ennemie de societé. Qui

ENGLISH

nature. If you want him to fear shame and punishment, do not harden him to them. Harden him to sweat and cold, to wind and sun, and to the dangers he must learn to despise.

Rid him of all softness and daintiness in dress and bed, in eating and drinking; accustom him to everything. Let him not be a pretty boy and a ladies' man, but a lusty, vigorous lad. As a child, as a man, as an old man, I have always believed and judged the same. But among other things, the discipline of most of our colleges has always displeased me. They might have erred less harmfully by leaning toward indulgence. They are real jails for captive youth. They make the young debauched by punishing them for it before they are. Go there at lesson time: you hear nothing but cries, from children being tortured and from masters drunk with anger.

What a way to awaken a taste for their lessons in those tender and timid souls—to lead them to it with a fearsome scowl and hands armed with whips! An unjust and pernicious method. Not to mention what Quintilian has very rightly observed, that this imperious authority has dangerous consequences, and especially our manner of punishment. How much more fittingly their classrooms would be strewn with flowers and leaves than with bloody stumps of willow rods! I would have joy and gladness painted there, and Flora and the Graces, as the philosopher Speusippus did in his school. Where their profit is, let their pleasure be also. Wholesome foods should be sweetened for the child, and harmful ones dosed with gall.[37]

It is remarkable how careful Plato shows himself in his Laws about the gaiety and pastimes of the youth of his city, and how much he dwells on their races, games, songs, leaps and dances, the direction and patronage of which, he says, antiquity gave to the gods themselves: Apollo, the Muses and Minerva. He goes into a thousand precepts for his gymnasiums. On literary studies he spends very little time, and seems to recommend poetry in particular only for the sake of music.

All oddity and peculiarity in our manners and ways should be avoided as hostile to social life.

37 Quintilian, Roman teacher of rhetoric (1st century AD).

FRENCH

ne s'estonneroit de la complexion de Demophon, maistre d'hostel d'Alexandre, qui suoit à l'ombre, et trembloit au soleil? I'en ay veu fuir la senteur des pommes, plus que les harquebuzades; d'autres s'effrayer pour vne souris: d'autres rendre la gorge à voir de la cresme: d'autres à voir brasser vn lict de plume: comme Germanicus ne pouuoit souffrir ny la veuë ny le chant des cocqs. Il y peut auoir à l'aduanture à cela quelque proprieté occulte, mais on l'esteindroit, à mon aduis, qui s'y prendroit de bon'heure.

L'institution a gaigné cela sur moy, il est vray que ce n'a point esté sans quelque soing, que sauf la biere, mon appetit est accommodable indifferemment à toutes choses, dequoy on se paist.

1.26.37 Le corps est encore souple, on le doit à cette cause plier à toutes façons et coustumes: et pourueu qu'on puisse tenir l'appetit, et la volonté soubs boucle, qu'on rende hardiment vn ieune homme commode à toutes nations et compagnies, voire au desreglement et aux excés, si besoing est. Son exercitation suiue l'vsage. Qu'il puisse faire toutes choses, et n'ayme à faire que les bonnes. Les philosophes mesmes ne trouuent pas louable en Callisthenes, d'auoir perdu la bonne grace du grand Alexandre son maistre, pour n'auoir voulu boire d'autant à luy. Il rira, il follastrera, il se desbauchera auec son Prince.

Ie veux qu'en la desbauche mesme, il surpasse en vigueur et en fermeté ses compagnons, et qu'il ne laisse à faire le mal, ny à faute de force ny de science, mais à faute de volonté. *Multum interest, vtrum peccare quis nolit, aut nesciat.* Ie pensois faire honneur à vn Seigneur aussi eslongné de ces debordemens, qu'il en soit en France, de m'enquerir à luy en bonne compagnie, combien de fois en sa vie il s'estoit enyuré, pour la necessité des affaires du Roy en Allemaigne: il le print de cette façon, et me respondit que c'estoit trois fois, lesquelles il recita. I'en sçay, qui à faute de cette faculté, se sont mis en grand peine, ayans à pratiquer cette nation.

I'ay souuent remarqué auec grande admiration la merueilleuse nature d'Alcibiades, de se transformer si aisément à façons si diuerses, sans interest de sa santé; surpassant tantost la sumptuosité et pompe Persienne, tantost l'austerité et frugalité Lacedemonienne; autant

ENGLISH

Who would not be astonished at the constitution of Demophon, Alexander's steward, who sweated in the shade and shivered in the sun? I have seen men flee the smell of apples more than arquebus fire; others take fright at a mouse; others throw up at the sight of cream; others at seeing a feather bed shaken up; just as Germanicus could bear neither the sight nor the crowing of cocks. There may perhaps be some hidden property in this; but in my opinion it could be stamped out if one went about it early.

Education has won this much from me—true, not without some effort—that, except for beer, my appetite adapts itself indifferently to everything people eat.

The body is still supple; for that reason it should be bent to all fashions and customs. And provided appetite and will can be kept in check, let a young man boldly be made fit for all nations and all company, even for disorder and excess, if need be. Let his training follow usage. Let him be able to do all things, and love to do only the good. The philosophers themselves do not find it praiseworthy in Callisthenes that he lost the favor of his master, the great Alexander, by refusing to match him drink for drink. He will laugh, he will frolic, he will carouse with his prince.[38]

I want him, even in carousing, to outdo his companions in vigor and firmness, and to refrain from doing wrong not for lack of strength or knowledge, but for lack of will. *There is a great difference between not wanting to do wrong and not knowing how.* I thought I was paying honor to a lord as far removed from such excesses as anyone in France when I asked him, in good company, how many times in his life he had got drunk out of necessity in the King's business in Germany. He took it in that spirit, and answered that it was three times, and told us about them. I know some who, for lack of this ability, have got into great difficulty when they had to deal with that nation.[39]

I have often noted with great admiration the marvelous nature of Alcibiades, who could transform himself so easily to such different ways without harm to his health: outdoing now the sumptuous-

38 Callisthenes, historian and nephew of Aristotle, who accompanied Alexander on his campaigns.
39 Seneca, Letters 90.

FRENCH

reformé en Sparte, comme voluptueux en Ionie. *Omnis Aristippum decuit color, et status et res.* Tel voudrois-ie former mon disciple, *Quem duplici panno patientia velat,*
Mirabor, vitæ via si conuersa decebit,
Personamque feret non inconcinnus vtramque.

1.26.38 Voicy mes leçons: Celuy-là y a mieux proffité, qui les fait, que qui les sçait. Si vous le voyez, vous l'oyez: si vous l'oyez, vous le voyez. Ia à Dieu ne plaise, dit quelqu'vn en Platon, que philosopher ce soit apprendre plusieurs choses, et traitter les arts. *Hanc amplissimam omnium artium bene viuendi disciplinam, vita magis quàm literis persequuti sunt.* Leon Prince des Phliasiens, s'enquerant à Heraclides Ponticus, de quelle science, de quelle art il faisoit profession: Ie ne sçay, dit-il, ny art, ny science: mais ie suis Philosophe. On reprochoit à Diogenes, comment, estant ignorant, il se mesloit de la Philosophie: Ie m'en mesle, dit-il, d'autant mieux à propos.

Hegesias le prioit de luy lire quelque liure: Vous estes plaisant, luy respondit il: vous choisissés les figues vrayes et naturelles, non peintes: que ne choisissez vous aussi les exercitations naturelles, vrayes, et non escrites?

1.26.39 Il ne dira pas tant sa leçon, comme il la fera. Il la repetera en ses actions. On verra s'il y a de la prudence en ses entreprises: s'il y a de la bonté, de la iustice en ses deportements: s'il a du iugement et de la grace en son parler: de la vigueur en ses maladies: de la modestie en ses ieux: de la temperance en ses voluptez: de l'ordre en son œconomie: de l'indifference en son goust, soit chair, poisson, vin ou eau. *Qui disciplinam suam non ostentationem scientiæ, sed legem vitæ putet: quique obtemperet ipse sibi, et decretis pareat.* Le vray miroir de nos discours, est le cours de nos vies.

Zeuxidamus respondit à vn qui luy demanda pourquoy les Lacedemoniens ne redigeoient par escrit les ordonnances de la prouesse, et ne les donnoient à lire à leurs ieunes gens; que c'estoit parce qu'ils les vouloient accoustumer aux faits, non pas aux parolles. Comparez au bout de 15. ou 16. ans, à cettuy-cy, vn de ces latineurs de

ENGLISH

ness and pomp of the Persians, now the austerity and frugality of the Lacedaemonians; as reformed in Sparta as voluptuous in Ionia. *Every color, every state and circumstance became Aristippus.* That is how I would like to shape my pupil: *Him whom patience clothes in a doubled rag,*
I shall admire if he carries a changed way of life well,
And plays both parts not without grace.[40]

These are my lessons: the one who does them has profited from them more than the one who knows them. If you see him, you hear him; if you hear him, you see him. "God forbid," says someone in Plato, "that philosophizing should mean learning many things and dabbling in the arts." *This discipline of living well, the greatest of all the arts, they pursued in their lives rather than in their reading.* Leon, prince of the Phliasians, asked Heraclides Ponticus what science, what art he professed. "I know neither art nor science," he said, "but I am a philosopher." Diogenes was reproached for meddling with philosophy when he was ignorant. "I meddle with it," he said, "all the more fittingly."[41]

Hegesias begged him to read him some book. "You are funny," he answered. "You choose real, natural figs, not painted ones; why do you not also choose natural, real exercises, not written ones?"

He will not so much recite his lesson as do it. He will repeat it in his actions. We shall see whether there is prudence in his undertakings, goodness and justice in his conduct, judgment and grace in his speech, fortitude in his illnesses, modesty in his games, temperance in his pleasures, order in the management of his household, indifference in his taste, whether for meat or fish, wine or water. *One who regards his learning not as a display of knowledge but as a law of life, and who obeys himself and follows his own principles.* The true mirror of our discourse is the course of our lives.[42]

Someone asked Zeuxidamus why the Lacedaemonians did not put the rules of valor into writing and give them to their young people to read; he answered that it was because they wanted to accustom them to deeds, not words. Compare with this pupil, after fifteen or sixteen years, one of

40 Horace, Epistles I.17.
41 Cicero, Tusculan Disputations IV.3.
42 Cicero, Tusculan Disputations II.4.

FRENCH

college, qui aura mis autant de temps à n'apprendre simplement qu'à parler. Le monde n'est que babil, et ne vis iamais homme, qui ne die plustost plus, que moins qu'il ne doit: toutesfois la moitié de nostre aage s'en va là.

On nous tient quatre ou cinq ans à entendre les mots et les coudre en clauses, encores autant à en proportionner vn grand corps estendu en quatre ou cinq parties, autres cinq pour le moins à les sçauoir brefuement mesler et entrelasser de quelque subtile façon. Laissons le à ceux qui en font profession expresse.

1.26.40 Allant vn iour à Orleans, ie trouuay dans cette plaine au deça de Clery, deux regents qui venoyent à Bourdeaux, enuiron à cinquante pas l'vn de l'autre: plus loing derriere eux, ie voyois vne trouppe, et vn maistre en teste, qui estoit feu Monsieur le Comte de la Rochefoucaut: vn de mes gens s'enquit au premier de ces regents, qui estoit ce Gentil'homme qui venoit apres luy: luy qui n'auoit pas veu ce train qui le suiuoit, et qui pensoit qu'on luy parlast de son compagnon, respondit plaisamment, Il n'est pas Gentil'homme, c'est vn grammairien, et ie suis logicien.

Or nous qui cherchons icy au rebours, de former non vn grammairien ou logicien, mais vn Gentil'homme, laissons les abuser de leur loisir: nous auons affaire ailleurs.

ENGLISH

those college Latinizers who will have spent as long merely learning to talk. The world is nothing but chatter, and I never saw a man who did not say more rather than less than he should; yet half our life goes into it.

They keep us four or five years learning to understand words and stitch them into sentences; as many again to shape them into a great body laid out in four or five parts; and another five at least to learn how to mix and weave them together concisely in some subtle fashion. Let us leave that to those who make it their express profession.

Going to Orléans one day, I met, on that plain this side of Cléry, two college teachers on their way to Bordeaux, about fifty paces apart. Farther behind them I saw a troop of riders with a master at its head, who was the late Count de La Rochefoucauld. One of my men asked the first of these teachers who the gentleman was who was coming along behind him. He had not seen the retinue following him, and thought he was being asked about his companion; he answered amusingly: "He is not a gentleman; he is a grammarian, and I am a logician."

Now we, who on the contrary are trying here to form not a grammarian or a logician but a gentleman, let us leave them to misuse their leisure: we have business elsewhere.

MATTER BEFORE WORDS

With clear ideas, words follow of themselves; Montaigne praises plain, vigorous speech.

FRENCH

1.26.41 Mais que notre disciple soit bien pourueu de choses, les parolles ne suiuront que trop: il les trainera, si elles ne veulent suiure. I'en oy qui s'excusent de ne se pouuoir exprimer; et font contenance d'auoir la teste pleine de plusieurs belles choses, mais à faute d'eloquence, ne les pouuoir mettre en euidence: c'est vne baye. Sçauez vous à mon aduis que c'est que cela? ce sont des ombrages, qui leur viennent de quelques conceptions informes, qu'ils ne peuuent démesler et esclarcir au dedans, ny par consequent produire au dehors.

Ils ne s'entendent pas encore eux mesmes: et voyez les vn peu begayer sur le point de l'enfanter, vous iugez que leur trauail n'est point à l'accouchement, mais à la conception, et qu'ils ne font que lecher encores cette

ENGLISH

But let our pupil be well supplied with matter, and the words will follow only too readily; if they will not follow, he will drag them along. I hear some people excuse themselves for not being able to express themselves. They make a show of having their heads full of many fine things, but say that for lack of eloquence they cannot bring them out. That is a sham. Do you know what I think it is? It is shadows that come to them from some shapeless notions, which they cannot sort out and clarify within, and so cannot bring forth without.

They do not yet understand themselves. Watch them stammer a little as they are about to give birth, and you will judge that their labor is not in the delivery but in the conception, and that they

FRENCH

matiere imparfaicte. De ma part, ie tiens, et Socrates ordonne, que qui a dans l'esprit vne viue imagination et claire, il la produira, soit en Bergamasque, soit par mines, s'il est muet: *Verbâque prœuisam rem non inuita sequentur.* Et comme disoit celuy-là, aussi poëtiquement en sa prose, *cùm res animum occupauere, verba ambiunt*. Et cest autre: *ipsæ res verbas rapiunt*.

Il ne sçait pas ablatif, coniunctif, substantif, ny la grammaire; ne faict pas son laquais, ou vne harangere de Petit pont: et si vous entretiendront tout vostre soul, si vous en auez enuie, et se desferreront aussi peu, à l'aduenture, aux regles de leur langage, que le meilleur maistre és arts de France. Il ne sçait pas la rhetorique, ny pour auant-jeu capter la beneuolence du candide lecteur, ny ne luy chaut de le sçauoir. De vray, toute cette belle peinture s'efface aisément par le lustre d'vne verité simple et naifue. Ces gentilesses ne seruent que pour amuser le vulgaire, incapable de prendre la viande plus massiue et plus ferme; comme Afer montre bien clairement chez Tacitus.

Les Ambassadeurs de Samos estoyent venus à Cleomenes Roy de Sparte, preparez d'vne belle et longue oraison, pour l'esmouuoir à la guerre contre le tyran Polycrates: apres qu'il les eut bien laissez dire, il leur respondit: Quant à vostre commencement, et exorde, il ne m'en souuient plus, ny par consequent du milieu; et quant à vostre conclusion, ie n'en veux rien faire. Voila vne belle responce, ce me semble, et des harangueurs bien camus. Et quoy cet autre?

Les Atheniens estoient à choisir de deux architectes, à conduire vne grande fabrique; le premier plus affeté, se presenta auec vn beau discours premedité sur le subiect de cette besongne, et tiroit le iugement du peuple à sa faueur: mais l'autre en trois mots: Seigneurs Atheniens, ce que cettuy a dict, ie le feray. Au fort de l'eloquence de Cicero, plusieurs en entroient en admiration, mais Caton n'en faisant que rire: Nous auons, disoit-il, vn plaisant Consul. Aille deuant ou apres: vne vtile sentence, vn beau traict est tousiours de saison. S'il n'est pas bien à ce qui va deuant, ny à ce qui vient apres, il est bien en soy.

ENGLISH

are still only licking this half-formed matter into shape. For my part, I hold, and Socrates prescribes, that whoever has a vivid and clear idea in his mind will bring it out, whether in the dialect of Bergamo or, if he is mute, by gestures: *Once the matter is foreseen, the words will follow willingly.* And as that other said, just as poetically in his prose, *when things have taken hold of the mind, words come crowding.* And this other: *the things themselves carry off the words.*[43]

He does not know the ablative, the subjunctive, the substantive, or grammar; nor does his lackey, or a fishwife of the Petit-Pont. And yet they will talk with you to your heart's content, if you wish, and will perhaps trip up over the rules of their language as little as the best master of arts in France. He does not know rhetoric, nor how to capture the goodwill of the candid reader by way of a preamble, nor does he care to know it. In truth, all this fine painting is easily outshone by the luster of a simple, natural truth. These niceties serve only to amuse the common people, who cannot take more solid and firmer meat, as Afer shows very clearly in Tacitus.[44]

The ambassadors of Samos had come to Cleomenes, king of Sparta, armed with a fine long oration to stir him to war against the tyrant Polycrates. After he had let them say their piece, he answered: "As for your beginning and exordium, I no longer remember it, nor therefore the middle; and as for your conclusion, I will have none of it." That is a fine answer, it seems to me, and a pair of orators thoroughly put out of countenance. And what about this other?[45]

The Athenians had to choose between two architects to direct a great building project. The first, more polished, presented himself with a fine prepared speech on the subject of the work, and was drawing the people's judgment his way. But the other said, in three words: "Lords of Athens, what this man has said, I will do." At the height of Cicero's eloquence, many were struck with admiration, but Cato only laughed at it: "We have," he said, "an amusing consul." Whether it comes be-

43 The quotations are from Horace, Art of Poetry; Seneca the Elder, Controversies; and Cicero, On Ends. The Bergamo dialect was proverbially rustic.
44 The Petit-Pont was a Paris bridge near the fish market. Montaigne means Marcus Aper, a speaker in Tacitus' Dialogue on Orators.
45 Polycrates was tyrant of Samos in the 6th century BC.

FRENCH

ENGLISH

fore or after, a useful maxim or a fine stroke is always in season. If it does not fit well with what goes before or what comes after, it is good in itself.[46]

1.26.42 Ie ne suis pas de ceux qui pensent la bonne rythme faire le bon poëme: laissez luy allonger vne courte syllabe s'il veut, pour cela non force; si les inuentions y rient, si l'esprit et le iugement y ont bien faict leur office: voyla vn bon poëte, diray-ie, mais vn mauuais versificateur, *Emunctæ naris, durus componere versus.* Qu'on face, dit Horace, perdre à son ouurage toutes ses coustures et mesures, *Tempora certa modósque, et quod prius ordine verbum est,*
Posterius facias, præponens vltima primis,
Inuenias etiam disiecti membra poetæ: il ne se dementira point pour cela: les pieces mesmes en seront belles.

I am not one of those who think that good rhyme makes a good poem. Let him lengthen a short syllable if he likes; no matter. If the inventions are delightful, if wit and judgment have done their work well, I will say: there is a good poet but a bad versifier, *A man of keen wit, but harsh in composing verse.* Let someone, says Horace, strip his work of all its seams and measures—*Take away the fixed beats and meters, put the word that comes first in order Last, and set the final words before the first,*
You would still find the limbs of the dismembered poet
—he will not belie himself for all that; even the pieces will be beautiful.[47]

C'est ce que respondit Menander, comme on le tensast, approchant le iour, auquel il auoit promis vne comedie, dequoy il n'y auoit encore mis la main: elle est composée et preste, il ne reste qu'à y adiouster les vers. Ayant les choses et la matiere disposée en l'ame, il mettoit en peu de compte le demeurant. Depuis que Ronsard et du Bellay ont donné credit à nostre poësie Françoise, ie ne vois si petit apprenti, qui n'enfle des mots, qui ne renge les cadences à peu pres, comme eux.

That is what Menander replied when he was scolded because the day was approaching on which he had promised a comedy, and he had not yet set his hand to it: "It is composed and ready; all that remains is to add the verses." Having the substance and the matter arranged in his mind, he made little account of the rest. Since Ronsard and du Bellay have brought our French poetry into credit, I see no apprentice so petty that he does not puff up his words and arrange his cadences more or less as they do.[48]

Plus sonat quàm valet. Pour le vulgaire, il ne fut iamais tant de poëtes: mais comme il leur a esté bien aisé de representer leurs rythmes, ils demeurent bien aussi court à imiter les riches descriptions de l'vn, et les délicates inuentions de l'autre.

More sound than substance. In the common view, there were never so many poets. But just as it has been easy for them to reproduce their rhymes, so they fall well short of imitating the rich descriptions of the one and the delicate inventions of the other.[49]

1.26.43 Voire mais que fera-il, si on le presse de la subtilité sophistique de quelque syllogisme? Le iambon fait boire, le boire desaltere, parquoi le iambon desaltere. Qu'il s'en mocque. Il est plus subtil de s'en mocquer, que d'y respondre. Qu'il emprunte d'Aristippus cette plaisante contrefinesse: Pourquoy le deslieray-ie, puis que tout lié il m'empesche? Quelqu'vn proposoit contre Cleanthes des finesses dialectiques: à qui Chrysippus dit, Iouë toy de ces battelages auec les enfans, et ne destourne à cela les

Yes, but what will he do if someone presses him with the sophistical subtlety of some syllogism? "Ham makes you drink; drinking quenches thirst; therefore ham quenches thirst." Let him laugh at it. It is subtler to laugh at it than to answer it. Let him borrow from Aristippus this amusing counter-trick: "Why should I untie it, since even tied up it gives me trouble?" Someone was propounding dialectical tricks against Cleanthes, and

46 Cato the Younger, mocking Cicero's speech for Murena in 63 BC.
47 Both quotations are from Horace, Satires I.4; the first describes the poet Lucilius.
48 Menander (c. 342–290 BC), Greek comic playwright. Pierre de Ronsard and Joachim du Bellay were the leading poets of the Pléiade.
49 Seneca, Letters to Lucilius 40.

FRENCH

pensées serieuses d'vn homme d'aage. Si ces sottes arguties, *contorta et aculeata sophismata*, luy doiuent persuader vne mensonge, cela est dangereux: mais si elles demeurent sans effect, et ne l'esmeuuent qu'à rire, ie ne voy pas pourquoy il s'en doiue donner garde.

Il en est de si sots, qu'ils se destournent de leur voye vn quart de lieuë, pour courir apres vn beau mot: *aut qui non verba rebus aptant, sed res extrinsecus arcessunt, quibus verba conueniant*. Et l'autre: *Qui alicuius verbi decore placentis vocentur ad id quod non proposuerant scribere*. Ie tors bien plus volontiers vne belle sentence, pour la coudre sur moy, que ie ne destors mon fil, pour l'aller querir. Au rebours, c'est aux paroles à seruir et à suiure, et que le Gascon y arriue, si le François n'y peut aller. Ie veux que les choses surmontent, et qu'elles remplissent de façon l'imagination de celuy qui escoute, qu'il n'aye aucune souuenance des mots.

Le parler que i'ayme, c'est vn parler simple et naif, tel sur le papier qu'à la bouche: vn parler succulent et nerueux, court et serré, non tant delicat et peigné, comme vehement et brusque. *Hæc demum sapiet dictio, quæ feriet.* Plustost difficile qu'ennuieux, esloigné d'affectation: desreglé, descousu, et hardy: chaque loppin y face son corps: non pedantesque, non fratesque, non pleideresque, mais plustost soldatesque, comme Suetone appelle celuy de Iulius Cæsar. Et si ne sens pas bien, pourquoy il l'en appelle.

1.26.44 I'ay volontiers imité cette desbauche qui se voit en nostre ieunesse, au port de leurs vestemens. Vn manteau en escharpe, la cape sur vne espaule, vn bas mal tendu, qui represente vne fierté desdaigneuse de ces paremens estrangers, et nonchallante de l'art: mais ie la trouue encore mieux employée en la forme du parler. Toute affectation, nommément en la gayeté et liberté Françoise, est mesaduenante au courtisan. Et en vne Monarchie, tout Gentil'homme doit estre dressé au port d'vn courtisan. Parquoy nous faisons bien de gauchir vn peu sur le naif et mesprisant. Ie n'ayme point de tissure, où les liaisons et les coustures paroissent: tout ainsi qu'en vn

ENGLISH

Chrysippus said to him: "Play these conjuring games with children, and do not divert the serious thoughts of a grown man to them." If these foolish quibbles, *twisted and prickly sophisms*, are to persuade him of a lie, that is dangerous; but if they remain without effect and move him only to laughter, I do not see why he should be on his guard against them.[50]

There are some so foolish that they go a quarter of a league out of their way to chase after a fine word: *or who do not fit words to things, but fetch from outside things that the words may suit.* And the other: *who, charmed by the beauty of some word, are drawn on to write what they had not meant to.* I am much more willing to twist a fine saying to sew it onto myself than to twist my thread out of line to go and fetch it. On the contrary, it is for words to serve and follow; and let Gascon get there if French cannot. I want the things to prevail, and to fill the imagination of the listener in such a way that he has no memory of the words.[51]

The speech I love is simple and natural, the same on paper as in the mouth: a speech succulent and sinewy, brief and compact, not so much dainty and well-combed as vehement and abrupt. *Only that speech will have savor which strikes home.* Rather difficult than tedious, far from affectation; irregular, disjointed and bold; each piece making a body of its own; not pedantic, not friarly, not lawyerly, but rather soldierly, as Suetonius calls that of Julius Caesar. And yet I do not quite see why he calls it that.[52]

I have gladly imitated that carelessness seen in our young men in the way they wear their clothes: a cloak worn like a sash, the cape over one shoulder, a stocking loosely pulled up, which displays a pride disdainful of these extraneous trappings and careless of art. But I find it even better employed in the manner of speaking. All affectation, especially given French gaiety and freedom, is unbecoming in a courtier. And in a monarchy every gentleman should be trained to the bearing of a courtier. So we do well to lean a little toward the natural and the disdainful. I do not like a fabric in which the joins and seams show; just as in a

50 The Latin is from Cicero, Academics.
51 Quintilian, Institutes of Oratory VIII.3, and Seneca, Letters to Lucilius 59.
52 From an epitaph of the Roman poet Lucan.

FRENCH

beau corps, il ne faut qu'on y puisse compter les os et les veines.

Quæ veritati operam dat oratio, incomposita sit et simplex. Quis accuratè loquitur, nisi qui vult putidè loqui? L'eloquence faict iniure aux choses, qui nous destourne à soy. Comme aux accoustremens, c'est pusillanimité, de se vouloir marquer par quelque façon particuliere et inusitée. De mesme au langage, la recherche des frases nouuelles, et des mots peu cogneuz, vient d'vne ambition scholastique et puerile. Peusse-ie ne me seruir que de ceux qui seruent aux hales à Paris! Aristophanes le Grammairien n'y entendoit rien, de reprendre en Epicurus la simplicité de ses mots: et la fin de son art oratoire, qui estoit, perspicuité de langage seulement. L'imitation du parler, par sa facilité, suit incontinent tout vn peuple. L'imitation du iuger, de l'inuenter, ne va pas si viste.

La plus part des lecteurs, pour auoir trouué vne pareille robbe, pensent tresfaucement tenir vn pareil corps. La force et les nerfs, ne s'empruntent point: les atours et le manteau s'empruntent. La plus part de ceux qui me hantent, parlent de mesmes les Essais: mais ie ne sçay, s'ils pensent de mesmes. Les Atheniens, dit Platon, ont pour leur part, le soing de l'abondance et elegance du parler, les Lacedemoniens de la briefueté, et ceux de Crete, de la fecundité des conceptions, plus que du langage: ceux-cy sont les meilleurs. Zenon disoit qu'il auoit deux sortes de disciples: les vns qu'il nommoit φιλολόγους, curieux d'apprendre les choses, qui estoient ses mignons: les autres λογοφιλους, qui n'auoyent soing que du langage.

Ce n'est pas à dire que ce ne soit vne belle et bonne chose que le bien dire: mais non pas si bonne qu'on la faict, et suis despit dequoy nostre vie s'embesongne toute à cela. Ie voudrois premierement bien sçauoir ma langue, et celle de mes voisins, où i'ay plus ordinaire commerce.

ENGLISH

beautiful body one should not be able to count the bones and veins.

The speech that serves truth should be plain and unadorned. Who speaks with care unless he wants to speak affectedly? Eloquence that draws us to itself does injury to the substance. As in dress it is small-mindedness to want to mark oneself out by some peculiar and unusual fashion, so in language the hunt for new phrases and little-known words comes from a schoolboyish, childish ambition. Would that I could use only the words that are used in the markets of Paris! Aristophanes the grammarian knew nothing about it when he criticized Epicurus for the simplicity of his words, and for the aim of his art of oratory, which was simply clarity of language. The imitation of speech, because it is easy, is promptly taken up by a whole people. The imitation of judgment and invention does not go so fast.[53]

Most readers, because they have found a similar robe, very wrongly think they hold a similar body. Strength and sinews cannot be borrowed; finery and cloak can. Most of those who frequent me talk like the Essays; but I do not know whether they think like them. The Athenians, says Plato, have as their share the care for abundance and elegance of speech, the Spartans for brevity, and the Cretans for fertility of ideas rather than of language: these last are the best. Zeno said he had two kinds of disciples: those he called φιλολόγους, eager to learn things, who were his favorites; and the others, λογοφιλους, who cared only for language.[54]

This is not to say that speaking well is not a fine and good thing; but it is not so good as people make it out, and I am vexed that our whole life is taken up with it. I would want first to know my own language well, and that of my neighbors, with whom I have the most frequent dealings.

MONTAIGNE'S OWN EDUCATION

His father had him taught Latin as a mother tongue, then sent him to the Collège de Guyenne.

FRENCH

1.26.45 C'est vn bel et grand agencement sans doubte, que le Grec et Latin, mais on l'achepte trop cher. Ie diray icy vne

ENGLISH

Greek and Latin are without doubt a fine and great accomplishment, but they are bought too dear. I

53 Seneca, Letters to Lucilius 40 and 75. Aristophanes of Byzantium was a Greek scholar of the 3rd–2nd century BC.
54 Plato, Laws I. The Greek terms mean roughly "lovers of reason" and "lovers of words."

FRENCH

façon d'en auoir meilleur marché que de coustume, qui a esté essayée en moy-mesmes; s'en seruira qui voudra. Feu mon pere, ayant faict toutes les recherches qu'homme peut faire, parmy les gens sçauans et d'entendement, d'vne forme d'institution exquise; fut aduisé de cet inconuenient, qui estoit en vsage: et luy disoit-on que cette longueur que nous mettions à apprendre les langues qui ne leur coustoient rien, est la seule cause, pourquoy nous ne pouuons arriuer à la grandeur d'ame et de cognoissance des anciens Grecs et Romains. Ie ne croy pas que c'en soit la seule cause.

Tant y a que l'expedient que mon pere y trouua, ce fut qu'en nourrice, et auant le premier desnouement de ma langue, il me donna en charge à vn Allemand, qui depuis est mort fameux medecin en France, du tout ignorant de nostre langue, et tresbien versé en la Latine. Cettuy-cy, qu'il auoit fait venir expres, et qui estoit bien cherement gagé, m'auoit continuellement entre les bras. Il en eut aussi auec luy deux autres moindres en sçauoir, pour me suiure, et soulager le premier: ceux-cy ne m'entretenoient d'autre langue que Latine.

Quant au reste de sa maison, c'estoit vne regle inuiolable, que ny luy mesme, ny ma mere, ny valet, ny chambriere, ne parloient en ma compagnie, qu'autant de mots de Latin, que chacun auoit appris pour iargonner auec moy. C'est merueille du fruict que chacun y fit: mon pere et ma mere y apprindrent assez de Latin pour l'entendre, et en acquirent à suffisance, pour s'en seruir à la necessité, comme firent aussi les autres domestiques, qui estoient plus attachez à mon seruice. Somme, nous nous latinizames tant, qu'il en regorgea iusques à nos villages tout autour, où il y a encores, et ont pris pied par l'vsage, plusieurs appellations Latines d'artisans et d'vtils.

Quant à moy, i'auois plus de six ans, auant que i'entendisse non plus de François ou de Perigordin, que d'Arabesque: et sans art, sans liure, sans grammaire ou precepte, sans fouet, et sans larmes, i'auois appris du Latin, tout aussi pur que mon maistre d'escole le sçauoit: car ie ne le pouuois auoir meslé ny alteré. Si par essay on me vouloit donner vn theme, à la mode des colleges; on le donne aux autres en François, mais à moy il me le falloit donner en mauuais Latin, pour le tourner en bon.

ENGLISH

will describe here a way of getting them more cheaply than usual, which was tried out on me myself; anyone who likes may use it. My late father, having made all the inquiries a man can make among learned and intelligent people about an excellent form of education, was made aware of this drawback then in practice. He was told that the long time we spent learning languages that cost the ancients nothing was the sole reason why we cannot attain the greatness of soul and of knowledge of the ancient Greeks and Romans. I do not believe it is the only reason.

Be that as it may, the expedient my father hit upon was this. While I was still at nurse and before my tongue was first loosened, he put me in the charge of a German, who has since died a famous doctor in France, wholly ignorant of our language and very well versed in Latin. This man, whom he had sent for expressly and who was very highly paid, had me constantly in his arms. He also had two others with him, less learned, to attend me and relieve the first; these spoke to me in no language but Latin.

As for the rest of his household, it was an inviolable rule that neither he himself, nor my mother, nor valet, nor chambermaid, spoke in my presence anything but as many words of Latin as each had learned in order to jabber with me. It is wonderful what profit everyone drew from it. My father and mother learned enough Latin to understand it, and acquired enough to use it when necessary, as did the other servants who were most attached to my service. In short, we Latinized ourselves so much that it overflowed into the villages all around, where there still remain, having taken root through use, several Latin names for craftsmen and their tools.

As for me, I was over six years old before I understood any more French or Perigordian than Arabic. And without art, without book, without grammar or precept, without the whip and without tears, I had learned Latin quite as pure as my schoolmaster knew it, for I could not have mixed or corrupted it. If, as a test, they wanted to set me a theme in the school fashion, where others are given it in French, it had to be given to me in bad Latin, for me to turn into good.[55]

55 Perigordian is the Occitan dialect of Montaigne's native Périgord.

FRENCH

Et Nicolas Grouchi, qui a escript *de comitiis Romanorum*, Guillaume Guerente, qui a commenté Aristote, George Bucanan, ce grand poëte Escossois, Marc Antoine Muret, que la France et l'Italie recognoist pour le meilleur orateur du temps, mes precepteurs domestiques, m'ont dit souuent, que i'auois ce langage en mon enfance, si prest et si à main, qu'ils craignoient à m'accoster. Bucanan, que ie vis depuis à la suitte de feu Monsieur le Mareschal de Brissac, me dit, qu'il estoit apres à escrire de l'institution des enfans: et qu'il prenoit l'exemplaire de la mienne: car il auoit lors en charge ce Comte de Brissac, que nous auons veu depuis si valeureux et si braue.

1.26.46 Quant au Grec, duquel ie n'ay quasi du tout point d'intelligence, mon pere desseigna me le faire apprendre par art. Mais d'vne voie nouuelle, par forme d'ébat et d'exercice: nous pelotions nos declinaisons, à la maniere de ceux qui par certains ieux de tablier apprennent l'Arithmetique et la Geometrie. Car entre autres choses, il auoit esté conseillé de me faire gouster la science et le deuoir, par vne volonté non forcée, et de mon propre desir; et d'esleuer mon ame en toute douceur et liberté, sans rigueur et contrainte.

Ie dis iusques à telle superstition, que par ce qu'aucuns tiennent, que cela trouble la ceruelle tendre des enfans, de les esueiller le matin en sursaut, et de les arracher du sommeil (auquel ils sont plongez beaucoup plus que nous ne sommes) tout à coup, et par violence, il me faisoit esueiller par le son de quelque instrument, et ne fus iamais sans homme qui m'en seruist.

1.26.47 Cet exemple suffira pour en iuger le reste, et pour recommander aussi et la prudence et l'affection d'vn si bon pere: auquel il ne se faut prendre, s'il n'a recueilly aucuns fruits respondans à vne si exquise culture. Deux choses en furent cause: en premier, le champ sterile et incommode. Car quoy que i'eusse la santé ferme et entiere, et quant et quant vn naturel doux et traitable, i'estois parmy cela si poisant, mol et endormy, qu'on ne me pouuoit arracher de l'oisiueté, non pas pour me faire iouer. Ce que ie voyois, ie le voyois bien; et souz cette

ENGLISH

And Nicolas Grouchy, who wrote On the Assemblies of the Romans, Guillaume Guérente, who wrote commentaries on Aristotle, George Buchanan, that great Scottish poet, and Marc-Antoine Muret, whom France and Italy recognize as the best orator of the age—my private tutors—have often told me that in my childhood I had that language so ready and so much at hand that they were afraid to accost me. Buchanan, whom I later saw in the retinue of the late Marshal de Brissac, told me he was busy writing on the education of children and was taking mine as his model; for he then had in his charge that Count de Brissac whom we have since seen so valiant and so brave.[56]

As for Greek, of which I have almost no understanding at all, my father planned to have me taught it by art, but in a new way, as a game and exercise: we tossed our declensions back and forth like a ball, in the manner of those who learn arithmetic and geometry through certain board games. For among other things he had been advised to make me relish knowledge and duty through my own unforced will and desire, and to bring up my soul in all gentleness and freedom, without severity or constraint.

I may say he carried this to the point of superstition. Because some hold that it disturbs the tender brains of children to wake them in the morning with a start, and to snatch them suddenly and violently from sleep (in which they are plunged much more deeply than we are), he had me woken by the sound of some instrument, and I was never without a man to do me that service.

This example will suffice to judge the rest, and also to commend both the prudence and the affection of so good a father, who is not to be blamed if he reaped no fruits answering to such exquisite cultivation. Two things were the cause. First, the field was barren and unsuitable. For though I had firm and sound health, and with it a gentle and tractable nature, I was for all that so heavy, soft and drowsy that no one could drag me out of idleness, not even to make me play. What I saw, I saw well; and beneath this sluggish constitution I

56 Humanists who taught at the Collège de Guyenne in Bordeaux. Marshal Charles de Cossé-Brissac's son Timoléon was killed in 1569.

FRENCH

complexion lourde, nourrissois des imaginations hardies, et des opinions au dessus de mon aage.

L'esprit, ie l'auois lent, et qui n'alloit qu'autant qu'on le menoit: l'apprehension tardiue, l'inuention lasche, et apres tout vn incroyable defaut de memoire. De tout cela il n'est pas merueille, s'il ne sceut rien tirer qui vaille.

Secondement, comme ceux que presse vn furieux desir de guerison, se laissent aller à toute sorte de conseil, le bon homme, ayant extreme peur de faillir en chose qu'il auoit tant à cœur, se laissa en fin emporter à l'opinion commune, qui suit tousiours ceux qui vont deuant, comme les gruës; et se rengea à la coustume, n'ayant plus autour de luy ceux qui luy auoient donné ces premieres institutions, qu'il auoit apportées d'Italie: et m'enuoya enuiron mes six ans au college de Guienne, tres-florissant pour lors, et le meilleur de France.

Et là, il n'est possible de rien adiouster au soing qu'il eut, et à me choisir des precepteurs de chambre suffisans, et à toutes les autres circonstances de ma nourriture; en laquelle il reserua plusieurs façons particulieres, contre l'vsage des colleges: mais tant y a que c'estoit tousiours college. Mon Latin s'abastardit incontinent, duquel depuis par desaccoustumance i'ay perdu tout vsage. Et ne me seruit cette mienne inaccoustumée institution, que de me faire eniamber d'arriuée aux premieres classes. Car à treize ans, que ie sortis du college, i'auois acheué mon cours (qu'ils appellent) et à la verité sans aucun fruit, que ie peusse à present mettre en compte.

1.26.48 Le premier goust que i'euz aux liures, il me vint du plaisir des fables de la Metamorphose d'Ouide. Car enuiron l'aage de 7. ou 8. ans, ie me desrobois de tout autre plaisir, pour les lire: d'autant que cette langue estoit la mienne maternelle; et que c'estoit le plus aisé liure, que ie cogneusse, et le plus accommodé à la foiblesse de mon aage, à cause de la matiere. Car des Lancelots du Lac, des Amadis, des Huons de Bordeaux, et tels fatras de liures, à quoy l'enfance s'amuse, ie n'en cognoissois pas seulement le nom, ny ne fais encore le corps: tant exacte estoit ma discipline. Ie m'en rendois plus nonchalant à l'estude de mes autres leçons prescrites.

ENGLISH

nourished bold imaginings and opinions beyond my age.

My mind was slow, and went only as far as it was led; my grasp was tardy, my invention feeble, and on top of all that I had an incredible lack of memory. With all this, it is no wonder he could get nothing worthwhile out of me.

Secondly, just as those driven by a frantic desire to be cured let themselves follow every sort of advice, the good man, being extremely afraid of failing in a thing he had so much at heart, finally let himself be carried away by common opinion, which always follows those who go ahead, like cranes. He fell in with custom, no longer having around him those who had given him those first ideas on education, which he had brought back from Italy; and he sent me, at about six, to the Collège de Guyenne, then very flourishing and the best in France.[57]

And there it is impossible to add anything to the care he took, both in choosing competent private tutors for me and in all the other circumstances of my upbringing, in which he reserved several special practices contrary to the usage of the colleges. But all the same, it was still college. My Latin promptly degenerated, and since then, through disuse, I have lost all use of it. And this unusual education of mine served only to make me skip straight into the top classes on arrival. For at thirteen, when I left the college, I had finished my course (as they call it), and in truth without any fruit that I could now take into account.

My first taste for books came from the pleasure I took in the tales of Ovid's Metamorphoses. For at about the age of seven or eight I would steal away from every other pleasure to read them, since that language was my mother tongue, and it was the easiest book I knew and, because of its subject matter, the best suited to the weakness of my age. For as to the Lancelots of the Lake, the Amadises, the Huons of Bordeaux, and such rubbishy books that amuse childhood, I did not know even their names, nor do I yet know their contents, so strict was my discipline. This made me more careless in studying my other prescribed lessons.[58]

57 The Collège de Guyenne in Bordeaux, founded in 1533.
58 Popular romances of chivalry.

FRENCH

Là il me vint singulierement à propos, d'auoir affaire à vn homme d'entendement de precepteur, qui sceust dextrement conniuer à cette mienne desbauche, et autres pareilles. Car par là, i'enfilay tout d'vn train Vergile en l'Æneide, et puis Terence, et puis Plaute, et des comedies Italiennes, leurré tousiours par la douceur du subiect. S'il eust esté si fol de rompre ce train, i'estime que ie n'eusse rapporté du college que la haine des liures, comme fait quasi toute nostre noblesse. Il s'y gouuerna ingenieusement, faisant semblant de n'en voir rien. Il aiguisoit ma faim, ne me laissant qu'à la desrobée gourmander ces liures, et me tenant doucement en office pour les autres estudes de la regle.

Car les principales parties que mon pere cherchoit à ceux à qui il donnoit charge de moy, c'estoit la debonnaireté et facilité de complexion. Aussi n'auoit la mienne autre vice, que langueur et paresse. Le danger n'estoit pas que ie fisse mal, mais que ie ne fisse rien. Nul ne prognostiquoit que ie deusse deuenir mauuais, mais inutile: on y preuoyoit de la faineantise, non pas de la malice. Ie sens qu'il en est aduenu comme cela. Les plaintes qui me cornent aux oreilles, sont telles: Il est oisif, froid aux offices d'amitié, et de parenté: et aux offices publiques, trop particulier, trop desdaigneux. Les plus iniurieux mesmes ne disent pas, Pourquoy a il prins, pourquoy n'a-il payé? mais, Pourquoy ne quitte-il, pourquoy ne donne-il?

Ie receuroy à faueur, qu'on ne desirast en moy que tels effects de supererogation. Mais ils sont iniustes, d'exiger ce que ie ne doy pas, plus rigoureusement beaucoup, qu'ils n'exigent d'eux ce qu'ils doiuent. En m'y condemnant, ils effacent la gratification de l'action, et la gratitude qui m'en seroit deuë. Là où le bien faire actif, deuroit plus peser de ma main, en consideration de ce que ie n'en ay de passif nul qui soit. Ie puis d'autant plus librement disposer de ma fortune, qu'elle est plus mienne: et de moy, que ie suis plus mien.

Toutesfois si i'estoy grand enlumineur de mes actions, à l'aduenture rembarrerois-ie bien ces reproches; et à quelques-vns apprendrois, qu'ils ne sont pas si offensez que ie ne face pas assez: que dequoy ie puisse faire assez plus que ie ne fay.

1.26.49 Mon ame ne laissoit pourtant en mesme temps d'auoir à part soy des remuements fermes: et des iugements seurs et ouuerts autour des obiects qu'elle cognoissoit: et les

ENGLISH

Here it was singularly fortunate for me to have as tutor an intelligent man, who knew how to wink skillfully at this unruliness of mine and at others like it. For in that way I ran straight through Virgil's Aeneid, and then Terence, and then Plautus, and some Italian comedies, lured always by the pleasure of the subject. If he had been foolish enough to break off this course, I think I would have brought nothing away from school but a hatred of books, as almost all our nobility do. He managed it ingeniously, pretending to see nothing. He sharpened my hunger, letting me gorge on these books only on the sly, and keeping me gently at my duty in the other, regular studies.

For the chief qualities my father looked for in those to whom he gave charge of me were good nature and an easy temperament. And indeed mine had no other vice than languor and laziness. The danger was not that I would do ill, but that I would do nothing. No one predicted that I would become wicked, only useless; they foresaw idleness in me, not malice. I feel that this is how it has turned out. The complaints that ring in my ears are these: "He is idle; cold in the duties of friendship and kinship; and in public duties too aloof, too disdainful." Even the most abusive do not say, "Why has he taken? Why has he not paid?" but "Why does he not forgo? Why does he not give?"

I would take it as a favor if nothing more were wanted of me than such works of supererogation. But they are unjust to exact what I do not owe much more rigorously than they exact of themselves what they do owe. By condemning me to it, they wipe out the graciousness of the act and the gratitude that would be due me for it. Whereas the good I actively do ought to weigh more coming from my hand, considering that I have received none whatever. I can dispose of my fortune the more freely because it is more my own, and of myself because I am more my own.

Still, if I were a great illuminator of my own actions, I might perhaps rebuff these reproaches well enough, and teach some people that they are not so much offended that I do not do enough as that I could do a good deal more than I do.

My soul did not fail, nevertheless, to have at the same time firm stirrings of its own, and sure and open judgments about the things it knew; and it

FRENCH

digeroit seule, sans aucune communication. Et entre autres choses ie croy à la verité qu'elle eust esté du tout incapable de se rendre à la force et violence. Mettray-ie en compte cette faculté de mon enfance, vne asseurance de visage, et soupplesse de voix et de geste, à m'appliquer aux rolles que i'entreprenois? Car auant l'aage, *Alter ab vndecimo tum me vix ceperat annus:* i'ay soustenu les premiers personnages, és tragedies latines de Bucanan, de Guerente, et de Muret, qui se representerent en nostre college de Guienne auec dignité.

En cela, Andreas Goueanus nostre principal, comme en toutes autres parties de sa charge, fut sans comparaison le plus grand principal de France; et m'en tenoit-on maistre ouurier. C'est vn exercice, que ie ne meslouë point aux ieunes enfans de maison; et ay veu nos Princes s'y addonner depuis, en personne, à l'exemple d'aucuns des anciens, honnestement et louablement. Il estoit loisible, mesme d'en faire mestier, aux gents d'honneur et en Grece, *Aristoni tragico actori rem aperit: huic et genus et fortuna honesta erant: nec ars, quia nihil tale apud Græcos pudori est, ea deformabat.*

1.26.50 Car i'ay tousiours accusé d'impertinence, ceux qui condemnent ces esbatemens: et d'iniustice, ceux qui refusent l'entrée de nos bonnes villes aux comediens qui le valent, et enuient au peuple ces plaisirs publiques. Les bonnes polices prennent soing d'assembler les citoyens, et les r'allier, comme aux offices serieux de la deuotion, aussi aux exercices et ieux.

La societé et amitié s'en augmente, et puis on ne leur sçauroit conceder des passetemps plus reglez, que ceux qui se font en presence d'vn chacun, et à la veuë mesme du magistrat: et trouuerois raisonnable que le Prince à ses despens en gratifiast quelquefois la commune, d'vne affection et bonté comme paternelle: et qu'aux villes populeuses il y eust des lieux destinez et disposez pour ces spectacles: quelque diuertissement de pires actions et occultes.

1.26.51 Pour reuenir à mon propos, il n'y a tel, que d'allecher l'appetit et l'affection, autrement on ne fait que des asnes

ENGLISH

digested them alone, without sharing them with anyone. And among other things, I truly believe it would have been wholly incapable of yielding to force and violence. Shall I count this faculty of my childhood: assurance of countenance, and suppleness of voice and gesture in applying myself to the parts I undertook? For before the usual age, *I had barely entered my twelfth year,* I played the leading roles in the Latin tragedies of Buchanan, Guérente and Muret, which were performed with dignity in our Collège de Guyenne.[59]

In this, as in all other aspects of his office, Andreas Goveanus, our principal, was beyond compare the greatest principal in France; and I was considered a master craftsman at it. It is an exercise I do not disapprove of for young children of good family; and I have since seen our princes take it up in person, after the example of some of the ancients, honorably and laudably. In Greece it was even permitted for people of rank to make a profession of it: *He disclosed the matter to Aristo, the tragic actor; he was a man of good birth and fortune, and his art did not disgrace these, since nothing of the kind is shameful among the Greeks.*[60]

For I have always accused of absurdity those who condemn these entertainments, and of injustice those who refuse entry into our good towns to actors who deserve it, and begrudge the people these public pleasures. Good governments take care to assemble the citizens and bring them together for sports and games, as they do for the serious duties of devotion.

Society and friendship are increased by it; and besides, one could not grant them more orderly pastimes than those that take place in everyone's presence and in the very sight of the magistrate. And I would think it reasonable for the prince now and then to treat the common people to them at his own expense, with an affection and kindness almost paternal; and that in populous towns there should be places designed and fitted out for these spectacles—some diversion from worse and hidden doings.

To return to my subject, there is nothing like whetting the appetite and the affection; otherwise all

59 Virgil, Eclogues 8.
60 André de Gouvéa, Portuguese humanist, principal of the Collège de Guyenne. The Latin is from Livy, History of Rome XXIV.

FRENCH	ENGLISH
chargez de liures: on leur donne à coups de foüet en garde leur pochette pleine de science. Laquelle pour bien faire, il ne faut pas seulement loger chez soy, il la faut espouser.	you produce is asses loaded with books. They are flogged into keeping a satchel full of learning, which, to do any good, must not merely be lodged in us; we must marry it.

I.27 It Is Folly to Measure the True and False by Our Own Capacity

C'est folie de rapporter le vray et le faux à nostre suffisance
It is presumptuous to dismiss as impossible whatever seems unlikely to us, since we do not know the limits of nature.

FRENCH

1.27.1 CE n'est pas à l'aduenture sans raison, que nous attribuons à simplesse et ignorance, la facilité de croire et de se laisser persuader. Car il me semble auoir appris autrefois, que la creance estoit comme vne impression, qui se faisoit en nostre ame; et à mesure qu'elle se trouuoit plus molle et de moindre resistance, il estoit plus aysé à y empreindre quelque chose. *Vt necesse est lancem in libra ponderibus impositis deprimi: sic animum perspicuis cedere.* D'autant que l'ame est plus vuide, et sans contrepoids, elle se baisse plus facilement souz la charge de la premiere persuasion. Voylà pourquoy les enfans, le vulgaire, les femmes et les malades sont plus suiets à estre menez par les oreilles.

Mais aussi de l'autre part, c'est vne sotte presomption, d'aller desdeignant et condamnant pour faux, ce qui ne nous semble pas vray-semblable: qui est vn vice ordinaire de ceux qui pensent auoir quelque suffisance, outre la commune. I'en faisoy ainsin autrefois, et si i'oyois parler ou des esprits qui reuiennent, ou du prognostique des choses futures, des enchantemens, des sorcelleries, ou faire quelque autre conte, où ie ne peusse pas mordre, *Somnia, terrores magicos, miracula, sagas, / Nocturnos lemures, portentáque Thessala:* il me venoit compassion du pauure peuple abusé de ces folies.

1.27.2 Et à present ie treuue, que i'estoy pour le moins autant à plaindre moy mesme. Non que l'experience m'aye depuis rien faict voir, au dessus de mes premieres creances; et si n'a pas tenu à ma curiosité: mais la raison m'a instruit, que de condamner ainsi resolument vne chose pour fausse, et impossible, c'est se donner l'aduantage d'auoir dans la teste, les bornes et limites de la volonté de Dieu, et de la puissance de nostre mere nature: et qu'il n'y a point de plus notable folie au monde, que de les ramener à la mesure de nostre capacité et suffisance. Si nous appelons monstres ou miracles, ce où nostre raison ne

ENGLISH

It is perhaps not without reason that we attribute to simplicity and ignorance the readiness to believe and to be persuaded. For I seem to have learned once that belief was like an impression made on our soul, and that the softer and less resistant the soul was, the easier it was to imprint something on it. *As the pan of a scale must sink under the weights placed in it, so the mind must yield to what is evident.* The emptier the soul and the less counterweight it has, the more easily it sinks under the load of the first persuasion. That is why children, the common people, women and the sick are more apt to be led by the ears.[1]

But on the other hand, it is foolish presumption to go about disdaining and condemning as false whatever does not seem likely to us; which is a common vice of those who think they have some ability above the ordinary. I used to do so once. If I heard talk of returning spirits, or of the prediction of future things, of enchantments, of sorceries, or some other tale I could not swallow—*Dreams, magic terrors, marvels, witches, / Ghosts of the night and Thessalian portents*—I felt pity for the poor people deceived by these follies.[2]

And now I find that I was at least as much to be pitied myself. Not that experience has since shown me anything beyond my first beliefs—and that is not for want of curiosity on my part. But reason has taught me that to condemn a thing so decisively as false and impossible is to claim the advantage of having in one's head the bounds and limits of the will of God and of the power of our mother nature; and that there is no more notable folly in the world than to reduce them to the measure of our own capacity and ability. If we call

1 Cicero, Academics II.
2 Horace, Epistles II.2. Thessaly was famed in antiquity for witchcraft.

FRENCH

peut aller, combien s'en presente il continuellement à nostre veuë?

Considerons au trauers de quels nuages, et comment à tastons on nous meine à la cognoissance de la pluspart des choses qui nous sont entre mains: certes nous trouuerons que c'est plustost accoustumance, que science, qui nous en oste l'estrangeté: *Iam nemo fessus saturúsque videndi, / Suspicere in cœli dignatur lucida templa:* et que ces choses là, si elles nous estoyent presentees de nouueau, nous les trouuerions autant ou plus incroyables qu'aucunes autres.

Si nunc primùm morialibus adsint
Ex improuiso, ceu sint obiecta repente,
Nil magis his rebus poterat mirabile dici,
Aut minus antè quod auderent fore credere gentes. Celuy qui n'auoit iamais veu de riuiere, à la premiere qu'il rencontra, il pensa que ce fust l'Ocean: et les choses qui sont à nostre cognoissance les plus grandes, nous les iugeons estre les extremes que nature face en ce genre.
Scilicet et fluuius qui non est maximus, ei est
Qui non antè aliquem maiorem vidit, et ingens
Arbor homòque videtur, et omnia de genere omni
Maxima quæ vidit quisque, hæc ingentia fingit.

Consuetudine oculorum assuescunt animi, neque admirantur, neque requirunt rationes earum rerum, quas semper vident. La nouuelleté des choses nous incite plus que leur grandeur, à en rechercher les causes. Il faut iuger auec plus de reuerence de cette infinie puissance de nature, et plus de recognoissance de nostre ignorance et foiblesse. Combien y a il de choses peu vray-semblables, tesmoignees par gens dignes de foy, desquelles si nous ne pouuons estre persuadez, au moins les faut-il laisser en suspens: car de les condamner impossibles, c'est se faire fort, par vne temeraire presumption, de sçauoir iusques où va la possibilité.

Si lon entendoit bien la difference qu'il y a entre l'impossible et l'inusité; et entre ce qui est contre l'ordre du cours de nature, et contre la commune opinion des hommes, en ne croyant pas temerairement, ny aussi ne

ENGLISH

monsters or miracles whatever our reason cannot reach, how many of them continually present themselves to our sight?

Let us consider through what clouds, and how gropingly, we are led to the knowledge of most of the things we have in hand. We shall surely find that it is familiarity rather than knowledge that takes away their strangeness—*Now no one, weary and sated with seeing, / Deigns to look up at the shining temples of the sky*—and that if these things were presented to us anew, we would find them as unbelievable as any others, or more so.[3]

If now for the first time they appeared to mortals
Without warning, as if suddenly set before their eyes,
Nothing could be called more marvelous than these things,
Nor anything the nations would less have dared believe beforehand. The man who had never seen a river thought the first one he came upon was the Ocean; and the things that are greatest within our knowledge we judge to be the utmost that nature makes in that kind. Indeed, a river that is not the largest seems so to one
Who has never seen a larger; and a tree, and a man,
Seem huge; and in every kind of thing,
Whatever is greatest that each has seen, he imagines to be huge.

Minds grow accustomed through the habit of the eyes, and neither marvel at nor inquire into the causes of the things they always see. The novelty of things incites us more than their greatness to seek their causes. We must judge this infinite power of nature with more reverence, and with more acknowledgment of our own ignorance and weakness. How many unlikely things there are, attested by people worthy of belief, which, if we cannot be persuaded of them, we must at least leave in suspense! For to condemn them as impossible is to claim, with rash presumption, to know how far possibility extends.[4]

If we properly understood the difference between the impossible and the unusual, and between what is contrary to the order of nature's course and what is contrary to the common opinion of men—neither believing rashly nor disbelieving

3 Lucretius, On the Nature of Things II.
4 Cicero, On the Nature of the Gods II.

FRENCH

descroyant pas facilement: on obserueroit la regle de Rien trop, commandee par Chilon.

1.27.3 Quand on trouue dans Froissard, que le Conte de Foix sçeut en Bearn la defaicte du Roy Iean de Castille à Iuberoth, le lendemain qu'elle fut aduenue, et les moyens qu'il en allegue, on s'en peut moquer: et de ce mesme que nos Annales disent, que le Pape Honorius le propre iour que le Roy Philippe Auguste mourut à Mante, fit faire ses funerailles publiques, et les manda faire par toute l'Italie. Car l'authorité de ces tesmoings n'a pas à l'aduenture assez de rang pour nous tenir en bride. Mais quoy?

si Plutarque outre plusieurs exemples, qu'il allegue de l'antiquité, dit sçauoir de certaine science, que du temps de Domitian, la nouuelle de la bataille perdue par Antonius en Allemaigne à plusieurs iournees de là, fut publiee à Rome, et semee par tout le monde le mesme iour qu'elle auoit esté perduë: et si Cæsar tient, qu'il est souuent aduenu que la renommee a deuancé l'accident: dirons-nous pas que ces simples gens là, se sont laissez piper apres le vulgaire, pour n'estre pas clair-voyans comme nous? Est-il rien plus delicat, plus net, et plus vif, que le iugement de Pline, quand il luy plaist de le mettre en ieu? rien plus esloigné de vanité?

ie laisse à part l'excellence de son sçauoir, quand ie fay moins de conte: en quelle partie de ces deux là le surpassons nous? toutesfois il n'est si petit escolier, qui ne le conuainque de mensonge, et qui ne luy vueille faire leçon sur le progrez des ouurages de nature.

1.27.4 Quand nous lisons dans Bouchet les miracles des reliques de Sainct Hilaire: passe: son credit n'est pas assez grand pour nous oster la licence d'y contredire: mais de condamner d'vn train toutes pareilles histoires, me semble singuliere impudence.

Ce grand Sainct Augustin tesmoigne auoir veu sur les reliques Sainct Geruais et Protaise à Milan, vn enfant aueugle recouurer la veuë: vne femme à Carthage estre guerie d'vn cancer par le signe de la croix, qu'vne femme nouuellement baptisee luy fit: Hesperius, vn sien familier auoir chassé les esprits qui infestoient sa maison, auec vn peu de terre du Sepulchre de nostre Seigneur: et cette

ENGLISH

easily—we would observe the rule of "Nothing too much," prescribed by Chilon.[5]

When we find in Froissart that the Count of Foix, in Béarn, learned of the defeat of King John of Castile at Aljubarrota the day after it happened, and read the means he alleges for it, we may laugh at it; and likewise at what our annals say, that Pope Honorius, on the very day King Philip Augustus died at Mantes, had his public funeral held and ordered it held throughout Italy. For the authority of these witnesses perhaps does not rank high enough to keep us in check. But what then?[6]

Suppose Plutarch, besides several examples he cites from antiquity, says he knows for certain that in Domitian's time the news of the battle lost by Antonius in Germany, many days' journey away, was published in Rome and spread through the whole world on the very day it was lost; and suppose Caesar holds that it has often happened that rumor has outrun the event: shall we say that these simple people let themselves be fooled along with the common people, for not being as clear-sighted as we are? Is there anything more delicate, more clear and more lively than Pliny's judgment, when he cares to bring it into play? Anything further from vanity?[7]

I leave aside the excellence of his learning, which I count for less: in which of these two qualities do we surpass him? And yet there is no schoolboy so petty that he does not convict him of lying and want to lecture him on the workings of nature.

When we read in Bouchet of the miracles worked by the relics of Saint Hilary, let it pass: his credit is not great enough to deprive us of the license to contradict him. But to condemn all such stories wholesale seems to me a singular impudence.[8]

That great Saint Augustine testifies that he saw a blind child recover his sight at the relics of Saint Gervase and Saint Protasius in Milan; a woman in Carthage cured of a cancer by the sign of the cross that a newly baptized woman made over her; Hesperius, a friend of his, drive out the spirits that infested his house with a little earth from the Sep-

5 Chilon of Sparta, one of the Seven Sages of Greece.
6 Froissart's Chronicles say a familiar spirit brought the count news of the battle of 1385. Philip Augustus died in 1223.
7 Lucius Antonius Saturninus, whose revolt against Domitian was crushed in AD 89.
8 Jean Bouchet, author of the Annals of Aquitaine (1524). Saint Hilary was a 4th-century bishop of Poitiers.

FRENCH

terre depuis transportee à l'Eglise, vn paralytique en auoir esté soudain guery: vne femme en vne procession ayant touché à la chasse S. Estienne, d'vn bouquet, et de ce bouquet s'estant frottée les yeux, auoir recouuré la veuë pieça perduë: et plusieurs autres miracles, où il dit luy mesmes auoir assisté. Dequoy accuserons nous et luy et deux S.

Euesques Aurelius et Maximinus, qu'il appelle pour ses recors? sera-ce d'ignorance, simplesse, facilité, ou de malice et imposture? Est-il homme en nostre siecle si impudent, qui pense leur estre comparable, suit en vertu et piété, soit en sçauoir, iugement et suffisance? *Qui vt rationem nullam afferrent, ipsa autoritate me frangerent.* C'est vne hardiesse dangereuse et de consequence, outre l'absurde temerité qu'elle traine quant et soy, de mespriser ce que nous ne conceuons pas. Car apres que selon vostre bel entendement, vous auez estably les limites de la verité et de la mensonge, et qu'il se treuue que vous auez necessairement à croire des choses où il y a encores plus d'estrangeté qu'en ce que vous niez, vous vous estes des-ia obligé de les abandonner.

1.27.5 Or ce qui me semble apporter autant de desordre en nos consciences en ces troubles où nous sommes, de la Religion, c'est cette dispensation que les Catholiques font de leur creance. Il leur semble faire bien les moderez et les entenduz, quand ils quittent aux aduersaires aucuns articles de ceux qui sont en debat. Mais outre ce, qu'ils ne voyent pas quel aduantage c'est à celuy qui vous charge, de commancer à luy ceder, et vous tirer arriere, et combien cela l'anime à poursuiure sa pointe: ces articles là qu'ils choisissent pour les plus legers, sont aucunefois tres-importans. Ou il faut se submettre du tout à l'authorité de nostre police ecclesiastique, ou du tout s'en dispenser.

Ce n'est pas à nous à establir la part que nous luy deuons d'obeissance. Et d'auantage, ie le puis dire pour l'auoir essayé, ayant autrefois vsé de cette liberté de mon chois et triage particulier, mettant à nonchaloir certains points de l'obseruance de nostre Eglise, qui semblent auoir vn visage ou plus vain, ou plus estrange, venant à en communiquer aux hommes sçauans, i'ay trouué que ces

ENGLISH

ulcher of our Lord, and, when that earth was later carried to the church, a paralytic suddenly cured by it; a woman in a procession who touched Saint Stephen's reliquary with a bouquet, rubbed her eyes with that bouquet, and recovered her sight, long since lost; and several other miracles at which he says he himself was present. Of what shall we accuse him, and the two holy[9]

bishops Aurelius and Maximinus whom he calls as his witnesses? Shall it be of ignorance, simplicity, credulity, or of malice and imposture? Is there any man in our century so impudent as to think himself comparable to them, whether in virtue and piety or in learning, judgment and ability? *Though they gave no reason, they would overwhelm me by their authority alone.* It is a dangerous and weighty boldness, besides the absurd rashness it drags along with it, to despise what we do not understand. For after you have established, by your fine understanding, the limits of truth and falsehood, and it turns out that you must necessarily believe things even stranger than what you deny, you have already obliged yourself to abandon those limits.[10]

Now what seems to me to bring just as much disorder into our consciences, in these religious troubles we are in, is the way Catholics pick and choose within their belief. They think they are being very moderate and enlightened when they concede to their adversaries some of the articles in dispute. But besides not seeing what an advantage it is to the man who attacks you when you begin to yield to him and draw back, and how much it encourages him to press his point, they fail to see that the articles they choose as the least weighty are sometimes very important. Either we must submit entirely to the authority of our ecclesiastical government, or release ourselves from it entirely.

It is not for us to determine what share of obedience we owe it. Moreover, I can say this from having tried it. I once made use of this freedom of personal choice and selection, disregarding certain points in the observance of our Church that seemed to have a more empty or a stranger look; then, coming to discuss them with learned men, I

9 Augustine, City of God XXII.8.
10 Cicero, Tusculan Disputations I.

FRENCH	ENGLISH
choses là ont vn fondement massif et tressolide: et que ce n'est que bestise et ignorance, qui nous fait les receuoir auec moindre reuerence que le reste. Que ne nous souuient il combien nous sentons de contradiction en nostre iugement mesmes? combien de choses nous seruoyent hyer d'articles de foy, qui nous sont fables auiourd'huy?	found that these things have a massive and very solid foundation, and that it is only stupidity and ignorance that make us receive them with less reverence than the rest. Why do we not remember how much contradiction we feel even within our own judgment? How many things served us yesterday as articles of faith that are fables to us today?
La gloire et la curiosité, sont les fleaux de nostre ame. Cette cy nous conduit à mettre le nez par tout, et celle là nous defend de rien laisser irresolu et indecis.	Glory and curiosity are the two scourges of our soul. The latter leads us to poke our nose into everything; the former forbids us to leave anything unresolved and undecided.

I.28 Of Friendship

De l'Amitié

Montaigne describes his perfect friendship with Étienne de La Boétie, a union of souls unlike any ordinary bond.

FRENCH

ENGLISH

1.28.1 CONSIDERANT la conduite de la besongne d'vn peintre que i'ay, il m'a pris enuie de l'ensuiure. Il choisit le plus bel endroit et milieu de chaque paroy, pour y loger vn tableau élabouré de toute sa suffisance; et le vuide tout au tour, il le remplit de crotesques: qui sont peintures fantasques, n'ayans grace qu'en la varieté et estrangeté. Que sont-ce icy aussi à la verité que crotesques et corps monstrueux, rappiecez de diuers membres, sans certaine figure, n'ayants ordre, suite, ny proportion que fortuite?

As I was considering the way a painter I employ goes about his work, I had a mind to follow his example. He chooses the finest spot, in the middle of each wall, to put a picture worked with all his skill; and the empty space all around it he fills with grotesques, which are fantastic paintings whose only charm lies in their variety and strangeness. And what are these here, in truth, but grotesques and monstrous bodies, patched together from various limbs, with no definite shape, having no order, sequence or proportion other than by chance?

Desinit in piscem mulier formosa supernè. Ie vay bien iusques à ce second point, auec mon peintre: mais ie demeure court en l'autre, et meilleure partie: car ma suffisance ne va pas si auant, que d'oser entreprendre vn tableau riche, poly et formé selon l'art. Ie me suis aduisé d'en emprunter vn d'Estienne de la Boitie, qui honorera tout le reste de cette besongne. C'est vn discours auquel il donna nom: *La Seruitude volontaire*: mais ceux qui l'ont ignoré, l'ont bien proprement depuis rebatisé, le Contre-vn. Il l'escriuit par maniere d'essay, en sa premiere ieunesse, à l'honneur de la liberté contre les tyrans.

A lovely woman above, ending in a fish below. I go along with my painter as far as this second point, but I fall short in the other and better part; for my skill does not go so far that I would dare undertake a rich, polished picture, formed according to art. It occurred to me to borrow one from Étienne de La Boétie, which will honor all the rest of this work. It is a discourse to which he gave the name Voluntary Servitude; but those who did not know this have since very aptly rebaptized it Against One. He wrote it by way of an essay in his early youth, in honor of liberty against tyrants.[1]

Il court pieça és mains des gens d'entendement, non sans bien grande et meritee recommandation: car il est gentil, et plein ce qu'il est possible. Si y a il bien à dire, que ce ne soit le mieux qu'il peust faire: et si en l'aage que ie l'ay cogneu plus auancé, il eust pris vn tel desseing que le mien, de mettre par escrit ses fantasies, nous verrions plusieurs choses rares, et qui nous approcheroient bien pres de l'honneur de l'antiquité: car notamment en cette partie des dons de nature, ie n'en cognois point qui luy soit comparable.

It has long been passing through the hands of people of understanding, not without very great and well-deserved praise; for it is fine, and as full as can be. Yet it is far from being the best he could do. If, at the more mature age when I knew him, he had taken up a plan like mine of putting his notions in writing, we would see many rare things that would bring us very close to the glory of antiquity; for especially in this matter of natural gifts, I know no one comparable to him.

Mais il n'est demeuré de luy que ce discours, encore par rencontre, et croy qu'il ne le veit oncques depuis qu'il luy

But nothing of his has remained except this discourse—and that by chance, and I believe he never

1 Horace, Art of Poetry.

FRENCH	ENGLISH
eschappa: et quelques memoires sur cet edict de Ianuier fameux par nos guerres ciuiles, qui trouueront encores ailleurs peut estre leur place. C'est tout ce que i'ay peu recouurer de ses reliques (moy qu'il laissa d'vne si amoureuse recommandation, la mort entre les dents, par son testament, heritier de sa bibliotheque et de ses papiers) outre le liuret de ses œuures que i'ay faict mettre en lumiere. Et si suis obligé particulierement à cette piece, d'autant qu'elle a seruy de moyen à nostre premiere accointance.	saw it again after it left his hands—and some memoranda on that edict of January made famous by our civil wars, which may yet find their place elsewhere. That is all I have been able to recover of his remains (I, whom he left, on his deathbed, with so loving a recommendation, by his will, heir to his library and his papers), apart from the little book of his works that I have had published. And I am particularly indebted to this piece, inasmuch as it served as the means of our first acquaintance.[2]
Car elle me fut montree longue espace auant que ie l'eusse veu; et me donna la premiere cognoissance de son nom, acheminant ainsi cette amitié, que nous auons nourrie, tant que Dieu a voulu, entre nous, si entiere et si parfaicte, que certainement il ne s'en lit guere de pareilles: et entre nos hommes il ne s'en voit aucune trace en vsage. Il faut tant de rencontre à la bastir, que c'est beaucoup si la fortune y arriue vne fois en trois siecles.	For it was shown to me long before I had seen him, and gave me my first knowledge of his name, thus starting on its way this friendship which we fostered between us, as long as God willed, so entire and so perfect that you will certainly read of few like it, and among men of our time no trace of it is to be seen in practice. So many chances must meet to build it that it is a great deal if Fortune brings it about once in three centuries.

KINDS OF FRIENDSHIP

Ties of family, love and marriage fall short of the perfect friendship he describes.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
1.28.2	Il n'est rien à quoy il semble que nature nous aye plus acheminés qu'à la societé. Et dit Aristote, que les bons legislateurs ont eu plus de soing de l'amitié, que de la iustice. Or le dernier point de sa perfection est cetuy-cy. Car en general toutes celles que la volupté, ou le profit, le besoin publique ou priué, forge et nourrit, en sont d'autant moins belles et genereuses, et d'autant moins amitiez, qu'elles meslent autre cause et but et fruit en l'amitié qu'elle mesme. Ny ces quatre especes anciennes, naturelle, sociale, hospitaliere, venerienne, particulierement n'y conuiennent, ny coniointement.	There is nothing to which nature seems to have led us more than to society. And Aristotle says that good lawgivers have taken more care for friendship than for justice. Now the ultimate point of its perfection is this one. For in general, all the friendships that pleasure or profit, public or private need, forge and nourish are so much the less beautiful and generous, and so much the less friendships, as they mix into friendship some cause, aim and fruit other than friendship itself. Nor do the four ancient kinds—natural, social, hospitable, erotic—come up to it, either separately or together.[3]
1.28.3	Des enfans aux peres, c'est plustost respect. L'amitié se nourrit de communication, qui ne peut se trouuer entre eux, pour la trop grande disparité, et offenceroit à l'aduenture les deuoirs de nature: car ny toutes les secrettes pensees des peres ne se peuuent communiquer aux enfans, pour n'y engendrer vne messeante priuauté: ny les aduertissemens et corrections, qui est vn des premiers offices d'amitié, ne se pourroient exercer des	From children to fathers, it is rather respect. Friendship is nourished by communication, which cannot exist between them because of their too great disparity, and would perhaps offend against the duties of nature. For neither can all the secret thoughts of fathers be communicated to their children, lest it beget an unbecoming famili-

2 The Edict of January 1562 granted limited toleration to Protestants. Montaigne published La Boétie's works in 1571.
3 Aristotle, Nicomachean Ethics VIII.

FRENCH

enfans aux peres. Il s'est trouué des nations, où par vsage les enfans tuoyent leurs peres: et d'autres, où les peres tuoyent leurs enfans, pour euiter l'empeschement qu'ils se peuuent quelquesfois entreporter: et naturellement l'vn depend de la ruine de l'autre.

Il s'est trouué des philosophes desdaignans cette couſture naturelle, tesmoing Aristippus qui quand on le preſſoit de l'affection qu'il deuoit à ſes enfans pour eſtre ſortis de luy, il ſe mit à cracher, diſant, que cela en eſtoit auſſi bien ſorty: que nous engendrions bien des pouz et des vers. Et cet autre que Plutarque vouloit induire à s'accorder auec ſon frere: Ie n'en fais pas, dit-il, plus grand eſtat, pour eſtre ſorty de meſme trou.

C'eſt à la verité vn beau nom, et plein de dilection que le nom de frere, et à cette cauſe en fiſmes nous luy et moy noſtre alliance: mais ce meſlange de biens, ces partages, et que la richeſſe de l'vn ſoit la pauureté de l'autre, cela detrampe merueilleuſement et relaſche cette ſoudure fraternelle. Les freres ayants à conduire le progrez de leur auancement, en meſme ſentier et meſme train, il eſt force qu'ils ſe heurtent et choquent ſouuent. D'auantage, la correſpondance et relation qui engendre ces vrayes et parfaictes amitiez, pourquoy ſe trouuera elle en ceux cy? Le pere et le fils peuuent eſtre de complexion entierement eſlongnee, et les freres auſſi.

C'eſt mon fils, c'eſt mon parent: mais c'eſt vn homme farouche, vn meſchant, ou vn ſot. Et puis, à meſure que ce ſont amitiez que la loy et l'obligation naturelle nous commande, il y a d'autant moins de notre choix et liberté volontaire: et noſtre liberté volontaire n'a point de production qui ſoit plus proprement ſienne, que celle de l'affection et amitié.

Ce n'eſt pas que ie n'aye eſſayé de ce coſté là, tout ce qui en peut eſtre, ayant eu le meilleur pere qui fut onques, et le plus indulgent, iuſques à ſon extreme vieilleſſe: et eſtant d'vne famille fameuſe de pere en fils, et exemplaire en cette partie de la concorde fraternelle: *et ipſe*
Notus in fratres animi paterni. D'y comparer l'affection enuers les femmes, quoy qu'elle naiſſe de noſtre choix, on ne peut: ny la loger en ce rolle. Son feu, ie le confeſſe, *neque enim eſt dea neſcia noſtri*

ENGLISH

arity; nor could admonitions and corrections, which are one of the first offices of friendship, be exercised by children toward their fathers. There have been nations where by custom children killed their fathers, and others where fathers killed their children, to avoid the hindrance they can sometimes be to each other; and by nature the one depends on the ruin of the other.

There have been philosophers who disdained this natural bond. Witness Aristippus: when he was pressed about the affection he owed his children for having come out of him, he began to spit, saying that this too had come out of him, and that we also breed lice and worms. And that other man, whom Plutarch was trying to bring to make peace with his brother: "I do not think any more of him," he said, "for having come out of the same hole."

It is truly a beautiful name, and full of affection, the name of brother; and for that reason he and I made it the name of our alliance. But this mingling of property, these divisions of inheritance, and the fact that the wealth of one is the poverty of the other, wonderfully dilute and loosen this brotherly solder. Brothers, having to pursue their advancement along the same path and at the same pace, must inevitably jostle and collide with each other often. Moreover, why should the harmony and affinity that beget these true and perfect friendships be found in them? Father and son may be of entirely different temperaments, and so may brothers.

"He is my son, he is my kinsman—but he is a surly man, a wicked one, or a fool." And then, insofar as these are friendships that law and natural obligation command of us, there is so much the less of our own choice and free will in them; and our free will has no product more properly its own than affection and friendship.

Not that I have not experienced all that can be found on that side, having had the best father that ever was, and the most indulgent, even into his extreme old age, and coming from a family famous from father to son, and exemplary in this matter of brotherly concord: *and himself*
Known for his fatherly love toward his brothers. As for affection for women, though it is born of our choice, it cannot be compared with friendship, nor put in this category. Its fire, I confess—*for I am not unknown to the goddess*

FRENCH

Quæ dulcem curis miscet amaritiem, est plus actif, plus cuisant, et plus aspre.

Mais c'est vn feu temeraire et volage, ondoyant et diuers, feu de fiebure, subiect à accez et remises, et qui ne nous tient qu'à vn coing. En l'amitié, c'est vne chaleur generale et vniuerselle, temperee au demeurant et égale, vne chaleur constante et rassize, toute douceur et pollissure, qui n'a rien d'aspre et de poignant.

Qui plus est en l'amour ce n'est qu'vn desir forcené apres ce qui nous fuit, *Come segue la lepre il cacciatore*
Al freddo, al caldo, alla montagna, al lito,
Ne piu l'estima poi, che presa vede,
E sol dietro à chi fugge affreta il piede. Aussi tost qu'il entre aux termes de l'amitié, c'est à dire en la conuenance des volontez, il s'esuanouist et s'alanguist: la iouïssance le perd, comme ayant la fin corporelle et suiette à sacieté. L'amitié au rebours, est iouye à mesure qu'elle est desiree, ne s'esleue, se nourrit, ny ne prend accroissance qu'en la iouyssance, comme estant spirituelle, et l'ame s'affinant par l'vsage.

Sous cette parfaicte amitié, ces affections volages ont autresfois trouué place chez moy, affin que ie ne parle de luy, qui n'en confesse que trop par ses vers. Ainsi ces deux passions sont entrees chez moy en cognoissance l'vne de l'autre, mais en comparaison iamais: la premiere maintenant sa route d'vn vol hautain et superbe, et regardant desdaigneusement cette cy passer ses pointes bien loing au dessoubs d'elle.

1.28.4 Quant au mariage, outre ce que c'est vn marché qui n'a que l'entree libre, sa duree estant contrainte et forcee, dependant d'ailleurs que de nostre vouloir: et marché, qui ordinairement se fait à autres fins: il y suruient mille fusees estrangeres à desmeler parmy, suffisantes à rompre le fil et troubler le cours d'vne viue affection: là où en l'amitié, il n'y a affaire ny commerce que d'elle mesme. Ioint qu'à dire vray, la suffisance ordinaire des femmes, n'est pas pour respondre à cette conference et communication, nourrisse de cette saincte cousture: ny leur ame ne semble assez ferme pour soustenir l'estreinte d'vn neud si pressé, et si durable.

Et certes sans cela, s'il se pouuoit dresser vne telle accointance libre et volontaire, où non seulement les

ENGLISH

Who mingles a sweet bitterness with the cares of love—is more active, more burning and fiercer.[4]

But it is a rash and fickle fire, wavering and changeable, a fever's fire, subject to fits and remissions, that holds us only by one corner. In friendship there is a general and universal warmth, temperate besides and even, a constant and settled warmth, all gentleness and smoothness, with nothing sharp or stinging about it.

What is more, in love there is nothing but a frantic desire for what flees us: *As the hunter pursues the hare*
In cold and heat, on mountain and on shore,
And cares no more for it once he sees it caught,
And only hastens after what flees. As soon as love enters the bounds of friendship, that is to say, the harmony of wills, it fades and languishes. Enjoyment destroys it, since its end is bodily and subject to satiety. Friendship, on the contrary, is enjoyed in proportion as it is desired; it rises, feeds and grows only in enjoyment, since it is spiritual, and the soul is refined by use.[5]

Beneath this perfect friendship, those fickle affections once found a place in me—not to speak of him, who confesses only too much of them in his verses. Thus these two passions came to know each other in me, but never to be compared: the first holding its course in a lofty and proud flight, and disdainfully watching the other make its swoops far beneath it.

As for marriage, it is a bargain in which only the entry is free, since its duration is constrained and forced and depends on something other than our will; and it is a bargain ordinarily made for other ends. Besides that, a thousand foreign tangles come into it that have to be unraveled, enough to break the thread and disturb the course of a lively affection. In friendship, by contrast, there is no business or dealing except with friendship itself. Moreover, to tell the truth, the ordinary ability of women is not up to the conversation and communication that nourish this sacred bond. Nor does their soul seem firm enough to bear the strain of a knot so tight and so lasting.

And certainly, but for that, if it were possible to form such a free and voluntary relationship—one

4 Horace, Odes II.2, and Catullus 68; the goddess is Venus.

FRENCH

ENGLISH

ames eussent cette entiere iouyssance, mais encores où les corps eussent part à l'alliance, où l'homme fust engagé tout entier: il est certain que l'amitié en seroit plus pleine et plus comble: mais ce sexe par nul exemple n'y est encore peu arriuer, et par les escholes anciennes en est reietté.

in which not only the souls had this complete enjoyment, but the bodies also had a share in the union, so that the whole man was engaged—it is certain that the friendship would be fuller and more complete. But this sex has never yet, by any example, been able to attain it, and the ancient schools exclude it.

1.28.5 Et cette autre licence Grecque est iustement abhorree par nos mœurs. Laquelle pourtant, pour auoir selon leur vsage, vne si necessaire disparité d'aages, et difference d'offices entre les amants, ne respondoit non plus assez à la parfaicte vnion et conuenance qu'icy nous demandons. Quis est enim iste amor amicitiæ?

And that other, Greek license is rightly abhorred by our morals. Yet it too, because by their custom it required so great a disparity of age and difference of roles between the lovers, did not sufficiently match the perfect union and harmony that we are asking for here either. For what is this love of friendship?[6]

cur neque deformem adolescentem quisquam amat, neque formosum senem? Car la peinture mesme qu'en faict l'Academie ne me desaduoüera pas, comme ie pense, de dire ainsi de sa part: Que cette premiere fureur, inspiree par le fils de Venus au cœur de l'amant, sur l'obiect de la fleur d'vne tendre ieunesse, à laquelle ils permettent tous les insolents et passionnez efforts, que peut produire vne ardeur immoderee, estoit simplement fondee en vne beauté externe: fauce image de la generation corporelle. Car en l'esprit elle ne pouuoit, duquel la montre estoit encore cachee: qui n'estoit qu'en sa naissance, et auant l'aage de germer.

Why does no one love an ugly youth, or a handsome old man? For I think even the picture the Academy paints of it will not disown me if I say this on its behalf. That first frenzy, inspired by the son of Venus in the lover's heart for the flower of tender youth, was simply founded on outward beauty, a false image of bodily generation; and to it they permit all the insolent and passionate efforts that an immoderate ardor can produce. It could not be founded on the mind, whose qualities were still hidden from view, for the mind was only just being born and was not yet old enough to sprout.[7]

Que si cette fureur saisissoit vn bas courage, les moyens de sa poursuitte c'estoient richesses, presents, faueur à l'auancement des dignitez: et telle autre basse marchandise, qu'ils reprouuent. Si elle tomboit en vn courage plus genereux, les entremises estoient genereuses de mesmes: Instructions philosophiques, enseignements à reuerer la religion, obeïr aux loix, mourir pour le bien de son païs: exemples de vaillance, prudence, iustice. S'estudiant l'amant de se rendre acceptable par la bonne grace et beauté de son ame, celle de son corps estant pieça fanée: et esperant par cette societé mentale, establir vn marché plus ferme et durable.

If this frenzy seized a base heart, the means of its pursuit were riches, presents, favor in advancement to high office, and other such base merchandise, which they condemn. If it fell upon a nobler heart, the means employed were noble too: philosophical instruction, teachings to revere religion, obey the laws and die for the good of one's country, examples of valor, prudence and justice. The lover strove to make himself acceptable by the grace and beauty of his soul, the beauty of his body having long since faded, and hoped by this fellowship of minds to establish a firmer and more lasting bargain.

Quand cette poursuitte arriuoit à l'effect, en sa saison (car ce qu'ils ne requierent point en l'amant, qu'il apportast loysir et discretion en son entreprise; ils le requierent exactement en l'aimé: d'autant qu'il luy falloit

When this pursuit achieved its effect in due season —for what they do not require of the lover, that he should bring leisure and discretion to his enterprise, they strictly require of the beloved, since he

5 Ariosto, Orlando Furioso X.
6 Cicero, Tusculan Disputations.
7 The Academy is Plato's school; Montaigne summarizes the account of love in Plato's Symposium and Phaedrus. The son of Venus is Cupid.

FRENCH

iuger d'vne beauté interne, de difficile cognoissance, et abstruse descouuerte) lors naissoit en l'aymé le desir d'vne conception spirituelle, par l'entremise d'vne spirituelle beauté. Cette cy estoit icy principale: la corporelle, accidentale et seconde: tout le rebours de l'amant. A cette cause preferent ils l'aymé: et verifient, que les Dieux aussi le preferent: et tansent grandement le poëte Aischylus, d'auoir en l'amour d'Achilles et de Patroclus, donné la part de l'amant à Achilles, qui estoit en la premiere et imberbe verdeur de son adolescence, et le plus beau des Grecs.

Apres cette communauté generale, la maistresse et plus digne partie d'icelle, exerçant ses offices, et predominant: ils disent, qu'il en prouenoit des fruicts tres-vtiles au priué et au public. Que c'estoit la force des païs, qui en receuoient l'vsage: et la principale defense de l'equité et de la liberté. Tesmoin les salutaires amours de Hermodius et d'Aristogiton. Pourtant la nomment ils sacree et diuine, et n'est à leur compte, que la violence des tyrans, et lascheté des peuples, qui luy soit aduersaire: en fin, tout ce qu'on peut donner à la faueur de l'Academie, c'est dire, que c'estoit vn amour se terminant en amitié: chose qui ne se rapporte pas mal à la definition Stoique de l'amour: *Amorem conatum esse amicitiæ faciendæ ex pulchritudinis specie*.

1.28.6 Ie reuien à ma description, de façon plus equitable et plus equable. *Omnino amicitiæ, corroboratis iam confirmatisque et ingeniis, et ætatibus, iudicandæ sunt.* Au demeurant, ce que nous appellons ordinairement amis et amitiez, ce ne sont qu'accoinctances et familiaritez nouees par quelque occasion ou commodité, par le moyen de laquelle nos ames s'entretiennent. En l'amitié dequoy ie parle, elles se meslent et confondent l'vne en l'autre, d'vn meslange si vniuersel, qu'elles effacent, et ne retrouuent plus la cousture qui les a ioinctes. Si on me presse de dire pourquoy ie l'aymoys, ie sens que cela ne se peut exprimer, qu'en respondant: Par ce que c'estoit luy, par ce que c'estoit moy.

Il y a au delà de tout mon discours, et de ce que i'en puis dire particulierement, ie ne sçay quelle force inexplicable

ENGLISH

had to judge an inner beauty, hard to know and hidden from discovery—then there was born in the beloved the desire for a spiritual conception, by means of a spiritual beauty. On his side this was the main thing, and bodily beauty was accidental and secondary: the very reverse of the lover. For this reason they prefer the beloved, and prove that the gods prefer him too. And they sharply rebuke the poet Aeschylus for having given, in the love of Achilles and Patroclus, the lover's part to Achilles, who was in the first beardless bloom of his youth and the most beautiful of the Greeks.[8]

Once this general communion is established, with its master and worthier part exercising its functions and holding sway, they say that very useful fruits came of it, both private and public. It was the strength of the countries that accepted the practice, and the chief defense of equity and liberty: witness the salutary loves of Harmodius and Aristogiton. That is why they call it sacred and divine; by their account nothing is hostile to it but the violence of tyrants and the cowardice of peoples. In short, all that can be granted in favor of the Academy is that this was a love ending in friendship, which fits not badly with the Stoic definition of love: *Love is an attempt to form a friendship, inspired by the appearance of beauty.*[9]

I return to my own description, which is fairer and more even. *Friendships can be fully judged only when characters and ages have been strengthened and matured.* For the rest, what we ordinarily call friends and friendships are nothing but acquaintanceships and familiarities knotted together by some chance or convenience, by means of which our souls keep each other company. In the friendship I speak of, they mix and blend into each other in so complete a mingling that they efface the seam that joined them and can no longer find it. If I am pressed to say why I loved him, I feel that it cannot be expressed except by answering: Because it was he, because it was I.[10]

Beyond all my reasoning, and beyond anything I can say about it in particular, there is some inex-

8 Aeschylus' lost play The Myrmidons; the criticism is made in Plato's Symposium.
9 Harmodius and Aristogiton killed Hipparchus, brother of the tyrant of Athens, in 514 BC. The Stoic definition is quoted from Cicero, Tusculan Disputations.
10 Cicero, On Friendship.

FRENCH

et fatale, mediatrice de cette vnion. Nous nous cherchions auant que de nous estre veus, et par des rapports que nous oyïons l'vn de l'autre: qui faisoient en nostre affection plus d'effort, que ne porte la raison des rapports: ie croy par quelque ordonnance du ciel. Nous nous embrassions par noz noms. Et à nostre premiere rencontre, qui fut par hazard en vne grande feste et compagnie de ville, nous nous trouuasmes si prins, si cognus, si obligez entre nous, que rien des lors ne nous fut si proche, que l'vn à l'autre.

Il escriuit vne Satyre Latine excellente, qui est publiee: par laquelle il excuse et explique la precipitation de nostre intelligence, si promptement paruenue à sa perfection. Ayant si peu à durer, et ayant si tard commencé (car nous estions tous deux hommes faicts: et luy plus de quelque annee) elle n'auoit point à perdre temps. Et n'auoit à se regler au patron des amitiez molles et regulieres, ausquelles il faut tant de precautions de longue et preallable conuersation. Cette cy n'a point d'autre idee que d'elle mesme, et ne se peut rapporter qu'à soy.

Ce n'est pas vne speciale consideration, ny deux, ny trois, ny quatre, ny mille: c'est ie ne sçay quelle quinte-essence de tout ce meslange, qui ayant saisi toute ma volonté, l'amena se plonger et se perdre dans la sienne, qui ayant saisi toute sa volonté, l'amena se plonger et se perdre en la mienne: d'vne faim, d'vne concurrence pareille. Ie dis perdre à la verité, ne nous reseruant rien qui nous fust propre, ny qui fust ou sien ou mien.

1.28.7 Quand Lælius en presence des Consuls Romains, lesquels apres la condemnation de Tiberius Gracchus, poursuiuoient tous ceux qui auoient esté de son intelligence, vint à s'enquerir de Caius Blosius, qui estoit le principal de ses amis, combien il eust voulu faire pour luy, et qu'il eust respondu: Toutes choses. Comment toutes choses? suiuit-il, et quoy, s'il t'eust commandé de mettre le feu en nos temples? Il ne me l'eust iamais commandé, repliqua Blosius. Mais s'il l'eust fait? adiousta Lælius: I'y eusse obey, respondit-il. S'il estoit si parfaictement amy de Gracchus, comme disent les histoires, il n'auoit que faire d'offenser les Consuls par cette derniere et hardie confession: et ne se deuoit departir de l'asseurance qu'il auoit de la volonté de Gracchus.

ENGLISH

plicable and fateful force that brought about this union. We were seeking each other before we had ever seen each other, through reports we heard of each other, which worked more powerfully on our affection than reports reasonably should—by some decree of heaven, I believe. We embraced each other by our names. And at our first meeting, which happened by chance at a great feast and gathering in the city, we found ourselves so taken with each other, so well acquainted, so bound together, that from then on nothing was so close to either of us as each was to the other.

He wrote an excellent Latin satire, which has been published, in which he excuses and explains the haste of our mutual understanding, which reached its perfection so quickly. Since it had so little time to last, and had begun so late (for we were both grown men, and he a year or so older), it had no time to lose. Nor did it have to follow the pattern of soft, regular friendships, which need so many precautions of long preliminary acquaintance. This one has no model but itself, and can be compared only to itself.[11]

It is not one particular consideration, nor two, nor three, nor four, nor a thousand. It is some quintessence of all this mixture which, having seized my whole will, led it to plunge and lose itself in his; which, having seized his whole will, led it to plunge and lose itself in mine, with an equal hunger, an equal eagerness. I say "lose" in all truth, for we kept nothing back that was our own, nothing that was either his or mine.

The Roman consuls, after the condemnation of Tiberius Gracchus, were prosecuting all those who had been in league with him. In their presence Laelius asked Caius Blosius, the chief of Gracchus's friends, how much he would have been willing to do for him. Blosius answered: "Everything." "What, everything?" Laelius went on. "And what if he had ordered you to set fire to our temples?" "He would never have ordered me to," replied Blosius. "But what if he had?" added Laelius. "I would have obeyed," he answered. If he was as perfect a friend of Gracchus as the histories say, he had no need to offend the consuls by this

11 La Boétie's Latin poem to Montaigne, published in 1571 with his other works.

FRENCH

Mais toutesfois ceux qui accusent cette responce comme seditieuse, n'entendent pas bien ce mystere: et ne presupposent pas comme il est, qu'il tenoit la volonté de Gracchus en sa manche, et par puissance et par cognoissance. Ils estoient plus amis que citoyens, plus amis qu'amis ou que ennemis de leur païs, qu'amis d'ambition et de trouble. S'estans parfaittement commis, l'vn à l'autre, ils tenoient parfaittement les renes de l'inclination l'vn de l'autre: et faictes guider cet harnois, par la vertu et conduitte de la raison (comme aussi est il du tout impossible de l'atteler sans cela) la responce de Blosius est telle, qu'elle deuoit estre. Si leurs actions se demancherent, ils n'estoient ny amis, selon ma mesure, l'vn de l'autre, ny amis à eux mesmes.

Au demeurant cette response ne sonne non plus que feroit la mienne, à qui s'enquerroit à moy de cette façon: Si vostre volonté vous commandoit de tuer vostre fille, la tueriez vous? et que ie l'accordasse: car cela ne porte aucun tesmoignage de consentement à ce faire: par ce que ie ne suis point en doute de ma volonté, et tout aussi peu de celle d'vn tel amy. Il n'est pas en la puissance de tous les discours du monde, de me desloger de la certitude, que i'ay des intentions et iugemens du mien: aucune de ses actions ne me sçauroit estre presentee, quelque visage qu'elle eust, que ie n'en trouuasse incontinent le ressort.

Nos ames ont charié si vniment ensemble: elles se sont considerees d'vne si ardante affection, et de pareille affection descouuertes iusques au fin fond des entrailles l'vne à l'autre: que non seulement ie cognoissoy la sienne comme la mienne, mais ie me fusse certainement plus volontiers fié à luy de moy, qu'à moy.

ENGLISH

last bold confession, and he should not have abandoned the assurance he had of Gracchus's will.[12]

All the same, those who condemn this answer as seditious do not properly understand the mystery of it. They fail to assume what was the fact: that he held Gracchus's will up his sleeve, both by power over it and by knowledge of it. They were more friends than citizens, more friends to each other than friends or enemies of their country, or friends of ambition and upheaval. Having committed themselves perfectly to each other, each perfectly held the reins of the other's inclination. Have this team guided by virtue and the direction of reason (as indeed it is altogether impossible to harness it without that), and Blosius's answer is just what it should have been. If their actions came apart, they were neither friends to each other, by my measure, nor friends to themselves.

Besides, this answer sounds no worse than mine would if someone asked me in this way, "If your will commanded you to kill your daughter, would you kill her?" and I said yes. For that bears no witness of any consent to doing it, because I have no doubt about my will, and just as little about the will of such a friend. It is not in the power of all the arguments in the world to dislodge me from the certainty I have about the intentions and judgments of mine. Not one of his actions could be presented to me, whatever face it wore, without my immediately finding its mainspring.

Our souls pulled together in harness so closely, they regarded each other with so ardent an affection, and with a like affection laid themselves open to each other down to their innermost depths, that not only did I know his soul as well as my own, but I would certainly have trusted myself to him more readily than to myself.

COMMON FRIENDSHIPS

Ordinary friendships need caution; perfect friendship knows no debts and admits only one friend.

FRENCH

1.28.8 Qu'on ne me mette pas en ce rang ces autres amitiez communes: i'en ay autant de cognoissance qu'vn autre, et des plus parfaictes de leur genre. Mais ie ne conseille pas qu'on confonde leurs regles, on s'y tromperoit. Il faut

ENGLISH

Let no one put those other, common friendships in this rank. I know as much about them as anyone, and some of the most perfect of their kind. But I do not advise confusing their rules; one would be

12 Tiberius Gracchus, tribune of the people, was killed in 133 BC; Gaius Laelius was the friend of Scipio. The story is told in Cicero's On Friendship.

FRENCH

marcher en ces autres amitiez, la bride à la main, auec prudence et precaution: la liaison n'est pas nouée en maniere, qu'on n'ait aucunement à s'en deffier. Aymez le, disoit Chilon, comme ayant quelque iour à le haïr: haïssez le, comme ayant à l'aymer.

Ce precepte qui est si abominable en cette souueraine et maistresse amitié, il est salubre en l'vsage des amitiez ordinaires et coustumieres: à l'endroit desquelles il faut employer le mot qu'Aristote auoit tres familier, O mes amys, il n'y a nul amy.

1.28.9 En ce noble commerce, les offices et les bien-faicts nourrissiers des autres amitiez, ne meritent pas seulement d'estre mis en compte: cette confusion si pleine de nos volontez en est cause: car tout ainsi que l'amitié que ie me porte, ne reçoit point augmentation, pour le secours que ie me donne au besoin, quoy que dient les Stoiciens: et comme ie ne me sçay aucun gré du seruice que ie me fay: aussi l'vnion de tels amis estant veritablement parfaicte, elle leur faict perdre le sentiment de tels deuoirs, et haïr et chasser d'entre eux, ces mots de diuision et de difference, bien-faict, obligation, recognoissance, priere, remerciement, et leurs pareils.

Tout estant par effect commun entre eux, volontez, pensemens, iugemens, biens, femmes, enfans, honneur et vie: et leur conuenance n'estant qu'vne ame en deux corps, selon la tres-propre definition d'Aristote, ils ne se peuuent ny prester ny donner rien. Voila pourquoy les faiseurs de loix, pour honnorer le mariage de quelque imaginaire ressemblance de cette diuine liaison, defendent les donations entre le mary et la femme. Voulans inferer par là, que tout doit estre à chacun d'eux, et qu'ils n'ont rien à diuiser et partir ensemble.

1.28.10 Si en l'amitié dequoy ie parle, l'vn pouuoit donner à l'autre, ce seroit celuy qui receuroit le bien-fait, qui obligeroit son compagnon. Car cherchant l'vn et l'autre, plus que toute autre chose, de s'entre-bien faire, celuy qui en preste la matiere et l'occasion, est celuy là qui faict le liberal, donnant ce contentement à son amy, d'effectuer en son endroit ce qu'il desire le plus. Quand le Philosophe Diogenes auoit faute d'argent, il disoit, qu'il le redemandoit à ses amis, non qu'il le demandoit. Et pour

ENGLISH

deceived. In those other friendships one must walk with the bridle in hand, with prudence and caution: the bond is not so tied that one has no reason at all to distrust it. "Love him," said Chilon, "as if you will one day have to hate him; hate him as if you will have to love him."

This precept, so abominable in that sovereign and masterful friendship, is healthy in the practice of ordinary, customary friendships. With regard to them we must use the saying Aristotle so often had on his lips: "O my friends, there is no friend."[13]

In this noble relationship, the services and benefits that nourish other friendships do not even deserve to be taken into account. The reason is this complete fusion of our wills. For just as the friendship I bear myself receives no increase from the help I give myself in need, whatever the Stoics say, and just as I feel no gratitude to myself for the service I do myself, so the union of such friends, being truly perfect, makes them lose the sense of such duties. It makes them hate and banish from between them these words of division and difference: benefit, obligation, gratitude, request, thanks, and the like.

Everything being in effect common between them —wills, thoughts, judgments, goods, wives, children, honor and life—and their union being nothing but one soul in two bodies, according to Aristotle's very apt definition, they can neither lend nor give each other anything. That is why lawmakers, to honor marriage with some imaginary resemblance to this divine bond, forbid gifts between husband and wife. They mean to imply by this that everything should belong to each of them, and that they have nothing to divide and share out between them.

If, in the friendship I speak of, one could give to the other, it would be the one who received the benefit who would put his companion under obligation. For since each of them seeks, above all else, to do the other good, the one who provides the matter and the occasion is the one who is being generous, since he gives his friend the satisfaction of doing for him what he most desires. When the philosopher Diogenes was short of money, he used

13 The saying is attributed to Aristotle by Diogenes Laertius.

FRENCH

montrer comment cela se pratique par effect, i'en reciteray vn ancien exemple singulier.

Eudamidas Corinthien auoit deux amis, Charixenus Sycionien, et Aretheus Corinthien: venant à mourir estant pauure, et ses deux amis riches, il fit ainsi son testament: Ie legue à Aretheus de nourrir ma mere, et l'entretenir en sa vieillesse: à Charixenus de marier ma fille, et luy donner le doüaire le plus grand qu'il pourra: et au cas que l'vn d'eux vienne à defaillir, ie substitue en sa part celuy, qui suruiura. Ceux qui premiers virent ce testament, s'en moquerent: mais ses heritiers en ayants esté aduertis, l'accepterent auec vn singulier contentement.

Et l'vn d'eux, Charixenus, estant trespassé cinq iours apres, la substitution estant ouuerte en faueur d'Aretheus, il nourrit curieusement cette mere, et de cinq talens qu'il auoit en ses biens, il en donna les deux et demy en mariage à vne sienne fille vnique, et deux et demy pour le mariage de la fille d'Eudamidas, desquelles il fit les nopces en mesme iour.

1.28.11 Cet exemple est bien plein: si vne condition en estoit à dire, qui est la multitude d'amis. Car cette parfaicte amitié, dequoy ie parle, est indiuisible: chacun se donne si entier à son amy, qu'il ne luy reste rien à departir ailleurs: au rebours il est marry qu'il ne soit double, triple, ou quadruple, et qu'il n'ait plusieurs ames et plusieurs volontez, pour les conferer toutes à ce subiet. Les amitiez communes on les peut départir, on peut aymer en cestuy-ci la beauté, en cet autre la facilité de ses mœurs, en l'autre la liberalité, en celuy-là la paternité, en cet autre la fraternité, ainsi du reste: mais cette amitié, qui possede l'ame, et la regente en toute souueraineté, il est impossible qu'elle soit double.

Si deux en mesme temps demandoient à estre secourus, auquel courriez vous? S'ils requeroient de vous des offices contraires, quel ordre y trouueriez vous? Si l'vn commettoit à vostre silence chose qui fust vtile à l'autre de sçauoir, comment vous en desmeleriez vous? L'vnique et principale amitié descoust toutes autres obligations. Le secret que i'ay iuré ne deceller à vn autre, ie le puis sans pariure, communiquer à celuy, qui n'est pas autre, c'est moy. C'est vn assez grand miracle de se doubler: et n'en

ENGLISH

to say that he asked his friends to give it back, not to give it. And to show how this works in practice, I will relate a singular example from antiquity.

Eudamidas of Corinth had two friends, Charixenus of Sicyon and Aretheus of Corinth. When he came to die, he was poor and his two friends were rich, and he made his will as follows: "I bequeath to Aretheus the task of feeding my mother and supporting her in her old age; to Charixenus, that of marrying off my daughter and giving her the largest dowry he can. And in case one of them should die, I put the survivor in his place." Those who first saw this will laughed at it; but his heirs, when they were informed of it, accepted it with singular satisfaction.[14]

One of them, Charixenus, died five days later, and the substitution fell to Aretheus. He supported the mother with great care, and of the five talents in his estate he gave two and a half as a dowry to his own only daughter and two and a half for the marriage of Eudamidas's daughter, and he held both weddings on the same day.

This example is quite complete, but for one condition that is lacking: the number of friends. For this perfect friendship I speak of is indivisible. Each gives himself so wholly to his friend that he has nothing left to share out elsewhere; on the contrary, he is sorry not to be double, triple or quadruple, and not to have several souls and several wills to bestow them all on this one object. Common friendships can be divided: one may love in this man his beauty, in that one the ease of his manners, in another his generosity, in one his fatherliness, in another his brotherliness, and so on. But this friendship, which possesses the soul and rules it with complete sovereignty, cannot possibly be double.

If two asked to be helped at the same time, which one would you run to? If they required contrary services of you, how would you set them in order? If one entrusted to your silence something it would be useful for the other to know, how would you get out of that? The single, principal friendship unstitches all other obligations. The secret I have sworn not to reveal to another, I can without perjury communicate to the one who is not anoth-

14 The story comes from Lucian's dialogue Toxaris.

FRENCH

cognoissent pas la hauteur ceux qui parlent de se tripler. Rien n'est extreme, qui a son pareil.

Et qui presupposera que de deux i'en aime autant l'vn que l'autre, et qu'ils s'entr'aiment, et m'aiment autant que ie les aime: il multiplie en confrairie, la chose la plus vne et vnie, et dequoy vne seule est encore la plus rare à trouuer au monde. Le demeurant de cette histoire conuient tres-bien à ce que ie disois: car Eudamidas donne pour grace et pour faueur à ses amis de les employer à son besoin: il les laisse heritiers de cette sienne liberalité, qui consiste à leur mettre en main les moyens de luy bien-faire. Et sans doubte, la force de l'amitié se montre bien plus richement en son fait, qu'en celuy d'Aretheus.

Somme, ce sont effects inimaginables, à qui n'en a gousté: et qui me font honnorer à merueilles la responce de ce ieune soldat, à Cyrus, s'enquerant à luy, pour combien il voudroit donner vn cheual, par le moyen duquel il venoit de gaigner le prix de la course: et s'il le voudroit eschanger à vn royaume: Non certes, Sire: mais bien le lairroy ie volontiers, pour en aquerir vn amy, Si ie trouuoy homme digne de telle alliance. Il ne disoit pas mal, Si ie trouuoy.

Car on trouue facilement des hommes propres à vne superficielle accointance: mais en cettecy, en laquelle on negotie du fin fons de son courage, qui ne fait rien de reste: il est besoin, que tous les ressorts soyent nets et seurs parfaictement.

1.28.12 Aux confederations, qui ne tiennent que par vn bout, on n'a à prouuoir qu'aux imperfections, qui particulierement interessent ce bout là. Il ne peut chaloir de quelle religion soit mon medecin, et mon aduocat; cette consideration n'a rien de commun auec les offices de l'amitié, qu'ils ne doiuent. Et en l'accointance domestique, que dressent auec moy ceux qui me seruent i'en fay de mesmes: et m'enquiers peu d'vn laquay, s'il est chaste, ie cherche s'il est diligent: et ne crains pas tant vn muletier ioueur qu'imbecille: ny vn cuisinier iureur, qu'ignorant. Ie ne me mesle pas de dire ce qu'il faut faire au monde: d'autres assés s'en meslent: mais ce que i'y fay, *Mihi sic vsus est: tibi, vt opus est facto, face.*

ENGLISH

er: he is myself. It is a great enough miracle to double oneself, and those who talk of tripling themselves do not know how lofty it is. Nothing is extreme that has its equal.

Whoever supposes that of two friends I love one as much as the other, and that they love each other and love me as much as I love them, turns into a brotherhood the most single and united of all things, of which even one is the rarest thing to find in the world. The rest of this story fits very well with what I was saying. For Eudamidas grants it to his friends as a grace and favor to use them for his need; he leaves them heirs to this generosity of his, which consists in putting into their hands the means of doing him good. And no doubt the force of friendship shows itself much more richly in what he did than in what Aretheus did.

In short, these are effects unimaginable to anyone who has not tasted them. They make me wonderfully honor the answer of that young soldier to Cyrus. Cyrus asked him for how much he would sell a horse on which he had just won the prize in a race, and whether he would exchange it for a kingdom. "Certainly not, Sire; but I would gladly give it up to gain a friend, if I found a man worthy of such an alliance." He was not wrong to say "if I found."[15]

For it is easy to find men fit for a superficial acquaintance. But in this kind, in which we deal from the very bottom of our heart and hold nothing back, all the springs must be perfectly clean and sound.

In alliances that hold only by one end, we need only provide against the imperfections that particularly concern that end. It cannot matter what religion my doctor or my lawyer belongs to; that consideration has nothing in common with the services of friendship, which they do not owe. And in the domestic acquaintance formed with me by those who serve me, I do the same. I inquire little whether a lackey is chaste; I look to see whether he is diligent. And I do not fear a gambling muleteer so much as a feeble one, nor a swearing cook so much as an ignorant one. I do not take it upon myself to say what should be done in the

15 From Xenophon's Cyropaedia.

FRENCH

ENGLISH

world—plenty of others do that—but only what I do in it. *That is my practice; do as you see fit.*[16]

1.28.13 A la familiarité de la table, i'associe le plaisant, non le prudent: au lict, la beauté auant la bonté: et en la societé du discours, la suffisance, voire sans la preud'hommie, pareillement ailleurs. Tout ainsi que cil qui fut rencontré à cheuauchons sur vn baton, se iouant auec ses enfans, pria l'homme qui l'y surprint, de n'en rien dire, iusques à ce qu'il fust pere luy-mesme, estimant que la passion qui luy naistroit lors en l'ame, le rendroit iuge equitable d'vne telle action. Ie souhaiterois aussi parler à des gens qui eussent essayé ce que ie dis: mais sçachant combien c'est chose esloignee du commun vsage qu'vne telle amitié, et combien elle est rare, ie ne m'attens pas d'en trouuer aucun bon iuge.

For the familiarity of the table I choose the amusing, not the prudent; for bed, beauty before goodness; for the fellowship of conversation, ability, even without integrity; and likewise elsewhere. A man who was found riding a stick-horse, playing with his children, begged the man who caught him at it to say nothing until he was a father himself, judging that the feeling that would then arise in his soul would make him a fair judge of such an action. In the same way, I would like to speak to people who had tried out what I am saying. But knowing how far such a friendship is from common practice, and how rare it is, I do not expect to find any good judge of it.[17]

Car les discours mesmes que l'antiquité nous a laissé sur ce subiect, me semblent lasches au prix du sentiment que i'en ay. Et en ce poinct les effects surpassent les preceptes mesmes de la philosophie. *Nil ego contulerim iucundo sanus amico.*

For even the discourses that antiquity has left us on this subject seem feeble to me beside what I feel. And on this point the facts surpass even the precepts of philosophy. *While I am in my right mind, I would compare nothing to a delightful friend.*[18]

1.28.14 L'ancien Menander disoit celuy-là heureux, qui auoit peu rencontrer seulement l'ombre d'vn amy: il auoit certes raison de le dire, mesmes s'il en auoit tasté. Car à la verité si ie compare tout le reste de ma vie, quoy qu'auec la grace de Dieu ie l'aye passee douce, aisee, et sauf la perte d'vn tel amy, exempte d'affliction poisante, pleine de tranquillité d'esprit, ayant prins en payement mes commoditez naturelles et originelles, sans en rechercher d'autres: si ie la compare, dis-ie, toute, aux quatre annees, qu'il m'a esté donné de iouyr de la douce compagnie et societé de ce personnage, ce n'est que fumee, ce n'est qu'vne nuict obscure et ennuyeuse.

Old Menander called a man happy who had been able to meet even the shadow of a friend. He was certainly right to say so, especially if he had tasted friendship. For in truth, by the grace of God, I have spent my life pleasantly and easily, free of heavy affliction except for the loss of such a friend, full of tranquility of mind, having accepted my natural and original advantages as payment without seeking others. Yet if I compare all the rest of my life—if I compare it all, I say—with the four years I was granted to enjoy the sweet company and fellowship of this man, it is nothing but smoke, nothing but a dark and sorrowful night.[19]

Depuis le iour que ie le perdy, *quem semper acerbum, Semper honoratum (sic, Dii, voluistis!) habebo,* ie ne fay que trainer languissant: et les plaisirs mesmes qui s'offrent à moy, au lieu de me consoler, me redoublent le regret de sa perte. Nous estions à moitié de tout: il me semble que ie luy desrobe sa part, *Nec fas esse vlla me voluptate hic frui Decreui, tantisper dum ille abest meus particeps.*

Since the day I lost him, *a day I shall always hold bitter,*
always honored (such, gods, was your will!), I do nothing but drag on, languishing. The very pleasures that come my way, instead of consoling me, redouble my grief at his loss. We went halves in everything; it seems to me that I am robbing him of his share. *Nor have I thought it right to enjoy any*

16 Terence, The Self-Tormentor.
17 The father was Agesilaus, king of Sparta, as told by Plutarch.
18 Horace, Satires.
19 Montaigne knew La Boétie from about 1559 until his death in 1563.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
		pleasure here, *so long as he who shared my life is gone.*[20]
1.28.15	I'estois desia si faict et accoustumé à estre deuxiesme par tout, qu'il me semble n'estre plus qu'à demy. *Illam meæ si partem animæ tulit* *Maturior vis, quid moror altera?* *Nec charus æquè nec superstes* *Integer? Ille dies vtramque* *Duxit ruinam.* Il n'est action ou imagination, où ie ne le trouue à dire, comme si eust-il bien faict à moy: car de mesme qu'il me surpassoit d'vne distance infinie en toute autre suffisance et vertu, aussi faisoit-il au deuoir de l'amitié. Quis desiderio sit pudor aut modus Tam chari capitis? O misero frater adempte mihi! Omnia tecum vnà perierunt gaudia nostra, Quæ tuus in vita dulcis alebat amor.	I was already so formed and accustomed to being one of two in everything that I now seem to be only half a man. *If an untimely blow has carried off that part of my soul,* *why do I, the other part, linger on,* *neither as dear nor surviving* *whole? That day brought* *ruin to both.* There is no action or thought in which I do not miss him, as indeed he would have missed me. For just as he surpassed me by an infinite distance in every other ability and virtue, so did he in the duty of friendship. What shame or limit should there be to grief for one so dear? O brother, taken from wretched me! All our joys have perished with you, which your sweet love nourished while you lived.[21]
	/ Tu mea, tu moriens fregisti commoda, frater; Tecum vna tota est nostra sepulta anima, Cuius ego interitu tota de mente fugaui Hæc studia, atque omnes delicias animi. Alloquar? audiero nunquam tua verba loquentem? Nunquam ego te, vita frater amabilior, Aspiciam posthac? at certè semper amabo.	/ You, brother, by your death have shattered my happiness; with you my whole soul lies buried; at your death I drove from my mind these studies and all the delights of the spirit. Shall I speak to you? Shall I never hear your voice? Shall I never, brother dearer than life, see you again? But surely I shall always love you.

WHY THE DISCOURSE IS WITHHELD

Since partisans published it for their own ends, Montaigne will print other works of La Boétie instead.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
1.28.16	Mais oyons vn peu parler ce garson de seize ans. Parce que i'ay trouué que cet ouurage a esté depuis mis en lumiere, et à mauuaise fin, par ceux qui cherchent à troubler et changer l'estat de nostre police, sans se soucier s'ils l'amenderont, qu'ils ont meslé à d'autres escrits de leur farine, ie me suis dédit de le loger icy. Et affin que la memoire de l'autheur n'en soit interessee en l'endroit de ceux qui n'ont peu cognoistre de pres ses opinions et ses actions: ie les aduise que ce subiect fut traicté par luy en son enfance, par maniere d'exercitation seulement, comme subiect vulgaire et tracassé en mil endroits des liures.	But let us hear this boy of sixteen speak a little. I have found that this work has since been brought to light, and for an evil purpose, by those who seek to disturb and change the state of our government without caring whether they will improve it, and that they have mixed it with other writings ground from their own flour. So I have given up my plan to place it here. And so that the author's memory may not suffer with those who could not know his opinions and actions closely, I inform them that he treated this subject in his boyhood,

20 Virgil, Aeneid; the second quotation is from Terence, The Self-Tormentor.
21 Horace, Odes (twice); then Catullus, lamenting his brother.

FRENCH

ENGLISH

merely as an exercise, as a common theme worked over in a thousand places in books.[22]

Ie ne fay nul doubte qu'il ne creust ce qu'il escriuoit: car il estoit assez conscientieux, pour ne mentir pas mesmes en se iouant: et sçay d'auantage que s'il eust eu à choisir, il eust mieux aymé estre nay à Venise qu'à Sarlac; et auec raison. Mais il auoit vn' autre maxime souuerainement empreinte en son ame, d'obeyr et de se soubmettre tres-religieusement aux loix, sous lesquelles il estoit nay. Il ne fut iamais vn meilleur citoyen, ny plus affectionné au repos de son païs, ny plus ennemy des remuëments et nouuelletez de son temps: il eust bien plustost employé sa suffisance à les esteindre, qu'à leur fournir dequoy les émouuoir d'auantage: il auoit son esprit moulé au patron d'autres siecles que ceux-cy.

I have no doubt that he believed what he wrote, for he was conscientious enough not to lie even in jest. And I know further that if he had had the choice, he would rather have been born in Venice than in Sarlat—and with reason. But he had another maxim sovereignly imprinted on his soul: to obey and submit most scrupulously to the laws under which he was born. There was never a better citizen, nor one more devoted to the peace of his country, nor more hostile to the commotions and innovations of his time. He would much rather have used his ability to extinguish them than to supply them with the means of stirring things up further. His mind was molded on the pattern of other ages than these.[23]

Or en eschange de cest ouurage serieux i'en substitueray vn autre, produit en cette mesme saison de son aage, plus gaillard et plus enioué.

Now, in exchange for this serious work, I will substitute another, produced in the same season of his life, more lighthearted and playful.

22 La Boétie's Discourse on Voluntary Servitude, published by Protestant pamphleteers in 1574 and 1576.
23 Sarlat, La Boétie's birthplace in Périgord; Venice was a republic.

I.29 Twenty-Nine Sonnets of Étienne de La Boétie

Vingt et neuf sonnets d'Estienne de la Boetie, à Madame de Grammont Contesse de Guissen
Montaigne dedicates twenty-nine love sonnets by his late friend La Boétie to the Countess of Guiche.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
1.29.1	MADAME ie ne vous offre rien du mien, ou par ce qu'il est desia vostre, ou pour ce que ie n'y trouue rien digne de vous. Mais i'ay voulu que ces vers en quelque lieu qu'ils se vissent, portassent vostre nom en teste, pour l'honneur que ce leur sera d'auoir pour guide cette grande Corisande d'Andoins.	MADAME, I offer you nothing of my own, either because it is already yours or because I find nothing in it worthy of you. But I wanted these verses, wherever they might be seen, to bear your name at their head, for the honor it will be for them to have as their guide the great Corisande d'Andoins.[1]
	Ce present m'a semblé vous estre propre, d'autant qu'il est peu de dames en France, qui iugent mieux, et se seruent plus à propos que vous, de la poësie: et puis qu'il n'en est point qui la puissent rendre viue et animee, comme vous faites par ces beaux et riches accords, dequoy parmy vn milion d'autres beautez, nature vous a estrenee: Madame ces vers meritent que vous les cherissiez: car vous serez de mon aduis, qu'il n'en est point sorty de Gascongne, qui eussent plus d'inuention et de gentillesse, et qui tesmoignent estre sortis d'vne plus riche main.	This present seemed fitting for you, since there are few ladies in France who judge poetry better or make more fitting use of it than you; and since there are none who can make it as lively and animated as you do with those beautiful, rich harmonies with which, among a million other beauties, nature has endowed you. Madame, these verses deserve your cherishing them. For you will agree with me that none have ever come out of Gascony with more invention and grace, or that show they came from a richer hand.
	Et n'entrez pas en ialousie, dequoy vous n'auez que le reste de ce que pieça i'en ay faict imprimer sous le nom de Monsieur de Foix, vostre bon parent: car certes ceux-cy ont ie ne sçay quoy de plus vif et de plus bouillant: comme il les fit en sa plus verte ieunesse, et eschauffé d'vne belle et noble ardeur que ie vous diray, Madame, vn iour à l'oreille. Les autres furent faits depuis, comme il estoit à la poursuitte de son mariage, en faueur de sa femme, et sentant desia ie ne sçay quelle froideur maritale. Et moy ie suis de ceux qui tiennent, que la poësie ne rid point ailleurs, comme elle faict en vn subiect folatre et desreglé.	And do not be jealous because you have only what remains after what I long ago had printed under the name of Monsieur de Foix, your good kinsman. For truly these have something livelier and more ardent about them, since he wrote them in his greenest youth, fired by a fine and noble passion that I will tell you about, Madame, one day in your ear. The others were written later, when he was courting for his marriage, in honor of his wife, and already feeling some sort of marital coldness. And I am one of those who hold that poetry never laughs anywhere as it does on a frolicsome and unruly subject.[2]

1 Diane d'Andoins, Countess of Guiche, called "la belle Corisande," later mistress of Henry of Navarre. This is the dedication of La Boétie's twenty-nine sonnets.
2 In 1571–72 Montaigne published La Boétie's other French verse with a dedication to Paul de Foix.

THE SONNETS

La Boétie's twenty-nine love sonnets follow, each rendered line by line.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
1.29.2	Pardon amour, pardon, ô Seigneur ie te voüe Le reste de mes ans, ma voix et mes escris, Mes sanglots, mes souspirs, mes larmes et mes cris: Rien, rien tenir d'aucun, que de toy ie n'aduoue. Helas comment de moy, ma fortune se ioue. De toy n'a pas long temps, amour, ie me suis ris. I'ay failly, ie le voy, ie me rends, ie suis pris. I'ay trop gardé mon cœur, or ie le desaduoüe. Si i'ay pour le garder retardé ta victoire, Ne l'en traitte plus mal, plus grande en est ta gloire.	Mercy, Love, mercy! O Lord, I vow to you The rest of my years, my voice and my writings, My sobs, my sighs, my tears and my cries: Nothing, nothing will I own to hold from anyone but you. Alas, how my fortune makes sport of me! Not long ago, Love, I laughed at you. I have erred, I see it; I surrender, I am taken. I guarded my heart too well; now I disown it. If by guarding it I delayed your victory, Do not treat it worse for that: your glory is the greater.
	/ Et si du premier coup tu ne m'as abbatu, Pense qu'vn bon vainqueur et nay pour estre grand, Son nouueau prisonnier, quand vn coup il se rend, Il prise et l'ayme mieux, s'il a bien combattu.	/ And if you did not strike me down at the first blow, Consider that a good victor, born to be great, Holds his new prisoner, once he surrenders, In higher esteem and love if he has fought well.
1.29.3	C'est amour c'est amour, c'est luy seul, ie le sens; Mais le plus vif amour, la poison la plus forte, A qui onq pauure cœur ait ouuerte la porte. Ce cruel n'a pas mis vn de ses traitz perçans, Mais arc, traits et carquois, et luy tout dans mes sens. Encor vn mois n'a pas, que ma franchise est morte, Que ce venin mortel dans mes veines ie porte, Et des-ja i'ay perdu, et le cœur et le sens. Et quoy? si cest amour à mesure croissoit, Qui en si grand tourment dedans moy se conçoit? O croistz, si tu peuz croistre, et amende en croissant.	It is Love, it is Love, it is he alone, I feel it; But the most piercing love, the strongest poison To which a poor heart ever opened the door. This cruel one has not lodged just one of his piercing arrows, But bow, arrows and quiver, and himself entire, within my senses. It is not yet a month since my freedom died, Since I have carried this deadly venom in my veins, And already I have lost both heart and reason. What then? If this love kept growing at that rate, This love conceived within me in such torment? Oh, grow, if you can grow, and improve as you grow.
	/ Tu te nourris de pleurs; des pleurs ie te prometz, Et pour te refreschir, des souspirs pour iamais. Mais que le plus grand mal soit au moings en naissant.	/ You feed on tears: tears I promise you, And to refresh you, sighs forever. But let the worst pain at least come at the start.
1.29.4	C'est faict mon cœur, quitons la liberté. Dequoy meshuy seruiroit la deffence, Que d'agrandir et la peine et l'offence? Plus ne suis fort, ainsi que i'ay esté. La raison fust vn temps de mon costé, Or reuoltée elle veut que ie pense Qu'il faut seruir, et prendre en recompence Qu'oncq d'vn tel neud nul ne fust arresté. S'il se faut rendre, alors il est saison,	It is done, my heart; let us give up our freedom. What use would defense be now, Except to increase both the pain and the offense? I am no longer strong, as I once was. Reason was on my side for a time; Now, turned rebel, she would have me think That I must serve, and take as my reward That no one was ever held by such a knot.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
	Quand on n'a plus deuers soy la raison. Je voy qu'amour, sans que ie le deserue, Sans aucun droict, se vient saisir de moy? Et voy qu'encor il faut à ce grand Roy Quand il a tort, que la raison luy serue.	If one must surrender, then is the time, When one no longer has reason on one's side. I see that Love, though I do not deserve it, Without any right, comes and seizes me? And I see that this great King must still Have reason serve him, even when he is wrong.
1.29.5	C'estoit alors, quand les chaleurs passées, Le sale Automne aux cuues va foulant, Le raisin gras dessoubz le pied coulant, Que mes douleurs furent encommencées. Le paisan bat ses gerbes amassées, Et aux caueaux ses bouillans muis roulant, Et des fruitiers son automne croulant, Se vange lors des peines aduancées. Seroit ce point vn presage donné Que mon espoir est des-ja moissonné? Non certes, non. Mais pour certain ie pense, I'auray, si bien à deuiner i'entends, Si l'on peut rien prognostiquer du temps, Quelque grand fruict de ma longue esperance.	It was the time when, the heats gone by, Stained Autumn goes treading in the vats The plump grape that runs beneath the foot, That my sorrows began. The peasant threshes his gathered sheaves, And, rolling his seething casks into the cellars, And shaking his autumn harvest down from the fruit trees, Takes revenge then for the labors he has spent. Could this be an omen given That my hope has already been reaped? No, surely not. But I think for certain That I shall have, if I know how to divine, If one can foretell anything from the season, Some great fruit from my long hope.
1.29.6	I'ay veu ses yeux perçans, i'ay veu sa face claire: (Nul iamais sans son dam ne regarde les dieux) Froit, sans cœur me laissa son œil victorieux, Tout estourdy du coup de sa forte lumiere. Comme vn surpris de nuit aux champs quand il esclaire Estonné, se pallist si la fleche des cieux Sifflant luy passe contre, et luy serre les yeux, Il tremble, et veoit, transi, Iupiter en colere. Dy moy Madame, au vray, dy moy si tes yeux vertz Ne sont pas ceux qu'on dit que l'amour tient couuertz? / Tu les auois, ie croy, la fois que ie t'ay veüe, Au moins il me souuient, qu'il me fust lors aduis Qu'amour, tout à vn coup, quand premier ie te vis, Desbanda dessus moy, et son arc, et sa veüe.	I have seen her piercing eyes, I have seen her radiant face (No one ever looks on the gods without harm to himself); Her victorious eye left me cold and heartless, Utterly stunned by the blow of its strong light. As a man caught at night in the fields when lightning flashes, Stunned, turns pale if the arrow of the heavens Whistles past close by him and makes him shut his eyes; He trembles, and sees, frozen with fear, Jupiter in his wrath. Tell me, Madame, truly, tell me if your green eyes Are not those that Love is said to keep covered? / You had them, I believe, the time I saw you; At least I remember that it seemed to me then That Love, all at once, when I first saw you, Loosed his bow upon me and unbound his eyes.
1.29.7	Ce dit maint vn de moy, de quoy se plaint il tant, Perdant ses ans meilleurs en chose si legiere? Qu'a il tant à crier, si encore il espere? Et s'il n'espere rien, pourquoy n'est il content? Quand i'estois libre et sain i'en disois bien autant. Mais certes celuy là n'a la raison entiere, Ains a le cœur gasté de quelque rigueur fiere, S'il se plaint de ma plainte, et mon mal il n'entend.	Many a one says of me: "What is he complaining of so much, Wasting his best years on so frivolous a thing? Why does he cry out so much, if he still has hope? And if he hopes for nothing, why is he not content?" When I was free and healthy, I used to say as

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
	Amour tout à vn coup de cent douleurs me point, Et puis l'on m'aduertit que ie ne crie point.	much. But surely that man is not quite in his right mind, But has his heart spoiled by some proud harshness, If he complains of my complaint and does not understand my pain. Love all at once pierces me with a hundred pains, And then I am told not to cry out.
	/ Si vain ie ne suis pas que mon mal i'agrandisse A force de parler: s'on m'en peut exempter, Ie quitte les sonnetz, ie quitte le chanter. Qui me deffend le deuil, celuy là me guerisse.	/ I am not so vain as to magnify my pain By dint of talking: if someone can free me from it, I give up sonnets, I give up singing. Let whoever forbids me to grieve cure me.
1.29.8	Quant à chanter ton los, par fois ie m'aduenture, Sans oser ton grand nom, dans mes vers exprimer, Sondant le moins profond de cette large mer, Ie tremble de m'y perdre, et aux riues m'asseure. Ie crains en loüant mal, que ie te face iniure.	Sometimes I venture to sing your praise, Without daring to set down your great name in my verse; Sounding the shallowest part of this wide sea, I tremble lest I lose myself in it, and keep safe near the shore. I fear that by praising badly I may do you wrong.
	/ Mais le peuple estonné d'ouir tant t'estimer, Ardant de te connoistre, essaie à te nommer, Et cherchant ton sainct nom ainsi à l'aduenture, Esbloui n'attaint pas à veoir chose si claire, Et ne te trouue point ce grossier populaire, Qui n'ayant qu'vn moyen, ne voit pas celuy là: C'est que s'il peut trier, la comparaison faicte Des parfaictes du monde, vne la plus parfaicte, Lors s'il a voix, qu'il crie hardimant la voyla.	/ But the people, amazed to hear you so highly esteemed, Burning to know you, try to name you, And, seeking your holy name thus at random, Dazzled, cannot manage to see a thing so bright; And the common crowd does not find you, For, having only one way, it does not see that way: Namely, if, having made the comparison Of the perfect women of the world, it can pick out the one most perfect, Then, if it has a voice, let it boldly cry, "There she is."
1.29.9	Quand viendra ce iour la, que ton nom au vray passe Par France, dans mes vers? combien et quantes fois S'en empresse mon cœur, s'en demangent mes doits? Souuent dans mes escrits de soy mesme il prend place. Maugré moy ie t'escris, maugré moy ie t'efface. Quand astrée viendroit et la foy et le droit, Alors ioyeux ton nom au monde se rendroit. Ores c'est à ce temps, que cacher il te face, C'est à ce temps maling vne grande vergogne Donc Madame tandis tu seras ma Dourdouigne.	When will that day come when your name, truly told, passes Through France in my verse? How many, many times Does my heart press for it, do my fingers itch for it? Often in my writings it takes its place of its own accord. Despite myself I write you, despite myself I erase you. If Astraea should come, and good faith, and justice, Then your name would joyfully show itself to the world. As it is, this age makes it hide you; It is a great shame on this wicked age.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
		So, Madame, meanwhile you shall be my Dordogne.[3]
	/ Toutesfois laisse moy, laisse moy ton nom mettre, Ayez pitié du temps, si au iour ie te metz, Si le temps ce cognoist, lors ie te le prometz, Lors il sera doré, s'il le doit iamais estre.	/ Yet let me, let me set down your name; Take pity on the age: if I bring you into the light of day, If the age recognizes you, then I promise you, Then it will be golden, if it ever is to be.
1.29.10	O entre tes beautez, que ta constance est belle. C'est ce cœur asseuré, ce courage constant, C'est parmy tes vertus, ce que l'on prise tant: Aussi qu'est-il plus beau, qu'vne amitié fidelle? Or ne charge donc rien de ta sœur infidele, De Vesere ta sœur: elle va s'escartant Tousiours flotant mal seure en son cours inconstant. Voy tu comme à leur gré les vens se ioüent d'elle? Et ne te repens point pour droict de ton aisnage D'auoir des-ia choisi la constance en partage.	Oh, among your beauties, how beautiful your constancy is! It is that steadfast heart, that constant spirit, That people prize so highly among your virtues: And indeed what is more beautiful than a faithful love? So take on nothing from your faithless sister, From your sister the Vézère: she keeps straying, Always wavering, unsteady in her fickle course. Do you see how the winds play with her as they please? And do not regret having, by right of your seniority, Already chosen constancy as your share.[4]
	/ Mesme race porta l'amitié souueraine Des bons iumeaux, desquels l'vn à l'autre despart Du ciel et de l'enfer la moitié de sa part, Et l'amour diffamé de la trop belle Heleine.	/ The same race bore the sovereign love Of the good twins, each of whom shares with the other Half his portion of heaven and of hell, And the disgraced love of too-beautiful Helen.[5]
1.29.11	Ie voy bien, ma Dourdouigne encore humble tu vas: De te monstrer Gasconne en France, tu as honte. Si du ruisseau de Sorgue, on fait ores grand conte, Si a il bien esté quelquefois aussi bas. Voys tu le petit Loir comme il haste le pas? Comme des-ia parmy les plus grands il se conte? Comme il marche hautain d'vne course plus prompte Tout à costé du Mince, et il ne s'en plaint pas? Un seul Oliuier d'Arne enté au bord de Loire, Le faict courir plus braue et luy donne sa gloire. Laisse, laisse moy faire.	I see well, my Dordogne, that you still go humbly: You are ashamed to show yourself a Gascon in France. If the stream of the Sorgue is now held in great account, Yet it too was once just as low. Do you see how the little Loir quickens its pace? How it already counts itself among the greatest? How it marches proudly with a swifter course Right alongside the Mincio, and the Mincio does not complain? A single Olive tree from the Arno, grafted on the bank of the Loire, Makes it run more splendidly and gives it its glory. Leave it, leave it to me.[6]
	Et vn iour ma Dourdouigne, Si ie deuine bien, on te cognoistra mieux:	And one day, my Dordogne, If I guess right, you will be better known:

3 Astraea, goddess of justice, left the earth at the end of the Golden Age. The Dordogne, the river of La Boétie's Périgord, stands for the lady's name.
4 The Vézère, a tributary of the Dordogne.
5 Castor and Pollux, who shared their immortality between them, and their sister Helen were children of Leda.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
	Et Garonne, et le Rhone, et ces autres grands Dieux En auront quelque enuie, et possible vergoigne.	And the Garonne, and the Rhône, and those other great gods Will feel some envy of it, and perhaps shame.
1.29.12	Toy qui oys mes souspirs, ne me sois rigoureux Si mes larmes apart toutes miennes ie verse, Si mon amour ne suit en sa douleur diuerse Du Florentin transi les regrets languoreux, Ny de Catulle aussi, le folastre amoureux, Qui le cœur de sa dame en chatouillant luy perce, Ny le sçauant amour du migregeois Properce Ils n'ayment pas pour moy, ie n'ayme pas pour eux. Qui pourra sur autruy ses douleurs limiter, Celuy pourra d'autruy les plaintes imiter: Chacun sent son tourment, et sçait ce qu'il endure. Chacun parla d'amour ainsi qu'il l'entendit. Ie dis ce que mon cœur, ce que mon mal me dict.	You who hear my sighs, do not be harsh with me If I shed my tears apart, all my own, If my love, in its changing sorrow, does not follow The languishing laments of the lovelorn Florentine, Nor those of Catullus, the playful lover, Who pierces his lady's heart while tickling it, Nor the learned love of half-Greek Propertius: They do not love for me, I do not love for them. He who can measure his sorrows by another's Will be able to imitate another's laments: Each feels his own torment and knows what he endures. Each spoke of love as he understood it. I say what my heart, what my pain tells me.[7]
	/ Que celuy ayme peu, qui ayme à la mesure.	/ How little he loves who loves by measure!
1.29.13	Quoy? qu'est-ce? ô vens, ô nues, ô l'orage! A point nommé, quand d'elle m'aprochant Les bois, les monts, les baisses vois tranchant Sur moy d'aguest vous poussez vostre rage. Ores mon cœur s'embrase d'auantage. Allez, allez faire peur au marchant, Qui dans la mer les thresors va cherchant: Ce n'est ainsi, qu'on m'abbat le courage. Quand i'oy les vents, leur tempeste et leurs cris, De leur malice, en mon cœur ie me ris. Me pensent ils pour cela faire rendre? Face le ciel du pire, et l'air aussi: Ie veux, ie veux, et le declaire ainsi S'il faut mourir, mourir comme Leandre.	What? What is this? O winds, O clouds, O storm! Just when, as I draw near her, I see myself cutting across the woods, the mountains, the valleys, You lie in wait and hurl your rage upon me. Now my heart burns all the more. Go, go and frighten the merchant Who seeks treasures on the sea: That is not how my courage is struck down. When I hear the winds, their tempest and their cries, I laugh in my heart at their malice. Do they think they will make me give up for this? Let the sky do its worst, and the air too: I wish, I wish, and so declare, If I must die, to die like Leander.[8]
1.29.14	Vous qui aimer encore ne sçauez, Ores m'oyant parler de mon Leandre, Ou iamais non, vous y debuez aprendre, Si rien de bon dans le cœur vous auez. Il oza bien branlant ses bras lauez, Armé d'amour, contre l'eau se deffendre, Qui pour tribut la fille voulut prendre, Ayant le frere et le mouton sauuez.	You who do not yet know how to love, Now that you hear me speak of my Leander, Now or never you must learn from him, If you have anything good in your heart. He dared, waving his water-washed arms, Armed with love, to defend himself against the water That took the girl as tribute,

6 The Sorgue was Petrarch's river, the Loir Ronsard's, the Mincio Virgil's; the "Olive" is Du Bellay's Petrarchan collection L'Olive, Du Bellay being from the Loire.
7 The Florentine is Petrarch; with Catullus and Propertius he stands for the great love poets.
8 Leander swam the Hellespont nightly to visit Hero and drowned in a storm.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
	Vn soir vaincu par les flos rigoureux, Voyant des-ia, ce vaillant amoureux, Que l'eau maistresse à son plaisir le tourne: Parlant aux flos, leur iecta cette voix: Pardonnez moy maintenant que i'y veois, Et gardez moy la mort, quand ie retourne.	Having spared the brother and the ram. One evening, overcome by the cruel waves, This valiant lover, seeing already That the water, his mistress, was turning him at its pleasure, Spoke to the waves and cast them these words: "Spare me now, as I go there, And keep my death for when I return."[9]
1.29.15	O cœur leger, ô courage mal seur, Penses-tu plus que souffrir ie te puisse? O bontez creuze, ô couuerte malice, Traitre beauté, venimeuse douceur, Tu estois donc tousiours sœur de ta sœur? Et moy trop simple il falloit que i'en fisse L'essay sur moy? et que tard i'entendisse Ton parler double et tes chants de chasseur? Depuis le iour que i'ay prins à t'aimer, I'eusse vaincu les vagues de la mer. Qu'est-ce meshuy que ie pourrais attendre? Comment de toy pourrais i'estre content? Qui apprendra ton cœur d'estre constant, Puis que le mien ne le luy peut aprendre?	O fickle heart, O unreliable spirit, Do you think I can bear you any longer? O hollow kindness, O hidden malice, Treacherous beauty, venomous sweetness, Were you then always your sister's sister? And I, too simple, had to make The trial of it on myself? And understand too late Your double speech and your hunter's songs? Since the day I began to love you, I could have conquered the waves of the sea. What can I expect from now on? How could I be content with you? Who will teach your heart to be constant, Since mine cannot teach it?
1.29.16	Ce n'est pas moy que l'on abuse ainsi: Qu'à quelque enfant ses ruses on employe, Qui n'a nul goust, qui n'entend rien qu'il oye: Ie sçay aymer, ie sçay hayr aussi. Contente toy de m'auoir iusqu'icy Fermé les yeux, il est temps que i'y voye: Et que mes-huy, las et honteux ie soye D'auoir mal mis mon temps et mon soucy, Oserois tu m'ayant ainsi traicté Parler à moy iamais de fermeté? Tu prens plaisir à ma douleur extreme: Tu me deffends de sentir mon tourment: Et si veux bien que ie meure en t'aimant. Si ie ne sens, comment veux-tu que i'ayme?	I am not one to be deceived like this: Use your tricks on some child Who has no taste and understands nothing he hears: I know how to love, I know how to hate as well. Be content with having until now Kept my eyes shut; it is time I saw clearly, And that from now on I be weary and ashamed Of having spent my time and care so badly. Would you dare, having treated me so, Ever to speak to me of constancy? You take pleasure in my extreme pain; You forbid me to feel my torment; And yet you want me to die loving you. If I do not feel, how do you expect me to love?
1.29.17	O l'ay ie dict? helas l'ay ie songé? Ou si pour vray i'ay dict blaspheme telle? S'a fauce langue, il faut que l'honneur d'elle De moy, par moy, desus moy, soit vangé, Mon cœur chez toy, ô madame, est logé: Là donne luy quelque geene nouuelle: Fais luy souffrir quelque peine cruelle: Fais, fais luy tout, fors luy donner congé.	Oh, did I say it? Alas, did I dream it? Or did I truly speak such blasphemy? Come then, false tongue: her honor must be Avenged on me, by me, upon me. My heart, Madame, is lodged with you: There give it some new torture; Make it suffer some cruel pain; Do, do everything to it but send it away.

9 The Hellespont was named after Helle, who fell from the golden ram into the strait, while her brother Phrixus was carried safely across.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
	Or seras tu (ie le sçay) trop humaine, Et ne pourras longuement voir ma peine. Mais vn tel faict, faut il qu'il se pardonne? A tout le moins haut ie me desdiray De mes sonnets, et me desmentiray, Pour ces deux faux, cinq cent vrais ie t'en donne.	But you will be (I know it) too kind, And will not be able to watch my suffering for long. But such a deed—must it be pardoned? At the very least I will loudly retract My sonnets and give myself the lie: For these two false ones, I give you five hundred true.
1.29.18	Si ma raison en moy s'est peu remettre, Si recouurer astheure ie me puis, Si i'ay du sens, si plus homme ie suis Ie t'en mercie, ô bien heureuse lettre. Qui m'eust (helas) qui m'eust sçeu recognoistre Lors qu'enragé vaincu de mes ennuys, En blasphemant madame ie poursuis? De loing, honteux, ie te vis lors paroistre O sainct papier, alors ie me reuins, Et deuers toy deuotement ie vins. Ie te donrois vn autel pour ce faict, Qu'on vist les traicts de cette main diuine. Mais de les voir aucun homme n'est digne, Ny moy aussi, s'elle ne m'en eust faict.	If my reason has been able to return to me, If I can now recover myself, If I have sense, if I am a man again, I thank you for it, O most blessed letter. Who (alas), who could have recognized me When, enraged, overcome by my griefs, I went on blaspheming my lady? From afar, ashamed, I saw you then appear, O holy paper; then I came back to myself, And came devoutly toward you. I would give you an altar for this deed, Where all might see the strokes of that divine hand. But no man is worthy to see them, Nor I either, had she not made me so.
1.29.19	I'estois prest d'encourir pour iamais quelque blasme. De colere eschauffé mon courage brusloit, Ma fole voix au gré de ma fureur branloit, Ie despitois les dieux, et encore ma dame. Lors qu'elle de loing iette vn breuet dans ma flamme Ie le sentis soudain comme il me rabilloit, Qu'aussi tost deuant luy ma fureur s'en alloit, Qu'il me rendoit, vainqueur, en sa place mon ame. Entre vous, qui de moy, ces merueilles oyez, Que me dites vous d'elle? et ie vous prie voyez, S'ainsi comme ie fais, adorer ie la dois? Quels miracles en moy, pensez vous qu'elle fasse De son œil tout puissant, ou d'vn ray de sa face.	I was about to incur some lasting blame. Heated by anger, my heart was burning; My mad voice reeled at the whim of my fury; I defied the gods, and my lady too. When she from afar casts a little note into my flame, I felt at once how it set me right again, How before it my fury immediately departed, How, victorious, it gave me back my soul in its place. You who hear these marvels of me, What do you say of her? And see, I beg you, Whether I should adore her as I do. What miracles do you think she works in me With her all-powerful eye, or with one ray of her face,
	/ Puis qu'en moy firent tant les traces de ses doigts.	/ Since the marks of her fingers worked so much in me?
1.29.20	Ie tremblois deuant elle, et attendois, transi, Pour venger mon forfaict quelque iuste sentence, A moy mesme consent du poids de mon offence, Lors qu'elle me dict, va, ie te prens à mercy. Que mon loz desormais par tout soit esclarcy: Employe là tes ans: et sans plus, mes-huy pense D'enrichir de mon nom par tes vers nostre France,	I trembled before her and, frozen with fear, awaited Some just sentence to avenge my crime, Aware myself of the weight of my offense, When she said to me: "Go, I grant you mercy. Let my praise from now on shine out everywhere:

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
	Couure de vers ta faute, et paye moy ainsi. Sus donc ma plume, il faut, pour iouyr de ma peine Courir par sa grandeur, d'vne plus large veine. Mais regarde à son œil, qu'il ne nous abandonne. Sans ses yeux, nos esprits se mourroient languissants.	Spend your years on that; and from this day think only Of enriching our France with my name through your verses; Cover your fault with verse, and pay me so." Up then, my pen: to reap the fruit of my pains We must range over her greatness in an ampler vein. But watch her eye, lest it abandon us. Without her eyes our spirits would languish and die.
	/ Ils nous donnent le cœur, ils nous donnent le sens. / Pour se payer de moy, il faut qu'elle me donne.	/ They give us heart, they give us sense. / For her to be paid by me, she must first give to me.
1.29.21	O vous maudits sonnets, vous qui printes l'audace De toucher à madame: ô malings et peruers, Des Muses le reproche, et honte de mes vers: Si ie vous feis iamais, s'il faut que ie me fasse Ce tort de confesser vous tenir de ma race, Lors pour vous, les ruisseaux ne furent pas ouuerts D'Appollon le doré, des muses aux yeux verts, Mais vous receut naissants Tisiphone en leur place. Si i'ay oncq quelque part à la postérité Ie veux que l'vn et l'autre en soit desherité.	O you accursed sonnets, you who had the audacity To touch upon my lady: O spiteful and perverse, Reproach of the Muses and shame of my verse: If ever I made you, if I must do myself The wrong of confessing that you are of my stock, Then for you the streams were not opened Of golden Apollo and the green-eyed Muses, But Tisiphone received you at your birth in their place. If I ever have any share in posterity, I want both the one and the other of you disinherited of it.[10]
	/ Et si au feu vangeur des or ie ne vous donne, C'est pour vous diffamer, viuez chetifs, viuez, Viuez aux yeux de tous, de tout honneur priuez Car c'est pour vous punir, qu'ores ie vous pardonne.	/ And if I do not give you at once to the avenging fire, It is to disgrace you: live, wretches, live, Live before the eyes of all, stripped of all honor, For it is to punish you that I now pardon you.
1.29.22	N'ayez plus mes amis, n'ayez plus cette enuie Que ie cesse d'aimer, laissez moy obstiné, Viure et mourir ainsi, puis qu'il est ordonné, Mon amour c'est le fil, auquel se tient ma vie. Ainsi me dict la fée, ainsi en Ægrie Elle feit Meleagre à l'amour destiné, Et alluma sa souche à l'heure qu'il fust né, Et dict, toy, et ce feu, tenez vous compaignie.	Have no more, my friends, have no more this wish That I should cease to love; leave me, obstinate, To live and die this way, since it is so decreed: My love is the thread on which my life hangs. So the fairy told me; so in Aeagria She made Meleager destined for love, And lit his log at the hour he was born, And said: "You and this fire, keep each other company."[11]
	/ Elle le dict ainsi, et la fin ordonnée Suyuit apres le fil de cette destinée, La souche (ce dict lon) au feu fut consommée, Et deslors (grand miracle) en vn mesme moment	/ So she said, and the appointed end Followed after along the thread of that destiny; The log (so they say) was consumed in the fire, And then (great miracle) in one and the same moment

10 Tisiphone was one of the Furies, the avenging goddesses of Greek myth.
11 In Greek myth the Fates decreed at Meleager's birth that he would live only until a certain log had burned; his mother later threw it into the fire.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
	On veid tout à vn coup, du miserable amant La vie et le tison, s'en aller en fumée.	Were seen all at once, of the wretched lover, The life and the brand going up in smoke.
1.29.23	Quand tes yeux conquerans estonné ie regarde, I'y veoy dedans à clair tout mon espoir escript, I'y veoy dedans amour, luy mesme qui me rit, Et m'y monstre mignard le bon heur qu'il me garde. Mais quand de te parler par fois ie me hazarde, C'est lors que mon espoir desseiché se tarit. Et d'aduouer iamais ton œil, qui me nourrit, D'vn seul mot de saueur, cruelle tu n'as garde. Si tes yeux sont pour moy, or voy ce que ie dis, Ce sont ceux-là, sans plus, à qui ie me rendis. Mon Dieu quelle querelle en toy mesme se dresse, Si ta bouche et tes yeux se veulent desmentir.	When, stunned, I gaze into your conquering eyes, I see in them, clearly written, all my hope; I see in them Love himself, smiling at me, And sweetly showing me the happiness he keeps for me. But when at times I venture to speak to you, It is then that my hope dries up and runs out. And to vouch, ever, for your eye that feeds me With one word of favor, cruel one, you never will. If your eyes are for me—now mark what I say— They are the ones, and no others, to whom I surrendered. My God, what a quarrel rises within you If your mouth and your eyes mean to give each other the lie.
	/ Mieux vaut, mon doux tourment, mieux vaut les departir, / Et que ie prenne au mot de tes yeux la promesse.	/ Better, my sweet torment, better to settle between them, / And let me take your eyes at their word and keep their promise.
1.29.24	Ce sont tes yeux tranchans qui me font le courage Ie veoy saulter dedans la gaye liberté, Et mon petit archer, qui mene à son costé La belle gaillardise et plaisir le volage. Mais apres, la rigueur de ton triste langage Me montre dans ton cœur la fiere honnesteté Et condamné ie veoy la dure chasteté, Là grauement assise et la vertu sauuage, Ainsi mon temps diuers par ces vagues se passe. Ores son œil m'appelle, or sa bouche me chasse. Helas, en cest estrif, combien ay i'enduré.	It is your piercing eyes that give me courage: I see gay freedom leaping in them, And my little archer, who leads at his side Lovely high spirits and fickle pleasure. But afterward the severity of your stern speech Shows me proud honor in your heart, And, condemned, I see hard chastity Gravely seated there, and fierce virtue. So my changing time passes on these waves: Now her eye calls me, now her mouth drives me off. Alas, in this strife, how much I have endured!
	/ Et puis qu'on pense auoir d'amour quelque asseurance, Sans cesse nuict et iour à la seruir ie pense, Ny encor de mon mal, ne puis estre asseuré.	/ And then let anyone think he has some assurance in love! Ceaselessly, night and day, I think of serving her, And still I cannot be sure even of my suffering.
1.29.25	Or dis-ie bien, mon esperance est morte. Or est-ce faict de mon aise et mon bien. Mon mal est clair: maintenant ie veoy bien, I'ay espousé la douleur que ie porte. Tout me court sus, rien ne me reconforte, Tout m'abandonne et d'elle ie n'ay rien, Sinon tousiours quelque nouueau soustien, Qui rend ma peine et ma douleur plus forte. Ce que i'attends, c'est vn iour d'obtenir Quelques soupirs des gens de l'aduenir: Quelqu'vn dira dessus moy par pitié:	Now I can truly say my hope is dead. Now it is all over with my ease and my good. My ill is plain: now I see clearly I have wedded the grief I bear. Everything assails me, nothing comforts me, Everything forsakes me, and from her I get nothing But ever some new prop That makes my pain and my grief the stronger. What I wait for is one day to win A few sighs from the people of times to come:

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
	Sa dame et luy nasquirent destinez, Egalement de mourir obstinez, L'vn en rigueur, et l'autre en amitié.	Someone will say over me, out of pity: "His lady and he were born destined, Equally obstinate in dying, The one in harshness, the other in love."
1.29.26	I'ay tant vescu, chetif, en ma langueur, Qu'or i'ay veu rompre, et suis encor en vie, Mon esperance auant mes yeux rauie, Contre l'escueil de sa fiere rigueur. Que m'a seruy de tant d'ans la longueur? Elle n'est pas de ma peine assouuie: Elle s'en rit, et n'a point d'autre enuie, Que de tenir mon mal en sa vigueur. Donques i'auray, mal'heureux en aimant Tousiours vn cœur, tousiours nouueau tourment. Ie me sens bien que i'en suis hors d'halaine, Prest à laisser la vie soubs le faix: Qu'y feroit-on sinon ce que ie fais? Piqué du mal, ie m'obstine en ma peine.	I have lived so long, wretched, in my languor, That now I have seen—and am still alive— My hope, snatched away before my eyes, broken Against the reef of her proud harshness. What good to me has been the length of so many years? She is not sated with my pain: She laughs at it, and has no other wish Than to keep my suffering in full vigor. So I shall have, unhappy in loving Always one heart, always fresh torment. I feel that I am quite out of breath, Ready to give up my life under the burden: What could one do but what I am doing? Stung by suffering, I persist in my pain.
1.29.27	Puis qu'ainsi sont mes dures destinées, I'en saouleray, si ie puis, mon soucy. Si i'ay du mal, elle le veut aussi. I'accompliray mes peines ordonnées. Nymphes des bois qui auez estonnées, De mes douleurs, ie croy quelque mercy, Qu'en pensez vous? puis-ie durer ainsi, Si à mes maux trefues ne sont donnees? Or si quelqu'vne à m'escouter s'encline, Oyez pour Dieu ce qu'ores ie deuine. Le iour est pres que mes forces ia vaines Ne pourront plus fournir à mon tourment. C'est mon espoir, si ie meurs en aymant, A donc, ie croy, failliray-ie à mes peines.	Since such are my hard destinies, I shall glut my care with them, if I can. If I suffer, she wills it too. I shall fulfill my appointed pains. Nymphs of the woods, who have been stunned by my sorrows Into some pity, I believe, What do you think? Can I last like this If no truce is granted to my ills? Now if one of you is inclined to hear me, Listen, for God's sake, to what I now foresee: The day is near when my strength, already spent, Will no longer be able to keep up with my torment. It is my hope that if I die loving, Then, I believe, I shall be done with my pains.
1.29.28	Lors que lasse est, de me lasser ma peine, Amour d'vn bien mon mal refreschissant, Flate au cœur mort ma playe languissant, Nourrit mon mal, et luy faict prendre alaine, Lors ie conçoy quelque esperance vaine: Mais aussi tost, ce dur tyran, s'il sent Que mon espoir se renforce en croissant, Pour l'estoufer, cent tourmens il m'ameine Encor tous frez: lors ie me veois blasmant D'auoir esté rebelle à mon tourmant. Viue le mal, ô dieux, qui me deuore, Viue à son gré mon tourmant rigoureux.	When my pain is weary of wearying me, Love, refreshing my ill with some good, Soothes my languishing wound in my dead heart, Feeds my ill and lets it catch its breath; Then I conceive some vain hope: But at once this harsh tyrant, if he feels My hope growing stronger as it grows, Brings me a hundred torments to stifle it, All fresh again: then I find myself blaming myself For having rebelled against my torment. Long live the ill, O gods, that devours me! Long live my harsh torment, as it pleases!

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
	O bien-heureux, et bien-heureux encore Qui sans relasche est tousiours mal'heureux.	O happy, and happy again, He who without respite is always unhappy!
1.29.29	Si contre amour ie n'ay autre deffence Ie m'en plaindray, mes vers le maudiront, Et apres moy les roches rediront Le tort qu'il faict à ma dure constance. Puis que de luy i'endure cette offence, Au moings tout haut, mes rithmes le diront, Et nos neueus, alors qu'ils me liront, En l'outrageant, m'en feront la vengeance. Ayant perdu tout l'aise que i'auois, Ce sera peu que de perdre ma voix. S'on sçait l'aigreur de mon triste soucy, Et fut celuy qui m'a faict cette playe, Il en aura, pour si dur cœur qu'il aye, Quelque pitié, mais non pas de mercy.	If I have no other defense against Love, I shall complain of him; my verses will curse him, And after me the rocks will repeat The wrong he does to my hard constancy. Since I endure this offense from him, At least my rhymes will proclaim it aloud, And our descendants, when they read me, Will avenge me by reviling him. Having lost all the ease I had, It will be little to lose my voice. If the bitterness of my sad care is known, Even he who dealt me this wound, However hard a heart he has, Will feel some pity for it—but no mercy.
1.29.30	Ia reluisoit la benoiste iournée Que la nature au monde te deuoit, Quand des thresors qu'elle te reseruoit Sa grande clef, te fust abandonnée. Tu prins la grace à toy seule ordonnée, Tu pillas tant de beautez qu'elle auoit: Tant qu'elle, fiere, alors qu'elle te veoit En est par fois, elle mesme estonnée. Ta main de prendre en fin se contenta: Mais la nature encor te presenta, Pour t'enrichir cette terre ou nous sommes. Tu n'en prins rien: mais en toy tu t'en ris, Te sentant bien en auoir assez pris Pour estre icy royne du cœur des hommes.	Already the blessed day was shining That nature owed the world in you, When the great key to the treasures She had kept for you was handed over to you. You took the grace meant for you alone; You plundered so many of the beauties she had That she, proud as she is, when she sees you, Is at times stunned at it herself. At last your hand was content to take no more: But nature offered you as well, To enrich you, this earth where we live. You took none of it, but laughed to yourself, Well aware that you had taken enough To be queen here of the hearts of men.

I.30 Of Moderation

De la Moderation
Even virtue can be pursued to excess; Montaigne praises temperate natures and moderation even in pleasure and devotion.

FRENCH

1.30.1 COMME si nous auions l'attouchement infect, nous corrompons par nostre maniement les choses qui d'elles mesmes sont belles et bonnes. Nous pouuons saisir la vertu, de façon qu'elle en deuiendra vicieuse: si nous l'embrassons d'vn desir trop aspre et violant. Ceux qui disent qu'il n'y a iamais d'exces en la vertu, d'autant que ce n'est plus vertu, si l'exces y est, se iouent des paroles. *Insani sapiens nomen ferat, æquus iniqui, / Vltra quàm satis est, virtutem si petat ipsam.* C'est vne subtile consideration de la philosophie. On peut et trop aymer la vertu, et se porter excessiuement en vne action iuste. A ce biaiz s'accommode la voix diuine, Ne soyez pas plus sages qu'il ne faut, mais soyez sobrement sages.

I'ay veu tel grand, blesser la reputation de sa religion, pour se montrer religieux outre tout exemple des hommes de sa sorte. I'ayme des natures temperees et moyennes. L'immoderation vers le bien mesme, si elle ne m'offense, elle m'estonne, et me met en peine de la baptizer. Ny la mere de Pausanias, qui donna la premiere instruction, et porta la premiere pierre à la mort de son fils: ny le dictateur Posthumius, qui feit mourir le sien, que l'ardeur de ieunesse auoit heureusement poussé sur les ennemis, vn peu auant son reng, ne me semble si iuste, comme estrange. Et n'ayme ny à conseiller, ny à suiure vne vertu si sauuage et si chere.

L'archer qui outrepasse le blanc, faut comme celuy, qui n'y arriue pas. Et les yeux me troublent à monter à coup, vers vne grande lumiere également comme à deualler à l'ombre.

1.30.2 Calliclez en Platon dit, l'extremité de la philosophie estre dommageable: et conseille de ne s'y enfoncer outre les

ENGLISH

AS if our touch were infected, we corrupt by our handling things that are fine and good in themselves. We can grasp virtue in such a way that it becomes vicious, if we embrace it with too fierce and violent a desire. Those who say that there is never excess in virtue, since it is no longer virtue if there is excess in it, are playing with words. *Let the wise man bear the name of madman, and the just man of unjust, / If he pursues virtue itself beyond what is enough.* This is a subtle reflection of philosophy. One can both love virtue too much and behave excessively in a just action. The divine word fits this view: "Be not wiser than you should be, but be soberly wise."[1]

I have seen a certain great man damage the reputation of his religion by showing himself religious beyond every example of men of his kind. I like natures that are temperate and middling. Immoderation even in the direction of good, if it does not offend me, astonishes me, and leaves me at a loss what to call it. Neither the mother of Pausanias, who gave the first information against her son and carried the first stone for his death, nor the dictator Postumius, who put to death his own son, whom the ardor of youth had carried successfully against the enemy a little ahead of his rank, seems to me so much just as strange. And I like neither to advise nor to follow a virtue so fierce and so costly.[2]

The archer who overshoots the target misses just as much as the one who falls short of it. And my eyes are as troubled by climbing suddenly toward a great light as by going down into the dark.

Callicles in Plato says that philosophy carried to the extreme is harmful, and advises us not to plunge into it beyond the bounds of profit. Taken

1 The verse is from Horace, Epistles; the "divine word" is Saint Paul, Romans 12:3.

FRENCH

bornes du profit: que prinse auec moderation, elle est plaisante et commode: mais qu'en fin elle rend vn homme sauuage et vicieux: desdaigneux des religions, et loix communes: ennemy de la conuersation ciuile: ennemy des voluptez humaines: incapable de toute administration politique, et de secourir autruy, et de se secourir soy-mesme: propre à estre impunement souffletté. Il dit vray: car en son exces, elle esclaue nostre naturelle franchise: et nous desuoye par vne importune subtilité, du beau et plain chemin, que nature nous trace.

1.30.3 L'amitié que nous portons à nos femmes, elle est tres-legitime: la Theologie ne laisse pas de la brider pourtant, et de la restraindre. Il me semble auoir leu autresfois chez S. Thomas, en vn endroit où il condamne les mariages des parans és degrez deffendus, cette raison parmy les autres: Qu'il y a danger que l'amitié qu'on porte à vne telle femme soit immoderée: car si l'affection maritale s'y trouue entiere et parfaicte, comme elle doit; et qu'on la surcharge encore de celle qu'on doit à la parentele, il n'y a point de doubte, que ce surcroist n'emporte vn tel mary hors les barrieres de la raison.

1.30.4 Les sciences qui reglent les mœurs des hommes, comme la Theologie et la Philosophie, elles se meslent de tout. Il n'est action si priuée et secrette, qui se desrobbe de leur cognoissance et iurisdiction. Bien apprentis sont ceux qui syndiquent leur liberté. Ce sont les femmes qui communiquent tant qu'on veut leurs pieces à garçonner: à medeciner, la honte le deffend. Ie veux donc de leur part apprendre cecy aux maris, s'il s'en trouue encore qui y soient trop acharnez: c'est que les plaisirs mesmes qu'ils ont à l'accointance de leurs femmes, sont reprouuez, si la moderation n'y est obseruée: et qu'il y a dequoy faillir en licence et desbordement en ce subiect là, comme en vn subiect illegitime.

Ces encheriments deshontez, que la chaleur premiere nous suggere en ce ieu, sont non indecemment seulement, mais dommageablement employez enuers noz femmes. Qu'elles apprennent l'impudence au moins d'vne autre main. Elles sont tousiours assés esueillées pour nostre besoing. Ie ne m'y suis seruy que de l'instruction naturelle et simple.

ENGLISH

in moderation, he says, it is pleasant and useful; but in the end it makes a man uncouth and vicious, contemptuous of religion and the common laws, an enemy of civil society, an enemy of human pleasures, incapable of any political administration and of helping others or helping himself, fit to be slapped in the face with impunity. He is right: for in its excess it enslaves our natural freedom, and by a troublesome subtlety leads us astray from the fine, level road that nature marks out for us.[3]

The love we bear our wives is entirely lawful; theology nonetheless curbs and restrains it. I seem to have read once in Saint Thomas, in a passage where he condemns marriages between relatives within the forbidden degrees, this reason among others: that there is a danger that the love one bears such a wife may be immoderate. For if marital affection is found there whole and perfect, as it should be, and one loads on top of it the affection owed to kinship as well, there is no doubt that this surplus will carry such a husband beyond the barriers of reason.[4]

The sciences that regulate men's morals, such as theology and philosophy, meddle in everything. There is no action so private and secret that it escapes their knowledge and jurisdiction. Those who find fault with this freedom of theirs are mere novices. It is women who will share their private parts as freely as you please for lovemaking; for doctoring, shame forbids it. So on their behalf I want to teach husbands this, if there are still any who are too intent on it: that even the pleasures they take in intimacy with their wives are condemned if moderation is not observed, and that one can sin through license and excess in this matter as in an unlawful one.

Those shameless refinements that the first heat suggests to us in this game are employed with our wives not only indecently but harmfully. Let them learn shamelessness at least from another hand. They are always wide enough awake for our needs. For my part I have used only nature's simple instruction.

2 Pausanias, the Spartan regent, was walled up in a temple for treason, his mother laying the first stone; Aulus Postumius Tubertus, Roman dictator in 431 BC, reportedly executed his son for fighting out of rank.
3 Callicles is a speaker in Plato's dialogue Gorgias.
4 Saint Thomas Aquinas (1225–1274), the scholastic theologian.

FRENCH

ENGLISH

1.30.5 C’est vne religieuse liaison et deuote que le mariage: voyla pourquoy le plaisir qu’on en tire, ce doit estre vn plaisir retenu, serieux et meslé à quelque seuerité: ce doit estre vne volupté aucunement prudente et consciencieuse. Et par ce que sa principale fin c’est la generation, il y en a qui mettent en doubte, si lors que nous sommes sans l’esperance de ce fruict, comme quand elles sont hors d’aage, ou enceintes, il est permis d’en rechercher l’embrassement. C’est vn homicide à la mode de Platon. Certaines nations, et entre autres la Mahumetane, abominent la conionction auec les femmes enceintes. Plusieurs aussi auec celles qui ont leurs flueurs.

Marriage is a religious and devout bond: that is why the pleasure one takes from it should be a restrained, serious pleasure, mixed with some severity; it should be a pleasure that is in some measure prudent and conscientious. And because its principal end is procreation, there are those who question whether, when we have no hope of that fruit—as when women are past the age, or pregnant—it is permitted to seek their embrace. It is homicide, after the fashion of Plato. Certain nations, among others the Muslims, abhor intercourse with pregnant women. Many also abhor it with women who are having their periods.[5]

Zenobia ne receuoit son mary que pour vne charge; et cela fait elle le laissoit courir tout le temps de sa conception, luy donnant lors seulement loy de recommencer: braue et genereux exemple de mariage. C’est de quelque poëte diseteux et affamé de ce deduit, que Platon emprunta cette narration: Que Iuppiter fit à sa femme vne si chaleureuse charge vn iour, que ne pouuant auoir patience qu’elle eust gaigné son lict, il la versa sur le plancher: et par la vehemence du plaisir, oublia les resolutions grandes et importantes, qu’il venoit de prendre auec les autres Dieux en sa cour celeste: se ventant qu’il l’auoit trouué aussi bon ce coup là, que lors que premierement il la depucella à cachette de leurs parents.

Zenobia received her husband only for a single bout, and that done she let him roam all the while she was carrying the child, giving him leave to begin again only then: a brave and noble example of marriage. It was from some poet, needy and starved of this sport, that Plato borrowed this story: that Jupiter one day made so heated a charge on his wife that, unable to wait until she had reached her bed, he tumbled her onto the floor; and in the violence of his pleasure he forgot the great and weighty resolutions he had just taken with the other gods in his heavenly court, boasting that he had found it as good that time as when he first deflowered her behind their parents’ backs.[6]

1.30.6 Les Roys de Perse appelloient leurs femmes à la compagnie de leurs festins, mais quand le vin venoit à les eschauffer en bon escient, et qu’il falloit tout à fait, lascher la bride à la volupté, ils les r’enuoioient en leur priué; pour ne les faire participantes de leurs appetits immoderez; et faisoient venir en leur lieu, des femmes, ausquelles ils n’eussent point cette obligation de respect. Tous plaisirs et toutes gratifications ne sont pas bien logées en toutes gens. Epaminondas auoit fait emprisonner vn garçon desbauché; Pelopidas le pria de le mettre en liberté en sa faueur; il l’en refusa, et l’accorda à vne sienne garse, qui aussi l’en pria: disant, que c’estoit vne gratification deuë à vne amie, non à vn Capitaine.

The kings of Persia invited their wives to keep them company at their feasts; but when the wine began to heat them in earnest, and they had to give pleasure free rein altogether, they sent the wives back to their private quarters, so as not to make them share in their immoderate appetites, and had other women brought in their place, to whom they owed no such duty of respect. Not all pleasures and all favors are fitly bestowed on all people. Epaminondas had had a dissolute young man imprisoned; Pelopidas begged him to set him free as a favor to himself; he refused, and granted it to a girl of his who also begged it of him, saying that it was a favor due to a lady friend, not to a captain.

Sophocles estant compagnon en la Preture auec Pericles, voyant de cas de fortune passer vn beau garçon: O le beau

Sophocles, sharing the praetorship with Pericles, happened to see a handsome boy go by. “Oh, what a handsome boy!” he said to Pericles. “That would

5 In the Laws Plato condemns intercourse not aimed at procreation as a kind of murder of the human race.

FRENCH

garçon que voyla! feit-il à Pericles. Cela seroit bon à vn autre qu'à vn Preteur, luy dit Pericles; qui doit auoir non les mains seulement, mais aussi les yeux chastes. Ælius Verus l'Empereur respondit à sa femme comme elle se plaignoit, dequoy il se laissoit aller à l'amour d'autres femmes; qu'il le faisoit par occasion consciencieuse, d'autant que le mariage estoit vn nom d'honneur et dignité, non de folastre et lasciue concupiscence. Et nostre histoire Ecclesiastique a conserué auec honneur la memoire de cette femme, qui repudia son mary, pour ne vouloir seconder et soustenir ses attouchemens trop insolens et desbordez.

Il n'est en somme aucune si iuste volupté, en laquelle l'excez et l'intemperance ne nous soit reprochable. Mais à parler en bon escient, est-ce pas vn miserable animal que l'homme? A peine est-il en son pouuoir par sa condition naturelle, de gouster vn seul plaisir entier et pur, encore se met-il en peine de le retrancher par discours: il n'est pas assez chetif, si par art et par estude il n'augmente sa misere, *Fortunæ miseras auximus arte vias.*

1.30.7 La sagesse humaine faict bien sottement l'ingenieuse, de s'exercer à rabattre le nombre et la douceur des voluptez, qui nous appartiennent: comme elle faict fauorablement et industrieusement, d'employer ses artifices à nous peigner et farder les maux, et en alleger le sentiment. Si i'eusse esté chef de part, i'eusse prins autre voye plus naturelle: qui est à dire, vraye, commode et saincte: et me fusse peut estre rendu assez fort pour la borner. Quoy que noz medecins spirituels et corporels, comme par complot faict entre eux, ne trouuent aucune voye à la guerison, ny remede aux maladies du corps et de l'ame, que par le tourment, la douleur et la peine.

Les veilles, les ieusnes, les haires, les exils lointains et solitaires, les prisons perpetuelles, les verges et autres afflictions, ont esté introduites pour cela. Mais en telle condition, que ce soyent veritablement afflictions, et qu'il y ait de l'aigreur poignante: et qu'il n'en aduienne point comme à vn Gallio, lequel ayant esté enuoyé en exil en l'isle de Lesbos, on fut aduerty à Rome qu'il s'y donnoit

ENGLISH

be fine for anyone but a praetor," Pericles told him, "who must keep not only his hands but his eyes chaste." The emperor Aelius Verus, when his wife complained that he let himself go in love affairs with other women, answered that he did it for reasons of conscience, since marriage was a name of honor and dignity, not of playful and lascivious lust. And our ecclesiastical history has preserved with honor the memory of the woman who repudiated her husband because she would not second and put up with his too insolent and unbridled caresses.[7]

In short, there is no pleasure so legitimate that excess and intemperance in it are not open to reproach. But, to speak in earnest, is not man a wretched animal? Scarcely is it in his power, by his natural condition, to taste a single whole and pure pleasure, and still he goes to the trouble of cutting it back by reasoning. He is not wretched enough unless he increases his misery by art and study: *By art we have added to the miseries of Fortune's paths.*[8]

Human wisdom very foolishly plays the clever one when it exerts itself to reduce the number and sweetness of the pleasures that belong to us, just as it acts kindly and ingeniously when it uses its artifices to comb and paint over our ills and lighten our feeling of them. If I had been the head of a sect, I would have taken another, more natural path—that is to say, true, comfortable and holy—and perhaps I would have made myself strong enough to keep it within bounds. As it is, our physicians of the soul and of the body, as if by a plot agreed among them, find no road to healing and no remedy for the diseases of body and soul except through torment, pain and suffering.

Vigils, fasts, hair shirts, distant and solitary exiles, perpetual imprisonment, the rod and other afflictions have been introduced for that purpose. But on condition that they truly be afflictions, with a sharp, stinging bitterness in them, and that it not turn out as with one Gallio. He had been sent into exile on the island of Lesbos, and word came to

6 Zenobia was queen of Palmyra in the 3rd century AD. The story of Jupiter and Juno comes from Homer, Iliad 14, as cited in Plato's Republic, book 3.
7 Sophocles and Pericles were fellow generals (strategoi) of Athens, which Montaigne renders by the Roman "praetorship." Lucius Aelius Verus was Hadrian's adopted heir, made Caesar but never reigning.
8 Propertius, Elegies.

FRENCH

du bon temps, et que ce qu'on luy auoit enioint pour peine, luy tournoit à commodité. Parquoy ils se rauiserent de le r'appeler pres de sa femme, et en sa maison; et luy ordonnerent de s'y tenir, pour accommoder leur punition à son ressentiment.

Car à qui le ieune aiguiseroit la santé et l'allegresse, à qui le poisson seroit plus appetissant que la chair, ce ne seroit plus recepte salutaire: non plus qu'en l'autre medecine, les drogues n'ont point d'effect à l'endroit de celuy qui les prent auec appetit et plaisir. L'amertume et la difficulté sont circonstances seruants à leur operation. Le naturel qui accepteroit la rubarbe comme familiere, en corromproit l'vsage: il faut que ce soit chose qui blesse nostre estomac pour le guerir: et icy faut la regle commune, que les choses se guerissent par leurs contraires: car le mal y guerit le mal.

1.30.8 Cette impression se rapporte aucunement à cette autre si ancienne, de penser gratifier au Ciel et à la nature par nostre massacre et homicide, qui fut vniuersellement embrassée en toutes religions. Encore du temps de noz peres, Amurat en la prinse de l'Isthme, immola six cens ieunes hommes Grecs à l'ame de son pere: afin que ce sang seruist de propitiation à l'expiation des pechez du trespassé. Et en ces nouuelles terres descouuertes en nostre aage, pures encore et vierges au prix des nostres, l'vsage en est aucunement receu par tout. Toutes leurs Idoles s'abreuuent de sang humain, non sans diuers exemples d'horrible cruauté. On les brule vifs, et demy rostis on les retire du brasier, pour leur arracher le cœur et les entrailles.

A d'autres, voire aux femmes, on les escorche vifues, et de leur peau ainsi sanglante en reuest on et masque d'autres. Et non moins d'exemples de constance et resolution. Car ces pauures gens sacrifiables, vieillars, femmes, enfans, vont quelques iours auant, questans eux mesmes les aumosnes pour l'offrande de leur sacrifice, et se presentent à la boucherie chantans et dançans auec les assistans.

1.30.9 Les ambassadeurs du Roy de Mexico, faisans entendre à Fernand Cortez la grandeur de leur maistre; apres luy auoir dict, qu'il auoit trente vassaux, desquels chacun

ENGLISH

Rome that he was having a fine time there, and that what had been imposed on him as a penalty was turning to his comfort. So they changed their minds and recalled him to his wife and his home, and ordered him to stay there, in order to suit their punishment to his feelings.[9]

For if fasting were to sharpen a man's health and cheerfulness, if fish were more appetizing to him than meat, it would no longer be a salutary prescription; any more than, in the other kind of medicine, drugs have any effect on someone who takes them with appetite and pleasure. Bitterness and difficulty are circumstances that serve their working. A constitution that took to rhubarb as something familiar would spoil its use: it has to be something that hurts our stomach in order to cure it. And here the common rule fails, that things are cured by their contraries; for here ill cures ill.

This notion is somewhat related to that other very ancient one, of thinking we gratify heaven and nature by our own slaughter and killing, which was universally embraced in all religions. Even in our fathers' time Amurat, at the taking of the Isthmus, sacrificed six hundred young Greeks to his father's soul, so that this blood might serve as a propitiation to expiate the dead man's sins. And in these new lands discovered in our age, still pure and virgin compared with ours, the practice is in some measure accepted everywhere. All their idols drink their fill of human blood, not without various examples of horrible cruelty. They burn the victims alive, and pull them half-roasted from the fire to tear out their hearts and entrails.[10]

Others, even women, are flayed alive, and with their skin, still bloody, they dress and mask others. And there are no fewer examples of constancy and resolve. For these poor people destined for sacrifice—old men, women, children—go about for some days beforehand begging alms themselves for the offering of their sacrifice, and present themselves at the slaughter singing and dancing with the onlookers.

The ambassadors of the King of Mexico, explaining to Hernán Cortés the greatness of their master, told him that he had thirty vassals, each of whom

9 Junius Gallio, a Roman senator exiled under Tiberius, as told by Tacitus, Annals 6.
10 The Ottoman sultan Murad II, who stormed the Hexamilion wall across the Isthmus of Corinth in 1446.

FRENCH

pouuoit assembler cent mille combatans, et qu'il se tenoit en la plus belle et forte ville qui fust soubs le Ciel, luy adiousterent, qu'il auoit à sacrifier aux Dieux cinquante mille hommes par an. De vray, ils disent qu'il nourrissoit la guerre auec certains grands peuples voisins, non seulement pour l'exercice de la ieunesse du païs, mais principallement pour auoir dequoy fournir à ses sacrifices, par des prisonniers de guerre. Ailleurs, en certain bourg, pour la bien-venue dudit Cortez, ils sacrifierent cinquante hommes tout à la fois.

Ie diray encore ce compte: Aucuns de ces peuples ayants esté battuz par luy, enuoyerent le recognoistre et rechercher d'amitié: les messagers luy presenterent trois sortes de presens, en cette maniere: Seigneur voyla cinq esclaues: si tu és vn Dieu fier, qui te paisses de chair et de sang, mange les, et nous t'en amerrons d'auantage: si tu és vn Dieu debonnaire, voyla de l'encens et des plumes: si tu és homme, prens les oiseaux et les fruicts que voicy.

ENGLISH

could raise a hundred thousand fighting men, and that he lived in the finest and strongest city under heaven; and then they added that he had fifty thousand men a year to sacrifice to the gods. Indeed, they say that he kept up war with certain great neighboring peoples not only to exercise the youth of the country but chiefly to have prisoners of war with which to supply his sacrifices. Elsewhere, in a certain town, to welcome this same Cortés, they sacrificed fifty men all at once.

I will tell this story too. Some of these peoples, having been beaten by him, sent to acknowledge him and seek his friendship. The messengers presented him with three kinds of gifts, in this manner: "Lord, here are five slaves: if you are a fierce god who feeds on flesh and blood, eat them, and we will bring you more; if you are a kindly god, here are incense and feathers; if you are a man, take these birds and fruits."

I.31 Of Cannibals

Des Cannibales

Describing Brazilian peoples, Montaigne argues that Europeans, with their tortures and cruelties, are the true barbarians.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
1.31.1	QVAND le Roy Pyrrhus passa en Italie, apres qu'il eut recongneu l'ordonnance de l'armée que les Romains luy enuoyoient au deuant; Ie ne sçay, dit-il, quels barbares sont ceux-cy (car les Grecs appelloyent ainsi toutes les nations estrangeres) mais la disposition de cette armée que ie voy, n'est aucunement barbare. Autant en dirent les Grecs de celle que Flaminius fit passer en leur païs: et Philippus voyant d'vn tertre, l'ordre et distribution du camp Romain, en son Royaume, sous Publius Sulpicius Galba. Voilà comment il se faut garder de s'attacher aux opinions vulgaires, et les faut iuger par la voye de la raison, non par la voix commune.	WHEN King Pyrrhus crossed into Italy, after he had surveyed the formation of the army the Romans were sending to meet him, "I do not know," he said, "what barbarians these are" (for the Greeks called all foreign nations so), "but the disposition of this army that I see is not in the least barbarous." The Greeks said as much of the army that Flamininus brought into their country; and so did Philip, when he saw from a hillock the order and layout of the Roman camp in his kingdom under Publius Sulpicius Galba. That shows how we must beware of clinging to common opinions, and must judge them by the way of reason, not by popular report.[1]
1.31.2	I'ay eu long temps auec moy vn homme qui auoit demeuré dix ou douze ans en cet autre monde, qui a esté descouuert en nostre siecle, en l'endroit où Vilegaignon print terre, qu'il surnomma la France Antartique. Cette descouuerte d'vn païs infiny, semble de grande consideration. Ie ne sçay si ie me puis respondre, qu'il ne s'en face à l'aduenir quelqu'autre, tant de personnages plus grands que nous ayans esté trompez en cette-cy. I'ay peur que nous ayons les yeux plus grands que le ventre, et plus de curiosité, que nous n'auons de capacité. Nous embrassons tout, mais nous n'estreignons que du vent.	For a long time I had with me a man who had lived ten or twelve years in that other world which has been discovered in our century, in the place where Villegaignon landed and which he named Antarctic France. This discovery of a boundless country seems a matter of great consequence. I do not know whether I can vouch that some other will not be made in the future, since so many greater men than we were mistaken about this one. I fear that our eyes are bigger than our stomachs, and that we have more curiosity than capacity. We embrace everything, but we clasp nothing but wind.[2]
1.31.3	Platon introduit Solon racontant auoir appris des Prestres de la ville de Saïs en Ægypte, que iadis et auant le deluge, il y auoit vne grande Isle nommée Atlantide, droict à la bouche du destroit de Gibaltar, qui tenoit plus de païs que l'Afrique et l'Asie toutes deux ensemble: et que les Roys de cette contrée là, qui ne possedoient pas seulement cette Isle, mais s'estoyent estendus dans la terre ferme si auant, qu'ils tenoyent de la largeur	Plato introduces Solon telling how he had learned from the priests of the city of Saïs in Egypt that long ago, before the Flood, there was a great island called Atlantis, right at the mouth of the Strait of Gibraltar, which held more land than Africa and Asia together. The kings of that country, who not only possessed this island but had extended so far into the mainland that they held the breadth of

1 Pyrrhus, king of Epirus, invaded Italy in 280 BC. Titus Quinctius Flamininus and Publius Sulpicius Galba led Roman forces against Philip V of Macedon around 200 BC.

2 Nicolas Durand de Villegaignon founded a short-lived French colony in the bay of Rio de Janeiro in 1555.

FRENCH

d'Afrique, iusques en Ægypte, et de la largeur de l'Europe, iusques en la Toscane, entreprindrent d'eniamber iusques sur l'Asie, et subiuguer toutes les nations qui bordent la mer Mediterranée, iusques au golfe de la mer Maiour: et pour cet effect, trauerserent les Espaignes, la Gaule, l'Italie iusques en la Grece, où les Atheniens les soustindrent: mais que quelque temps apres, et les Atheniens et eux et leur Isle furent engloutis par le deluge.

Il est bien vray-semblable, que cet extreme rauage d'eau ait faict des changemens estranges aux habitations de la terre: comme on tient que la mer a retranché la Sicile d'auec l'Italie: *Hæc loca vi quondam, et vasta conuulsa ruina Dissiluisse ferunt, cùm protinus vtraque tellus Vna foret;* Chypre d'auec la Surie; l'Isle de Negrepont, de la terre ferme de la Bœoce: et ioint ailleurs les terres qui estoient diuisées, comblant de limon et de sable les fosses d'entre-deux.

Sterilisque diu palus aptáque remis / Vicinas vrbes alit, et graue sentit aratrum. Mais il n'y a pas grande apparence, que cette Isle soit ce monde nouueau, que nous venons de descouurir: car elle touchoit quasi l'Espaigne, et ce seroit vn effect incroyable d'inundation, de l'en auoir reculée comme elle est, de plus de douze cens lieuës. Outre ce que les nauigations des modernes ont des-ia presque descouuert, que ce n'est point vne isle, ains terre ferme, et continente auec l'Inde Orientale d'vn costé, et auec les terres, qui sont soubs les deux poles d'autre part: ou si elle en est separée, que c'est d'vn si petit destroit et interualle, qu'elle ne mérite pas d'estre nommée Isle, pour cela.

1.31.4 Il semble qu'il y aye des mouuemens naturels les vns, les autres fieureux en ces grands corps, comme aux nostres. Quand ie considere l'impression que ma riuiere de Dordoigne faict de mon temps, vers la riue droicte de sa descente; et qu'en vingt ans elle a tant gaigné, et desrobé le fondement à plusieurs bastimens, ie vois bien que c'est vne agitation extraordinaire: car si elle fust tousiours allée ce train, ou deust aller à l'aduenir, la figure du monde seroit renuersée. Mais il leur prend des changements. Tantost elles s'espandent d'vn costé, tantost d'vn autre, tantost elles se contiennent. Ie ne parle pas des soudaines inondations dequoy nous manions les causes.

ENGLISH

Africa as far as Egypt and the breadth of Europe as far as Tuscany, undertook to stride over into Asia and subjugate all the nations bordering the Mediterranean as far as the gulf of the Black Sea. To that end they crossed the Spains, Gaul and Italy, as far as Greece, where the Athenians held them off; but some time later the Athenians, and they, and their island were swallowed up by the Flood.[3]

It is very likely that this extreme devastation by water made strange changes in the inhabited parts of the earth, as it is held that the sea cut off Sicily from Italy—*These lands, they say, once torn apart by force and vast upheaval,*
Sprang asunder, when before the two countries
Had been one—Cyprus from Syria, and the island of Negropont from the mainland of Boeotia; and that elsewhere it joined lands that were divided, filling the channels between them with mud and sand:[4]

And the marsh, long barren and fit for oars, / Feeds the neighboring towns and feels the heavy plow. But there is little likelihood that this island is the new world we have just discovered. For it almost touched Spain, and it would be an incredible effect of a flood to have pushed it back as far as it is now, more than twelve hundred leagues. Besides, the voyages of the moderns have already all but established that it is not an island but mainland, continuous with the East Indies on one side and with the lands under the two poles on the other; or if it is separated from them, it is by so small a strait and gap that it does not deserve to be called an island on that account.[5]

It seems that there are movements in these great bodies, as in ours, some natural, others feverish. When I consider the inroads that my river, the Dordogne, has made in my lifetime on the right bank as it flows down, and how in twenty years it has gained so much ground and undermined the foundations of several buildings, I can see that this is an extraordinary disturbance: for if it had always gone at this rate, or were to go on so in future, the face of the world would be turned upside down. But rivers are subject to changes. Sometimes they spread to one side, sometimes to anoth-

3 The story is told in Plato's Timaeus and Critias; Montaigne's "mer Maiour" is the Black Sea.
4 Virgil, Aeneid. Negropont is the island of Euboea.
5 Horace, Art of Poetry.

FRENCH

ENGLISH

er, sometimes they keep within their banks. I am not speaking of sudden floods, whose causes we can account for.

En Medoc, le long de la mer, mon frere Sieur d'Arsac, voit vne sienne terre, enseuelie soubs les sables, que la mer vomit deuant elle: le feste d'aucuns bastimens paroist encore: ses rentes et domaines se sont eschangez en pasquages bien maigres. Les habitans disent que depuis quelque temps, la mer se pousse si fort vers eux, qu'ils ont perdu quatre lieuës de terre. Ces sables sont ses fourriers. Et voyons de grandes montioies d'arenes mouuantes, qui marchent vne demie lieuë deuant elle, et gaignent païs.

In Médoc, along the sea, my brother the Sieur d'Arsac sees one of his estates buried under the sands that the sea spews out before it; the tops of some buildings still show; his rents and lands have turned into very thin pasture. The inhabitants say that for some time now the sea has been pushing toward them so hard that they have lost four leagues of land. These sands are its advance guard. And we see great dunes of shifting sand marching half a league ahead of it and gaining ground.[6]

1.31.5 L'autre tesmoignage de l'antiquité, auquel on veut rapporter cette descouuerte, est dans Aristote, au moins si ce petit liuret des merueilles inouyes est à luy. Il raconte là, que certains Carthaginois s'estants iettez au trauers de la mer Atlantique, hors le destroit de Gibaltar, et nauigé long temps, auoient descouuert en fin vne grande isle fertile, toute reuestuë de bois, et arrousée de grandes et profondes riuieres, fort esloignée de toutes terres fermes: et qu'eux, et autres depuis, attirez par la bonté et fertilité du terroir, s'y en allerent auec leurs femmes et enfans, et commencerent à s'y habituer.

The other testimony from antiquity to which people try to relate this discovery is in Aristotle—at least if that little book of unheard-of marvels is his. He tells there that certain Carthaginians set out across the Atlantic Ocean beyond the Strait of Gibraltar and, after sailing a long time, at last discovered a great fertile island, all clothed in forest and watered by great deep rivers, very far from any mainland; and that they, and others after them, drawn by the goodness and fertility of the soil, went there with their wives and children and began to settle.[7]

Les Seigneurs de Carthage, voyans que leur pays se dépeuploit peu à peu, firent deffence expresse sur peine de mort, que nul n'eust plus à aller là, et en chasserent ces nouueaux habitans, craignants, à ce qu'on dit, que par succession de temps ils ne vinsent à multiplier tellement qu'ils les supplantassent eux mesmes, et ruinassent leur estat. Cette narration d'Aristote n'a non plus d'accord auec nos terres neufues.

The lords of Carthage, seeing their country being gradually depopulated, expressly forbade anyone, on pain of death, to go there any more, and drove out these new inhabitants, fearing, it is said, that in course of time they might multiply so much that they would supplant the Carthaginians themselves and ruin their state. This account of Aristotle's agrees no better with our new lands.

A PLAIN WITNESS

A simple man who lived in Brazil is a better witness than clever cosmographers.

FRENCH

ENGLISH

1.31.6 Cet homme que i'auoy, estoit homme simple et grossier, qui est vne condition propre à rendre veritable tesmoignage. Car les fines gens remarquent bien plus curieusement, et plus de choses, mais ils les glosent: et pour faire valoir leur interpretation, et la persuader, ils ne se peuuent garder d'alterer vn peu l'Histoire: ils ne

This man I had was a simple, rough fellow, which is a condition well suited to bearing true witness. For clever people notice more things, and more carefully, but they gloss them; and to give weight to their interpretation and make it persuasive, they cannot help altering the story a little. They

6 Thomas de Montaigne, Sieur d'Arsac, the author's younger brother.
7 On Marvellous Things Heard, a collection ascribed to Aristotle but not by him.

FRENCH

vous representent iamais les choses pures; ils les inclinent et masquent selon le visage qu'ils leur ont veu: et pour donner credit à leur iugement, et vous y attirer, prestent volontiers de ce costé là à la matiere, l'allongent et l'amplifient. Ou il faut vn homme tres-fidelle, ou si simple, qu'il n'ait pas dequoy bastir et donner de la vraysemblance à des inuentions fauces; et qui n'ait rien espousé.

Le mien estoit tel: et outre cela il m'a faict voir à diuerses fois plusieurs mattelots et marchans, qu'il auoit cogneuz en ce voyage. Ainsi ie me contente de cette information, sans m'enquerir de ce que les Cosmographes en disent. Il nous faudroit des topographes, qui nous fissent narration particuliere des endroits où ils ont esté. Mais pour auoir cet auantage sur nous, d'auoir veu la Palestine, ils veulent iouïr du priuilege de nous conter nouuelles de tout le demeurant du monde. Ie voudroye que chacun escriuist ce qu'il sçait, et autant qu'il en sçait: non en cela seulement, mais en tous autres subiects.

Car tel peut auoir quelque particuliere science ou experience de la nature d'vne riuiere, ou d'vne fontaine, qui ne sçait au reste, que ce que chacun sçait: il entreprendra toutesfois, pour faire courir ce petit loppin, d'escrire toute la Physique. De ce vice sourdent plusieurs grandes incommoditez.

ENGLISH

never present things to you pure; they bend and mask them according to the face they saw them wear; and to give credit to their judgment and win you over to it, they are glad to add to the matter on that side, stretching and amplifying it. We need either a very honest man, or one so simple that he has not the wherewithal to build up false inventions and make them plausible, and who is wedded to nothing.

Mine was such a man; and besides, he brought me on various occasions several sailors and merchants he had known on that voyage. So I am content with this information, without inquiring what the cosmographers say about it. We would need topographers, to give us detailed accounts of the places where they have been. But because they have this advantage over us, of having seen Palestine, they want to enjoy the privilege of telling us news of all the rest of the world. I would like everyone to write what he knows, and as much as he knows of it—not in this matter only, but in all other subjects.

For a man may have some particular knowledge or experience of the nature of a river or a spring who otherwise knows only what everyone knows; yet to get this little scrap into circulation he will undertake to write the whole science of nature. From this vice spring many great drawbacks.

BARBAROUS AND WILD

Each man calls barbarism whatever is not his own practice; these peoples live close to nature.

FRENCH

1.31.7 Or ie trouue, pour reuenir à mon propos, qu'il n'y a rien de barbare et de sauuage en cette nation, à ce qu'on m'en a rapporté: sinon que chacun appelle barbarie, ce qui n'est pas de son vsage. Comme de vray nous n'auons autre mire de la verité, et de la raison, que l'exemple et idée des opinions et vsances du païs où nous sommes. Là est tousiours la parfaicte religion, la parfaicte police, parfaict et accomply vsage de toutes choses.

Ils sont sauuages de mesmes que nous appellons sauuages les fruicts, que nature de soy et de son progrez ordinaire a produicts: là où à la verité ce sont ceux que nous auons alterez par nostre artifice, et destournez de l'ordre commun, que nous deurions appeller plustost sauuages. En ceux là sont viues et vigoureuses, les vrayes, et plus

ENGLISH

Now, to return to my subject, I find that there is nothing barbarous and wild in this nation, from what I have been told of it, except that each man calls barbarism whatever is not his own practice. For indeed we have no other test of truth and reason than the example and pattern of the opinions and customs of the country we live in. There, always, is the perfect religion, the perfect government, the perfect and accomplished practice in all things.

They are wild in the same way that we call wild the fruits that nature has produced by herself and in her ordinary course; whereas in truth it is those we have altered by our artifice and diverted from the common order that we ought rather to call

FRENCH

vtiles et naturelles, vertus et proprietez; lesquelles nous auons abbastardies en ceux-cy, les accommodant au plaisir de nostre goust corrompu. Et si pourtant la saueur mesme et delicatesse se trouue à nostre goust mesme excellente à l'enui des nostres, en diuers fruits de ces contrées là, sans culture: ce n'est pas raison que l'art gaigne le poinct d'honneur sur nostre grande et puissante mere nature.

Nous auons tant rechargé la beauté et richesse de ses ouurages par noz inuentions, que nous l'auons du tout estouffée. Si est-ce que par tout où sa pureté reluit, elle fait vne merueilleuse honte à noz vaines et friuoles entreprinses. *Et veniunt hederæ sponte sua melius,*
Surgit et in solis formosior arbutus antris,
Et volucres nulla dulcius arte canunt. Tous nos efforts ne peuuent seulement arriuer à representer le nid du moindre oyselet, sa contexture, sa beauté, et l'vtilité de son vsage: non pas la tissure de la chetiue araignée. Toutes choses, dit Platon, sont produites ou par la nature, ou par la fortune, ou par l'art.

Les plus grandes et plus belles par l'vne ou l'autre des deux premieres: les moindres et imparfaictes par la derniere.

1.31.8 Ces nations me semblent donc ainsi barbares, pour auoir receu fort peu de façon de l'esprit humain, et estre encore fort voisines de leur naifueté originelle. Les loix naturelles leur commandent encores, fort peu abbastardies par les nostres. Mais c'est en telle pureté, qu'il me prend quelque fois desplaisir, dequoy la cognoissance n'en soit venuë plustost, du temps qu'il y auoit des hommes qui en eussent sçeu mieux iuger que nous.

Il me desplaist que Lycurgus et Platon ne l'ayent euë: car il me semble que ce que nous voyons par experience en ces nations là, surpasse non seulement toutes les peintures dequoy la poësie a embelly l'aage doré, et toutes ses inuentions à feindre vne heureuse condition d'hommes: mais encore la conception et le desir mesme de la philosophie. Ils n'ont peu imaginer vne naifueté si pure et simple, comme nous la voyons par experience: ny n'ont peu croire que nostre societé se peust maintenir auec si peu d'artifice, et de soudeure humaine.

C'est vne nation, diroy-ie à Platon, en laquelle il n'y a aucune espece de trafique; nulle cognoissance de lettres;

ENGLISH

wild. In the former, the true, most useful and natural virtues and properties are alive and vigorous; in the latter we have debased them, adapting them to the pleasure of our corrupted taste. And yet in various uncultivated fruits of those countries the flavor and delicacy are found excellent even to our own taste, rivaling ours. It is not reasonable that art should win the point of honor over our great and powerful mother nature.

We have so overloaded the beauty and richness of her works with our inventions that we have smothered her entirely. Yet wherever her purity shines forth, she puts our vain and frivolous enterprises wonderfully to shame. *And ivy comes better of its own accord,*
And the arbutus grows lovelier in lonely caves,
And birds sing more sweetly with no art. All our efforts cannot even manage to reproduce the nest of the tiniest little bird, its structure, its beauty and its fitness for use—nor even the web of the puny spider. All things, says Plato, are produced either by nature, by fortune, or by art:[8]

the greatest and most beautiful by one or the other of the first two, the lesser and imperfect ones by the last.

These nations, then, seem to me barbarous in this sense: that they have received very little fashioning from the human mind and are still very close to their original naturalness. The laws of nature still govern them, very little debased by ours. But they are in such purity that I am sometimes sorry that knowledge of them did not come earlier, in the days when there were men who could have judged them better than we.

I am sorry that Lycurgus and Plato did not have it; for it seems to me that what we see by experience in those nations surpasses not only all the pictures with which poetry has embellished the golden age, and all its inventions in imagining a happy state of mankind, but even the conception and the very desire of philosophy. They could not imagine a naturalness so pure and simple as we see by experience; nor could they believe that our society could be maintained with so little artifice and human solder.

This is a nation, I would say to Plato, in which there is no kind of trade; no knowledge of letters;

FRENCH

nulle science de nombres; nul nom de magistrat, ny de superiorité politique; nul vsage de seruice, de richesse, ou de pauureté; nuls contrats; nulles successions; nuls partages; nulles occupations, qu'oysiues; nul respect de parenté, que commun; nuls vestemens; nulle agriculture; nul metal; nul vsage de vin ou de bled. Les paroles mesmes, qui signifient la mensonge, la trahison, la dissimulation, l'auarice, l'enuie, la detraction, le pardon, inouyes. Combien trouueroit il la republique qu'il a imaginée, esloignée de cette perfection?

Hos natura modos primúm dedit. Au demeurant, ils viuent en vne contrée de païs tres-plaisante, et bien temperée: de façon qu'à ce que m'ont dit mes tesmoings, il est rare d'y voir vn homme malade: et m'ont asseuré, n'en y auoir veu aucun tremblant, chassieux, edenté, ou courbé de vieillesse. Ils sont assis le long de la mer, et fermez du costé de la terre, de grandes et hautes montaignes, ayans entre-deux, cent lieuës ou enuiron d'estendue en large. Ils ont grande abondance de poisson et de chairs, qui n'ont aucune ressemblance aux nostres; et les mangent sans autre artifice, que de les cuire.

Le premier qui y mena vn cheual, quoy qu'il les eust pratiquez à plusieurs autres voyages, leur fit tant d'horreur en cette assiette, qu'ils le tuerent à coups de traict, auant que le pouuoir recognoistre. Leurs bastimens sont fort longs, et capables de deux ou trois cents ames, estoffez d'escorse de grands arbres, tenans à terre par vn bout, et se soustenans et appuyans l'vn contre l'autre par le feste, à la mode d'aucunes de noz granges, desquelles la couuerture pend iusques à terre, et sert de flanq. Ils ont du bois si dur qu'ils en coupent et en font leurs espées, et des grils à cuire leur viande.

Leurs licts sont d'vn tissu de cotton, suspenduz contre le toict, comme ceux de noz nauires, à chacun le sien: car les femmes couchent à part des maris. Ils se leuent auec le Soleil, et mangent soudain apres s'estre leuez, pour toute la iournée: car ils ne font autre repas que celuy-là. Ils ne boiuent pas lors, comme Suidas dit, de quelques autres peuples d'Orient, qui beuuoient hors du manger: ils boiuent à plusieurs fois sur iour, et d'autant. Leur

ENGLISH

no science of numbers; no title of magistrate or of political superiority; no use of servitude, of wealth or of poverty; no contracts; no inheritances; no divisions of property; no occupations but leisurely ones; no regard for kinship except what is common to all; no clothing; no agriculture; no metal; no use of wine or wheat. The very words that signify lying, treachery, dissimulation, avarice, envy, slander, pardon—unheard of. How far from this perfection would he find the republic he imagined!

These are the ways nature first ordained. For the rest, they live in a very pleasant and temperate stretch of country, so that, from what my witnesses have told me, it is rare to see a sick man there; and they have assured me that they never saw one there trembling, blear-eyed, toothless or bent with age. They are settled along the sea, and shut in on the landward side by great high mountains, with a stretch of about a hundred leagues in breadth between the two. They have a great abundance of fish and meat that bear no resemblance to ours, and they eat them with no other artifice than cooking.[9]

The first man who brought a horse there, though he had dealt with them on several other voyages, so horrified them, mounted as he was, that they shot him dead with arrows before they could recognize him. Their buildings are very long and can hold two or three hundred souls. They are covered with the bark of great trees, fixed in the ground at one end, and supporting and leaning on one another at the ridge, in the manner of some of our barns, whose roofs hang down to the ground and serve as sides. They have wood so hard that they cut with it and make their swords of it, and grills to cook their food.

Their beds are of woven cotton, hung from the roof like those in our ships, each person having his own: for the wives sleep apart from their husbands. They rise with the sun and eat immediately after rising, for the whole day, for they have no other meal than that one. They do not drink at that meal—like certain other peoples of the East, of whom Suidas says that they drank apart from eating—but they drink several times a day, and a

8 Propertius, Elegies.
9 Virgil, Georgics.

FRENCH

breuuage est faict de quelque racine, et est de la couleur de noz vins clairets. Ils ne le boiuent que tiede.

Ce breuuage ne se conserue que deux ou trois iours: il a le goust vn peu picquant, nullement fumeux, salutaire à l'estomach, et laxatif à ceux qui ne l'ont accoustumé: c'est vne boisson tres-aggreable à qui y est duit. Au lieu du pain ils vsent d'vne certaine matiere blanche, comme du coriandre confit. I'en ay tasté, le goust en est doux et vn peu fade. Toute la iournée se passe à dancer. Les plus ieunes vont à la chasse des bestes, à tout des arcs. Vne partie des femmes s'amusent cependant à chauffer leur breuuage, qui est leur principal office.

1.31.9 Il y a quelqu'vn des vieillards, qui le matin auant qu'ils se mettent à manger, presche en commun toute la grangée, en se promenant d'vn bout à autre, et redisant vne mesme clause à plusieurs fois, iusques à ce qu'il ayt acheué le tour, car ce sont bastimens qui ont bien cent pas de longueur; il ne leur recommande que deux choses, la vaillance contre les ennemis, et l'amitié à leurs femmes. Et ne faillent iamais de remarquer cette obligation, pour leur refrein, que ce sont elles qui leur maintiennent leur boisson tiede et assaisonnée.

Il se void en plusieurs lieux, et entre autres chez moy, la forme de leurs lits, de leurs cordons, de leurs espées, et brasselets de bois, dequoy ils couurent leurs poignets aux combats, et des grandes cannes ouuertes par vn bout, par le son desquelles ils soustiennent la cadance en leur dance. Ils sont raz par tout, et se font le poil beaucoup plus nettement que nous, sans autre rasouër que de bois, ou de pierre. Ils croyent les ames eternelles; et celles qui ont bien merité des Dieux, estre logées à l'endroit du ciel où le Soleil se leue: les maudites, du costé de l'Occident.

1.31.10 Ils ont ie ne sçay quels Prestres et Prophetes, qui se presentent bien rarement au peuple, ayans leur demeure aux montaignes. A leur arriuée, il se faict vne grande feste et assemblée solennelle de plusieurs villages; chaque grange, comme ie l'ay descrite, faict vn village, et sont enuiron à vne lieuë Françoise l'vne de l'autre. Ce Prophete parle à eux en public, les exhortant à la vertu et à leur deuoir: mais toute leur science ethique ne contient

ENGLISH

great deal. Their drink is made from some root, and is the color of our light red wines. They drink it only lukewarm.[10]

This drink keeps only two or three days; it tastes a little sharp, is not at all heady, is good for the stomach, and is laxative for those not used to it; it is a very pleasant drink for anyone accustomed to it. Instead of bread they use a certain white substance like candied coriander. I have tasted it; the taste is sweet and a little flat. The whole day is spent dancing. The younger men go hunting animals with bows. Some of the women meanwhile busy themselves warming their drink, which is their chief duty.

One of the old men, in the morning before they begin to eat, preaches to the whole barnful together, walking from one end to the other and repeating the same phrase several times until he has completed the round (for these buildings are a good hundred paces long). He recommends only two things to them: valor against their enemies and love for their wives. And they never fail to point out this obligation, by way of refrain: that it is the wives who keep their drink warm and seasoned for them.

In several places, and among others in my house, one can see what their beds are like, and their ropes, their swords, and the wooden bracelets with which they cover their wrists in battle, and the great canes, open at one end, by whose sound they keep time in their dance. They are shaved all over, and remove their hair much more cleanly than we do, with no other razor than one of wood or stone. They believe that souls are eternal, and that those that have deserved well of the gods are lodged in the part of the sky where the sun rises, and the accursed ones in the west.

They have some sort of priests and prophets, who very rarely appear before the people, since they live in the mountains. On their arrival there is a great feast and solemn assembly of several villages (each barn, as I have described it, makes a village, and they are about a French league from one another). This prophet speaks to them in public, exhorting them to virtue and to their duty; but all their ethical science contains only these two

10 Suidas: the Suda, a 10th-century Byzantine encyclopedia, long taken for the work of an author of that name.

FRENCH

que ces deux articles de la resolution à la guerre, et affection à leurs femmes.

Cettuy-cy leur prognostique les choses à venir, et les euenemens qu'ils doiuent esperer de leurs entreprinses: les achemine ou destourne de la guerre: mais c'est par tel si que où il faut à bien deuiner, et s'il leur aduient autrement qu'il ne leur a predit, il est haché en mille pieces, s'ils l'attrapent, et condamné pour faux Prophete. A cette cause celuy qui s'est vne fois mesconté, on ne le void plus. C'est don de Dieu, que la diuination: voyla pourquoy ce deuroit estre vne imposture punissable d'en abuser. Entre les Scythes, quand les deuins auoient failly de rencontre, on les couchoit enforgez de pieds et de mains, sur des charriotes pleines de bruyere, tirées par des bœufs, en quoy on les faisoit brusler.

Ceux qui manient les choses subiettes à la conduitte de l'humaine suffisance, sont excusables d'y faire ce qu'ils peuuent. Mais ces autres, qui nous viennent pipant des asseurances d'vne faculté extraordinaire, qui est hors de nostre cognoissance: faut-il pas les punir, de ce qu'ils ne maintiennent l'effect de leur promesse, et de la temerité de leur imposture?

ENGLISH

articles: resoluteness in war and affection for their wives.

He foretells to them things to come and the outcome they are to expect from their undertakings; he steers them toward war or away from it. But this is on condition that if he fails to divine correctly, and if things turn out otherwise than he predicted, he is hacked into a thousand pieces if they catch him, and condemned as a false prophet. For that reason, one who has been wrong once is never seen again. Divination is a gift of God; that is why abusing it ought to be a punishable imposture. Among the Scythians, when the soothsayers had missed the mark, they were laid, shackled hand and foot, on carts full of heather drawn by oxen, and burned in them.

Those who handle matters subject to the guidance of human ability are excusable for doing what they can. But those others, who come to us deceiving us with assurances of an extraordinary faculty beyond our knowledge—should they not be punished for failing to make good their promise, and for the rashness of their imposture?

WAR AND THE EATING OF PRISONERS

They fight only for valor and eat captives as revenge; our own cruelties are worse.

FRENCH

1.31.11 Ils ont leurs guerres contre les nations, qui sont au delà de leurs montaignes, plus auant en la terre ferme, ausquelles ils vont tous nuds, n'ayants autres armes que des arcs ou des espées de bois, appointées par vn bout, à la mode des langues de noz espieuz. C'est chose esmerueillable que de la fermeté de leurs combats, qui ne finissent iamais que par meurtre et effusion de sang: car de routes et d'effroy, ils ne sçauent que c'est. Chacun rapporte pour son trophée la teste de l'ennemy qu'il a tué, et l'attache à l'entrée de son logis.

Apres auoir long temps bien traité leurs prisonniers, et de toutes les commoditez, dont ils se peuuent aduiser, celuy qui en est le maistre, faict vne grande assemblée de ses cognoissans. Il attache une corde à l'vn des bras du prisonnier, par le bout de laquelle il le tient, esloigné de quelques pas, de peur d'en estre offencé, et donne au plus cher de ses amis, l'autre bras à tenir de mesme; et eux deux en presence de toute l'assemblée l'assomment à coups d'espée. Cela faict ils le rostissent, et en mangent en commun, et en enuoyent des loppins à ceux de leurs amis, qui sont absens.

ENGLISH

They wage wars against the nations beyond their mountains, further inland. They go to these wars quite naked, with no other weapons than bows or wooden swords sharpened at one end, like the tips of our boar-spears. The steadfastness of their battles is a marvel: they never end except in slaughter and bloodshed, for they do not know what routs and panic are. Each man brings back as his trophy the head of the enemy he has killed, and fixes it at the entrance of his dwelling.

After treating their prisoners well for a long time, with every comfort they can think of, the man who owns a prisoner calls a great gathering of his acquaintances. He ties a rope to one of the prisoner's arms and holds him by the end of it, a few paces away, for fear of being hurt by him. He gives his dearest friend the other arm to hold in the same way, and the two of them, in the presence of the whole gathering, beat him to death with their swords. That done, they roast him and eat him to-

FRENCH

ENGLISH

gether, and send portions to those of their friends who are absent.

Ce n'est pas comme on pense, pour s'en nourrir, ainsi que faisoient anciennement les Scythes, c'est pour representer vne extreme vengeance. Et qu'il soit ainsin, ayans apperceu que les Portugais, qui s'estoient r'alliez à leurs aduersaires, vsoient d'vne autre sorte de mort contre eux, quand ils les prenoient; qui estoit, de les enterrer iusques à la ceinture, et tirer au demeurant du corps force coups de traict, et les pendre apres: ils penserent que ces gens icy de l'autre monde (comme ceux qui auoient semé la cognoissance de beaucoup de vices parmy leur voisinage, et qui estoient beaucoup plus grands maistres qu'eux en toute sorte de malice) ne prenoient pas sans occasion cette sorte de vengeance, et qu'elle deuoit estre plus aigre que la leur, dont ils commencerent de quitter leur façon ancienne, pour suiure cette-cy.

This is not, as people think, to feed themselves on him, as the Scythians did in ancient times; it is to signify an extreme revenge. And here is the proof. They noticed that the Portuguese, who had joined forces with their enemies, used another kind of death against them when they captured them: they buried them up to the waist, shot the rest of the body full of arrows, and then hanged them. They concluded that these people from the other world, being men who had spread the knowledge of many vices among their neighbors and were far greater masters than they of every kind of wickedness, did not take this kind of revenge without good reason, and that it must be more painful than their own. So they began to abandon their old way and follow this one.

Ie ne suis pas marry que nous remerquons l'horreur barbaresque qu'il y a en vne telle action, mais ouy bien dequoy iugeans à point de leurs fautes, nous soyons si aueuglez aux nostres. Ie pense qu'il y a plus de barbarie à manger vn homme viuant, qu'à le manger mort, à deschirer par tourmens et par gehennes, vn corps encore plein de sentiment, le faire rostir par le menu, le faire mordre et meurtrir aux chiens, et aux pourceaux (comme nous l'auons non seulement leu, mais veu de fresche memoire, non entre des ennemis anciens, mais entre des voisins et concitoyens, et qui pis est, sous pretexte de pieté et de religion) que de le rostir et manger apres qu'il est trespassé.

I am not sorry that we note the barbarous horror of such an act; what I am sorry about is that, while judging their faults rightly, we are so blind to our own. I think there is more barbarism in eating a man alive than in eating him dead; in tearing apart by tortures and the rack a body still full of feeling, roasting it bit by bit, having it bitten and mangled by dogs and swine (as we have not only read but seen within fresh memory, not among ancient enemies but among neighbors and fellow citizens, and what is worse, on the pretext of piety and religion), than in roasting and eating him after he is dead.[11]

1.31.12 Chrysippus et Zenon chefs de la secte Stoicque, ont bien pensé qu'il n'y auoit aucun mal de se seruir de nostre charoigne, à quoy que ce fust, pour nostre besoin, et d'en tirer de la nourriture: comme nos ancestres estans assiegez par Cæsar en la ville d'Alexia, se resolurent de soustenir la faim de ce siege par les corps des vieillars, des femmes, et autres personnes inutiles au combat. *Vascones, fama est, alimentis talibus vsi / Produxere animas.* Et les medecins ne craignent pas de s'en seruir à toute sorte d'vsage, pour nostre santé; soit pour l'appliquer au dedans, ou au dehors.

Chrysippus and Zeno, heads of the Stoic school, did indeed think there was no harm in using our carcass for whatever we needed, and in drawing nourishment from it; just as our ancestors, besieged by Caesar in the town of Alesia, resolved to bear the hunger of that siege by means of the bodies of the old men, the women and other persons useless for fighting. *The Vascones, so the story goes, by using such food / Prolonged their lives.* And physicians do not shrink from using it in every sort of way for our health, whether applied internally or externally.[12]

Mais il ne se trouua iamais aucune opinion si desreglée, qui excusast la trahison, la desloyauté, la tyrannie, la

But no opinion was ever found so unruly as to excuse treachery, disloyalty, tyranny and cruelty,

11 Montaigne is alluding to atrocities committed in the French Wars of Religion.
12 Alesia, in Gaul, was besieged by Caesar in 52 BC. The verses are from Juvenal, Satires XV, on the Vascones besieged at Calagurris in Spain.

FRENCH

cruauté, qui sont noz fautes ordinaires. Nous les pouuons donc bien appeller barbares, eu esgard aux regles de la raison, mais non pas eu esgard à nous, qui les surpassons en toute sorte de barbarie.

1.31.13 Leur guerre est toute noble et genereuse, et a autant d'excuse et de beauté que cette maladie humaine en peut receuoir: elle n'a autre fondement parmy eux, que la seule ialousie de la vertu. Ils ne sont pas en debat de la conqueste de nouuelles terres: car ils iouyssent encore de cette vberté naturelle, qui les fournit sans trauail et sans peine, de toutes choses necessaires, en telle abondance, qu'ils n'ont que faire d'agrandir leurs limites. Ils sont encore en cet heureux point, de ne desirer qu'autant que leurs necessitez naturelles leur ordonnent: tout ce qui est au delà, est superflu pour eux.

Ils s'entr'appellent generallement ceux de mesme aage freres: enfans, ceux qui sont au dessouz; et les vieillards sont peres à tous les autres. Ceux-cy laissent à leurs heritiers en commun, cette pleine possession de biens par indiuis, sans autre titre, que celuy tout pur, que nature donne à ses creatures, les produisant au monde.

Si leurs voisins passent les montaignes pour les venir assaillir, et qu'ils emportent la victoire sur eux, l'acquest du victorieux, c'est la gloire, et l'auantage d'estre demeuré maistre en valeur et en vertu: car autrement ils n'ont que faire des biens des vaincus, et s'en retournent à leurs pays, où ils n'ont faute d'aucune chose necessaire; ny faute encore de cette grande partie, de sçauoir heureusement iouir de leur condition, et s'en contenter. Autant en font ceux-cy à leur tour. Ils ne demandent à leurs prisonniers, autre rançon que la confession et recognoissance d'estre vaincus.

Mais il ne s'en trouue pas vn en tout vn siecle, qui n'ayme mieux la mort, que de relascher, ny par contenance, ny de parole, vn seul point d'vne grandeur de courage inuincible. Il ne s'en void aucun, qui n'ayme mieux estre tué et mangé, que de requerir seulement de ne l'estre pas. Ils les traictent en toute liberté, afin que la vie leur soit d'autant plus chere: et les entretiennent communément des menasses de leur mort future, des tourmens qu'ils y auront à souffrir, des apprests qu'on dresse pour cet effect, du detranchement de leurs membres, et du festin qui se fera à leurs despens.

ENGLISH

which are our ordinary faults. So we may well call them barbarous with regard to the rules of reason, but not with regard to ourselves, who surpass them in every kind of barbarism.

Their warfare is wholly noble and generous, and has as much excuse and beauty as this human disease can admit of. Among them it has no other basis than the mere jealous rivalry of valor. They are not quarreling over the conquest of new lands, for they still enjoy that natural abundance which supplies them, without toil and without trouble, with all necessary things in such plenty that they have no need to enlarge their borders. They are still at that happy stage of desiring only as much as their natural needs require; everything beyond that is superfluous to them.

Those of the same age generally call one another brothers; those younger they call children; and the old men are fathers to all the rest. These leave to their heirs in common this full possession of goods, held undivided, with no other title than the pure and simple one that nature gives to her creatures in bringing them into the world.

If their neighbors cross the mountains to attack them and win the victory over them, the victor's gain is glory, and the advantage of having proved the master in valor and virtue. Beyond that they have no use for the goods of the vanquished, and they go back to their own country, where they lack nothing necessary; nor do they lack that great thing, knowing how to enjoy their condition happily and be content with it. These do the same in their turn. They ask no other ransom of their prisoners than the confession and acknowledgment that they are beaten.

But in a whole century not one prisoner is to be found who would not rather die than yield a single jot of an invincible greatness of courage, by look or by word. Not one is seen who would not rather be killed and eaten than so much as ask not to be. They treat them with complete freedom, so that life may be all the dearer to them; and they commonly entertain them with threats of their coming death, of the torments they will have to suffer, of the preparations being made for it, of the cutting up of their limbs, and of the feast that will be held at their expense.

FRENCH

Tout cela se faict pour cette seule fin, d'arracher de leur bouche quelque parole molle ou rabaissée, ou de leur donner enuie de s'en fuyr; pour gaigner cet auantage de les auoir espouuantez, et d'auoir faict force à leur constance. Car aussi à le bien prendre, c'est en ce seul point que consiste la vraye victoire: *victoria nulla est, / Quàm quæ confessos animo quoque subiugat hostes.* Les Hongres tres-belliqueux combattants, ne poursuiuoient iadis leur pointe outre auoir rendu l'ennemy à leur mercy. Car en ayant arraché cette confession, ils le laissoyent aller sans offense, sans rançon; sauf pour le plus d'en tirer parole de ne s'armer des lors en auant contre eux.

1.31.14 Assez d'auantages gaignons nous sur nos ennemis, qui sont auantages empruntez, non pas nostres. C'est la qualité d'vn porte-faix, non de la vertu, d'auoir les bras et les iambes plus roides: c'est vne qualité morte et corporelle, que la disposition: c'est vn coup de la fortune, de faire broncher nostre ennemy, et de luy esblouyr les yeux par la lumiere du Soleil: c'est vn tour d'art et de science, et qui peut tomber en vne personne lasche et de neant, d'estre suffisant à l'escrime.

L'estimation et le prix d'vn homme consiste au cœur et en la volonté: c'est là où gist son vray honneur: la vaillance c'est la fermeté, non pas des iambes et des bras, mais du courage et de l'ame: elle ne consiste pas en la valeur de nostre cheual, ny de noz armes, mais en la nostre. Celuy qui tombe obstiné en son courage, *si succiderit, de genu pugnat*. Qui pour quelque danger de la mort voisine, ne relasche aucun point de son asseurance, qui regarde encores en rendant l'ame, son ennemy d'vne veuë ferme et desdaigneuse, il est battu, non pas de nous, mais de la fortune: il est tué, non pas vaincu: les plus vaillans sont par fois les plus infortunez.

Aussi y a-il des pertes triomphantes à l'enui des victoires. Ny ces quatre victoires sœurs, les plus belles que le Soleil aye onques veu de ses yeux, de Salamine, de Platées, de Mycale, de Sicile, n'oserent onques opposer toute leur gloire ensemble, à la gloire de la desconfiture du Roy Leonidas et des siens au pas de Thermopyles, Qui courut iamais d'vne plus glorieuse enuie, et plus ambitieuse au gain du combat, que le Capitaine Ischolas à la perte? Qui

ENGLISH

All this is done for the sole purpose of wringing from their mouths some weak or abject word, or of making them want to run away, so as to gain the advantage of having frightened them and broken their constancy. For indeed, rightly considered, true victory consists in this alone: *there is no victory / But that which subdues enemies who confess themselves beaten in their hearts as well.* The Hungarians, most warlike fighters, did not in former times press their advantage beyond having brought the enemy to their mercy. Having wrung this confession from him, they let him go unharmed and without ransom, except at most for getting his word not to take up arms against them from then on.[13]

Many of the advantages we gain over our enemies are borrowed advantages, not our own. It is the quality of a porter, not of valor, to have stronger arms and legs; agility is a dead, bodily quality; it is a stroke of fortune to make our enemy stumble, or to dazzle his eyes with the light of the sun; and being good at fencing is a matter of skill and technique, which may fall to a cowardly and worthless person.

A man's worth and value lie in his heart and his will; that is where his true honor resides. Valor is firmness, not of legs and arms, but of courage and soul; it lies not in the worth of our horse or of our weapons, but in our own. He who falls with his courage unyielding, *if he has fallen, fights on his knees*. He who does not slacken his assurance in the least for any danger of imminent death; who, as he gives up the ghost, still looks at his enemy with a firm and scornful gaze—he is beaten not by us but by fortune; he is killed, not conquered. The most valiant are sometimes the most unfortunate.[14]

So there are also defeats that are as triumphant as victories. Not even those four sister victories, the finest the sun ever beheld with its eyes—Salamis, Plataea, Mycale and Sicily—ever dared set all their combined glory against the glory of the defeat of King Leonidas and his men at the pass of Thermopylae. Who ever rushed with a more glorious and ambitious eagerness to win a battle than Captain

13 Claudian, On the Sixth Consulship of Honorius.
14 Seneca, On Providence 2.

FRENCH

plus ingenieusement et curieusement s'est asseuré de son salut, que luy de sa ruine?

Il estoit commis à deffendre certain passage du Peloponnese, contre les Arcadiens; pour quoy faire, se trouuant du tout incapable, veu la nature du lieu, et inegalité des forces: et se resoluant que tout ce qui se presenteroit aux ennemis, auroit de necessité à y demeurer: d'autre part, estimant indigne et de sa propre vertu et magnanimité, et du nom Lacedemonien, de faillir à sa charge: il print entre ces deux extremités, vn moyen party, de telle sorte: Les plus ieunes et dispos de sa troupe, il les conserua à la tuition et seruice de leur païs, et les y renuoya: et auec ceux desquels le defaut estoit moindre, il delibera de soustenir ce pas: et par leur mort en faire achetter aux ennemis l'entrée la plus chere, qu'il luy seroit possible: comme il aduint.

Car estant tantost enuironné de toutes parts par les Arcadiens: apres en auoir faict vne grande boucherie, luy et les siens furent tous mis au fil de l'espée. Est-il quelque trophée assigné pour les veincueurs, qui ne soit mieux deu à ces veincus? Le vray veincre a pour son roolle l'estour, non pas le salut: et consiste l'honneur de la vertu, à combattre, non à battre.

1.31.15 Pour reuenir à nostre histoire, il s'en faut tant que ces prisonniers se rendent, pour tout ce qu'on leur fait, qu'au rebours pendant ces deux ou trois mois qu'on les garde, ils portent vne contenance gaye, ils pressent leurs maistres de se haster de les mettre en cette espreuue, ils les deffient, les iniurient, leur reprochent leur lascheté, et le nombre des battailles perduës contre les leurs.

I'ay vne chanson faicte par vn prisonnier, où il y a ce traict: Qu'ils viennent hardiment trétous, et s'assemblent pour disner de luy, car ils mangeront quant et quant leurs peres et leurs ayeulx, qui ont seruy d'aliment et de nourriture à son corps: ces muscles, dit-il, cette chair et ces veines, ce sont les vostres, pauure fols que vous estes: vous ne recognoissez pas que la substance des membres de vos ancestres s'y tient encore: sauourez les bien, vous y trouuerez le goust de vostre propre chair: inuention, qui ne sent aucunement la barbarie.

ENGLISH

Ischolas to lose one? Who has ever secured his own safety more ingeniously and carefully than he secured his ruin?[15]

He had been charged with defending a certain pass in the Peloponnese against the Arcadians. He found himself wholly unable to do so, given the nature of the place and the inequality of the forces, and concluded that whoever faced the enemy there must of necessity stay there for good. On the other hand, he judged it unworthy both of his own valor and magnanimity and of the Spartan name to fail in his charge. Between these two extremes he took a middle course, as follows. The youngest and fittest of his troop he preserved for the protection and service of their country, and sent them back home; and with those whose loss would matter less, he resolved to hold the pass, and by their death to make the enemy pay as dearly as he possibly could for getting through. And so it turned out.[16]

For soon he was surrounded on all sides by the Arcadians, and after making a great slaughter of them, he and his men were all put to the sword. Is there any trophy assigned to the victors that is not more due to these vanquished? True victory has for its part the fight, not survival; and the honor of valor lies in fighting, not in beating.

To return to our story: these prisoners are so far from giving in, whatever is done to them, that on the contrary, during the two or three months they are kept, they bear a cheerful countenance. They urge their masters to hurry up and put them to the test; they defy them, insult them, reproach them with their cowardice and with the number of battles they have lost against their own people.

I have a song composed by a prisoner which contains this point: let them all come boldly and gather to dine on him, for at the same time they will be eating their own fathers and grandfathers, who have served as food and nourishment for his body. These muscles, he says, this flesh and these veins are yours, poor fools that you are; you do not recognize that the substance of your ancestors' limbs is still in them. Savor them well: you will

15 Salamis, Plataea and Mycale were Greek victories over the Persians in 480–479 BC, and the Sicilian one was Himera (480 BC) over Carthage; Leonidas fell at Thermopylae in 480 BC.
16 Ischolas, a Spartan commander, held a pass against the Arcadians in 369 BC; the story is told by Diodorus Siculus.

FRENCH

Ceux qui les peignent mourans, et qui representent cette action quand on les assomme, ils peignent le prisonnier, crachant au visage de ceux qui le tuent, et leur faisant la mouë. De vray ils ne cessent iusques au dernier souspir, de les brauer et deffier de parole et de contenance. Sans mentir, au prix de nous, voila des hommes bien sauuages: car ou il faut qu'ils le soyent bien à bon escient, ou que nous le soyons: il y a vne merueilleuse distance entre leur forme et la nostre.

1.31.16 Les hommes y ont plusieurs femmes, et en ont d'autant plus grand nombre, qu'ils sont en meilleure reputation de vaillance. C'est vne beauté remarquable en leurs mariages, que la mesme ialousie que nos femmes ont pour nous empescher de l'amitié et bien-vueillance d'autres femmes, les leurs l'ont toute pareille pour la leur acquerir. Estans plus soigneuses de l'honneur de leurs maris, que de toute autre chose, elles cherchent et mettent leur solicitude à auoir le plus de compaignes qu'elles peuuent, d'autant que c'est vn tesmoignage de la vertu du mary. Les nostres crieront au miracle: ce ne l'est pas. C'est vne vertu proprement matrimoniale: mais du plus haut estage.

Et en la Bible, Lea, Rachel, Sara et les femmes de Iacob fournirent leurs belles seruantes à leurs maris, et Liuia seconda les appetits d'Auguste, à son interest: et la femme du Roy Deiotarus Stratonique, presta non seulement à l'vsage de son mary, vne fort belle ieune fille de chambre, qui la seruoit, mais en nourrit soigneusement les enfants: et leur feit espaule à succeder aux estats de leur pere. Et afin qu'on ne pense point que tout cecy se face par vne simple et seruile obligation à leur vsance, et par l'impression de l'authorité de leur ancienne coustume, sans discours et sans iugement, et pour auoir l'ame si stupide, que de ne pouuoir prendre autre party, il faut alleguer quelques traits de leur suffisance.

Outre celuy que ie vien de reciter de l'vne de leurs chansons guerrieres, i'en ay vn' autre amoureuse, qui commence en ce sens: Couleuure arreste toy, arreste toy couleuure, afin que ma sœur tire sur le patron de ta peinture, la façon et l'ouurage d'vn riche cordon, que ie puisse donner à m'amie: ainsi soit en tout temps ta beauté et ta disposition preferée à tous les autres

ENGLISH

find in them the taste of your own flesh. A notion with no whiff of barbarism about it at all.

Those who paint them dying, and depict the moment when they are killed, paint the prisoner spitting in the faces of those who are killing him and pulling faces at them. Indeed, to their last breath they never stop braving and defying them by word and look. Truly, here are men who are very wild compared with us: for either they must be so in good earnest, or we must be; there is an amazing distance between their ways and ours.

The men there have several wives, and the higher their reputation for valor, the more they have. It is a remarkable beauty in their marriages that the same jealousy our wives have in keeping us from the friendship and goodwill of other women, theirs have in exactly the same measure in winning it for them. Being more concerned for their husbands' honor than for anything else, they strive and take pains to have as many companions as they can, since that is a testimony to the husband's valor. Our wives will cry miracle; it is no miracle. It is a properly matrimonial virtue, but of the highest order.

And in the Bible, Leah, Rachel, Sarah and the wives of Jacob provided their beautiful handmaids to their husbands; Livia seconded the appetites of Augustus, to her own detriment; and Stratonice, the wife of King Deiotarus, not only lent her husband for his use a very beautiful young chambermaid who served her, but carefully brought up the children and backed them in succeeding to their father's dominions. And lest anyone think that all this is done out of a simple and servile obligation to their usage, under the weight of the authority of their ancient custom, without reasoning and without judgment, because their minds are too dull to take any other course, I must cite some instances of their ability.[17]

Besides the passage I have just recounted from one of their war songs, I have another song, a love song, which begins in this sense: Adder, stay; stay, adder, so that from the pattern of your coloring my sister may take the design and workmanship of a rich cord that I may give to my love; and so may your beauty and your grace be preferred

17 Deiotarus was king of Galatia in the 1st century BC; the story of Stratonice comes from Plutarch.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
	serpens. Ce premier couplet, c'est le refrein de la chanson. Or i'ay assez de commerce auec la poësie pour iuger cecy, que non seulement il n'y a rien de barbarie en cette imagination, mais qu'elle est tout à faict Anacreontique.	forever to all other snakes. This first couplet is the refrain of the song. Now I have enough acquaintance with poetry to judge this much: not only is there nothing barbarous in this conception, but it is altogether Anacreontic.[18]
	Leur langage au demeurant, c'est vn langage doux, et qui a le son aggreable, retirant aux terminaisons Grecques.	Their language, for the rest, is soft and pleasant-sounding, rather like Greek in its endings.

THREE VISITORS AT ROUEN

Brought to France, three of them marvel at men obeying a child and at unequal wealth.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
1.31.17	Trois d'entre eux, ignorans combien couttera vn iour à leur repos, et à leur bon heur, la cognoissance des corruptions de deçà, et que de ce commerce naistra leur ruine, comme ie presuppose qu'elle soit des-ia auancée (bien miserables de s'estre laissez pipper au desir de la nouuelleté, et auoir quitté la douceur de leur ciel, pour venir voir le nostre) furent à Roüan, du temps que le feu Roy Charles neufiesme y estoit: le Roy parla à eux long temps, on leur fit voir nostre façon, nostre pompe, la forme d'vne belle ville: apres cela, quelqu'vn en demanda leur aduis, et voulut sçauoir d'eux, ce qu'ils y auoient trouué de plus admirable: ils respondirent trois choses, dont i'ay perdu la troisiesme, et en suis bien marry; mais i'en ay encore deux en memoire.	Three of them were at Rouen at the time when the late King Charles IX was there. They did not know how dearly their peace and happiness will one day pay for the knowledge of the corruptions on this side of the ocean, nor that from this contact will come their ruin, which I suppose is already well advanced. Most wretched they were, to let themselves be lured by the desire for novelty and to leave the sweetness of their own sky to come and see ours! The king talked with them for a long time; they were shown our ways, our pomp, the layout of a fine city. After that someone asked their opinion and wanted to know what they had found most remarkable. They replied with three things, of which I have forgotten the third, and I am very sorry about it; but I still remember two.[19]
	Ils dirent qu'ils trouuoient en premier lieu fort estrange, que tant de grands hommes portans barbe, forts et armez, qui estoient autour du Roy (il est vray-semblable qu'ils parloient des Suisses de sa garde) se soubmissent à obeir à vn enfant, et qu'on ne choisissoit plustost quelqu'vn d'entre eux pour commander.	They said that, in the first place, they found it very strange that so many tall, bearded men, strong and armed, who stood around the king (it is likely they meant the Swiss of his guard), should submit to obey a child, and that one of them was not chosen to command instead.
	Secondement (ils ont vne façon de leur langage telle qu'ils nomment les hommes, moitié les vns des autres) qu'ils auoyent apperceu qu'il y auoit parmy nous des hommes pleins et gorgez de toutes sortes de commoditez, et que leurs moitiez estoient mendians à leurs portes, décharnez de faim et de pauureté; et trouuoient estrange comme ces moitiez icy necessiteuses, pouuoient souffrir vne telle iniustice, qu'ils ne prinsent les autres à la gorge, ou missent le feu à leurs maisons.	Secondly (they have a way of speaking in their language whereby they call men halves of one another), they had noticed that among us there were men full and gorged with all sorts of good things, while their halves were begging at their doors, emaciated with hunger and poverty; and they found it strange that these needy halves could put up with such injustice, and did not take the others by the throat or set fire to their houses.
1.31.18	Ie parlay à l'vn d'eux fort long temps, mais i'auois vn truchement qui me suiuoit si mal, et qui estoit si	I talked with one of them for a very long time; but I had an interpreter who followed me so badly,

18 That is, in the manner of Anacreon, the Greek lyric poet of the 6th century BC.
19 Charles IX visited Rouen in 1562, after its recapture from the Protestants; he died in 1574.

FRENCH

empesché à receuoir mes imaginations par sa bestise, que ie n'en peus tirer rien qui vaille.

Sur ce que ie luy demanday quel fruit il receuoit de la superiorité qu'il auoit parmy les siens, car c'estoit vn Capitaine, et noz matelots le nommoient Roy, il me dit, que c'estoit, marcher le premier à la guerre: De combien d'hommes il estoit suiuy; il me montra vne espace de lieu, pour signifier que c'estoit autant qu'il en pourroit en vne telle espace, ce pouuoit estre quatre ou cinq mille hommes: Si hors la guerre toute son authorité estoit expirée; il dit qu'il luy en restoit cela, que quand il visitoit les villages qui dépendoient de luy, on luy dressoit des sentiers au trauers des hayes de leurs bois, par où il peust passer bien à l'aise.

Tout cela ne va pas trop mal: mais quoy? ils ne portent point de haut de chausses.

ENGLISH

and whose stupidity made it so hard for him to take in my ideas, that I could get nothing worthwhile out of him.

When I asked him what benefit he gained from his high rank among his people (for he was a captain, and our sailors called him king), he told me it was to march first in war. How many men followed him? He pointed to a stretch of ground, to signify as many as could fit into such a space; it might have been four or five thousand men. Did all his authority lapse when there was no war? He said that this much remained to him: when he visited the villages that depended on him, they cleared paths for him through the thickets of their woods, so that he could pass through quite comfortably.

All this is not too bad. But what of it? They don't wear breeches.

I.32 That We Must Be Sparing in Judging Divine Ordinances

Qu'il faut sobrement se mesler de iuger des ordonnances diuines
Those who read God's will into the outcome of events claim knowledge no one has, and weaken faith by doing so.

FRENCH

1.32.1 LE vray champ et subiect de l'imposture, sont les choses inconnües: d'autant qu'en premier lieu l'estrangeté mesme donne credit, et puis n'estants point subiectes à nos discours ordinaires, elles nous ostent le moyen de les combattre. A cette cause, dit Platon, est-il bien plus aisé de satisfaire, parlant de la nature des Dieux, que de la nature des hommes: par ce que l'ignorance des auditeurs preste vne belle et large carriere, et toute liberté, au maniement d'vne matiere cachee. Il aduient de là, qu'il n'est rien creu si fermement, que ce qu'on sçait le moins, ny gens si asseurez, que ceux qui nous content des fables, comme Alchymistes, Prognostiqueurs, Iudiciaires, Chiromantiens, Medecins, *id genus omne*.

Ausquels ie ioindrois volontiers, si i'osois, vn tas de gens, interpretes et contrerolleurs ordinaires des dessains de Dieu, faisans estat de trouuer les causes de chasque accident, et de veoir dans les secrets de la volonté diuine, les motifs incomprehensibles de ses œuures. Et quoy que la varieté et discordance continuelle des euenemens, les reiette de coin en coin, et d'Orient en Occident, ils ne laissent de suiure pourtant leur esteuf, et de mesme creon peindre le blanc et le noir.

1.32.2 En vne nation Indienne il y a cette loüable obseruance, quand il leur mes-aduient en quelque rencontre ou bataille, ils en demandent publiquement pardon au Soleil, qui est leur Dieu, comme d'vne action iniuste: rapportant leur heur ou malheur à la raison diuine, et luy submettant leur iugement et discours. Suffit à vn Chrestien croire toutes choses venir de Dieu: les receuoir auec recognoissance de sa diuine et inscrutable sapience: pourtant les prendre en bonne part, en quelque visage qu'elles luy soient enuoyees. Mais ie trouue mauuais ce que ie voy en vsage, de chercher à fermir et appuyer

ENGLISH

THE true field and subject of imposture is things unknown. In the first place, strangeness itself lends them credit; and then, since they are not subject to our ordinary reasoning, they deprive us of the means of fighting them. For this reason, says Plato, it is much easier to satisfy people when speaking of the nature of the gods than of the nature of men, because the ignorance of the hearers lends a fine wide field and complete freedom to the handling of a hidden subject. Hence it comes about that nothing is so firmly believed as what is least known, and no people are so sure of themselves as those who tell us tall tales: alchemists, prognosticators, judicial astrologers, palm-readers, physicians, *all that tribe*.[1]

To these I would gladly add, if I dared, a crowd of people who are the regular interpreters and auditors of God's designs, who claim to find the causes of every event and to see in the secrets of the divine will the incomprehensible motives of his works. And though the variety and continual discord of events toss them from corner to corner and from East to West, they still keep chasing their ball, and paint white and black with the same crayon.

In one Indian nation there is this praiseworthy practice: when things go badly for them in some encounter or battle, they publicly ask pardon of the Sun, who is their god, as for an unjust act, attributing their good or bad fortune to divine reason and submitting their judgment and reasoning to it. It is enough for a Christian to believe that all things come from God, to receive them with acknowledgment of his divine and inscrutable wisdom, and therefore to take them in good part, in whatever guise they are sent to him. But I disap-

1 Plato, Critias 107. *Id genus omne* comes from Horace, Satires I.2.

FRENCH

nostre religion par la prosperité de nos entreprises. Nostre creance a assez d'autres fondemens, sans l'authoriser par les euenemens.

Car le peuple accoustumé à ces argumens plausibles, et proprement de son goust, il est danger, quand les euenemens viennent à leur tour contraires et desauantageux, qu'il en esbranle sa foi. Comme aux guerres où nous sommes pour la Religion, ceux qui eurent l'auantage au rencontre de la Rochelabeille, faisans grand feste de cet accident, et se seruans de cette fortune, pour certaine approbation de leur party: quand ils viennent apres à excuser leurs defortunes de Mont-contour et de Iarnac, sur ce que ce sont verges et chastiemens paternels, s'ils n'ont vn peuple du tout à leur mercy, ils luy font assez aisément sentir que c'est prendre d'vn sac deux moultures, et de mesme bouche souffler le chaud et le froid.

Il vaudroit mieux l'entretenir des vrays fondemens de la verité. C'est une belle bataille nauale qui s'est gaignee ces mois passez contre les Turcs, sous la conduite de dom Ioan d'Austria: mais il a bien pleu à Dieu en faire autres fois voir d'autres telles à nos despens. Somme, il est malaisé de ramener les choses diuines à nostre balance, qu'elles n'y souffrent du deschet.

Et qui voudroit rendre raison de ce que Arrius et Leon son Pape, chefs principaux de cette heresie, moururent en diuers temps, de morts si pareilles et si estranges (car retirez de la dispute par douleur de ventre à la garderobe, tous deux y rendirent subitement l'ame) et exaggerer cette vengeance diuine par la circonstance du lieu, y pourroit bien encore adiouster la mort de Heliogabalus, qui fut aussi tué en vn retraict. Mais quoy? Irenee se trouue engagé en mesme fortune.

1.32.3 Dieu nous voulant apprendre, que les bons ont autre chose à esperer: et les mauuais autre chose à craindre, que les fortunes ou infortunes de ce monde: il les manie et applique selon sa disposition occulte: et nous oste le moyen d'en faire sottement nostre profit. Et se moquent ceux qui s'en veulent preualoir selon l'humaine raison. Ils n'en donnent iamais vne touche, qu'ils n'en reçoiuent deux. Sainct Augustin en fait vne belle preuue sur ses

ENGLISH

prove of what I see commonly done, seeking to strengthen and support our religion by the success of our enterprises. Our faith has enough other foundations without being vouched for by events.

For when the people have grown used to these plausible arguments, so much to their taste, there is a danger that their faith will be shaken when events in their turn prove contrary and unfavorable. So it is in the wars we are now fighting over religion. Those who had the advantage in the encounter at La Roche-l'Abeille made a great fuss about it and used that piece of fortune as a sure sign of approval for their party. When they later come to excuse their misfortunes at Moncontour and Jarnac as fatherly rods and chastisements, unless they have a people wholly at their mercy, they easily enough make them feel that this is getting two grindings out of one sack, and blowing hot and cold with the same mouth.[2]

It would be better to instruct them in the true foundations of the truth. It was a fine naval battle that was won these past months against the Turks under the command of Don John of Austria; but at other times it has pleased God to let us see others like it at our expense. In short, it is hard to bring divine things into our scales without their losing some weight.[3]

And anyone who wanted to explain why Arius and Leo, his Pope, the principal leaders of this heresy, died at different times such similar and strange deaths (for both, having left the debate with a stomach-ache to go to the privy, suddenly gave up the ghost there), and to magnify this divine vengeance by the circumstance of the place, might well add the death of Heliogabalus, who was also killed in a latrine. But what of it? Irenaeus turns out to have met the same fate.[4]

God, wishing to teach us that the good have something other to hope for, and the wicked something other to fear, than the fortunes and misfortunes of this world, handles and dispenses them according to his hidden disposition, and deprives us of the means of foolishly turning them to our profit. Those who try to take advantage of them by human reason are only making fools of themselves.

2 The Protestants won at La Roche-l'Abeille in June 1569 and lost at Jarnac (March) and Moncontour (October) in the same year.
3 The battle of Lepanto, 7 October 1571.
4 Arius (d. AD 336) founded the Arian heresy; Heliogabalus, Roman emperor, was murdered in AD 222.

FRENCH	ENGLISH
aduersaires. C'est vn conflict, qui se decide par les armes de la memoire, plus que par celles de la raison.	They never land one blow without taking two. Saint Augustine gives a fine proof of this against his adversaries. It is a conflict decided by the weapons of memory more than by those of reason.
Il se faut contenter de la lumiere qu'il plaist au Soleil nous communiquer par ses rayons, et qui esleuera ses yeux pour en prendre vne plus grande dans son corps mesme, qu'il ne trouue pas estrange, si pour la peine de son outrecuidance il y perd la veuë. *Quis hominum potest scire consilium Dei? aut quis poterit cogitare, quid velit Dominus?*	We must be content with the light that it pleases the sun to share with us through its rays; and whoever raises his eyes to take in more of it from its very body, let him not think it strange if, as the penalty for his presumption, he loses his sight. *Who among men can know the counsel of God? Or who can conceive what the Lord wills?*[5]

5 Book of Wisdom 9:13.

I.33 Of Fleeing from Pleasures at the Cost of Life

De fuir les voluptez au pris de la vie
Ancients advised death over a life of worldly ties; Montaigne finds a Christian version in Saint Hilary's prayer for his daughter.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
1.33.1	I'AVOIS bien veu conuenir en cecy la pluspart des anciennes opinions: Qu'il est heure de mourir lorsqu'il y a plus de mal que de bien à viure: et que de conseruer nostre vie à nostre tourment et incommodité, c'est choquer les regles mesmes de nature, comme disent ces vieilles regles, Η ζην αλυπως, η θανειν ευδαιμονως. Καλον το θνησκειν οις ηυβριν το ζην φερει. Κρεισσον το μη ζην εστιν, η ζην αθλιως.	I HAD indeed seen most of the ancient opinions agree on this: that it is time to die when there is more ill than good in living, and that to preserve our life to our own torment and discomfort is to offend against the very rules of nature, as these old precepts say: *Either a life without grief, or a happy death.* *Death is good for those to whom life brings disgrace. It is better not to live than to live in misery.*[1]
	Mais de pousser le mespris de la mort iusques à tel degré, que de l'employer pour se distraire des honneurs, richesses, grandeurs, et autres faueurs et biens que nous appellons de la fortune; comme si la raison n'auoit pas assez affaire à nous persuader de les abandonner, sans y adiouster cette nouuelle recharge, ie ne l'auois veu ny commander, ny pratiquer:	But to push contempt for death so far as to use it to get away from honors, riches, high positions and the other favors and goods that we call the goods of fortune—as if reason did not have enough to do in persuading us to give them up, without adding this fresh burden—that I had never seen either prescribed or practiced,
	iusques lors que ce passage de Seneca me tomba entre mains, auquel conseillant à Lucilius, personnage puissant et de grande authorité autour de l'Empereur, de changer cette vie voluptueuse et pompeuse, et de se retirer de cette ambition du monde, à quelque vie solitaire, tranquille et philosophique: sur quoy Lucilius alleguoit quelques difficultez: Ie suis d'aduis, dit-il, que tu quites cette vie là, ou la vie tout à faict: bien te conseille-ie de suiure la plus douce voye, et de destacher plustost que de rompre ce que tu as mal noüé, pourueu que s'il ne se peut autrement destacher, tu le rompes.	until this passage of Seneca fell into my hands. He is advising Lucilius, a powerful man of great authority at the emperor's court, to change his life of pleasure and pomp and to withdraw from worldly ambition to some solitary, tranquil and philosophical life; and when Lucilius raised some difficulties, he says: My advice is that you leave that life, or life altogether. I do indeed advise you to take the gentler way, and to untie rather than break what you have badly knotted, provided that, if it cannot be untied any other way, you break it.[2]
	Il n'y a homme si coüard qui n'ayme mieux tomber vne fois, que de demeurer tousiours en bransle. I'eusse trouué ce conseil sortable à la rudesse Stoïque: mais il est plus estrange qu'il soit emprunté d'Epicurus, qui escrit à ce propos, choses toutes pareilles à Idomeneus. Si est-ce que ie pense auoir remarqué quelque traict semblable parmy nos gens, mais auec la moderation Chrestienne.	There is no man so cowardly that he would not rather fall once than stay forever teetering. I would have found this advice in keeping with Stoic harshness; but it is stranger that it is borrowed from Epicurus, who writes quite similar things on this subject to Idomeneus. Still, I think I have noticed something similar among our own people, but with Christian moderation.[3]

1 Greek gnomic verses, preserved in the anthology of Stobaeus.
2 Seneca, Letters to Lucilius 22.
3 Idomeneus was a friend and disciple of Epicurus; Seneca quotes the letter in the same passage.

FRENCH

ENGLISH

1.33.2 Sainct Hilaire Euesque de Poitiers, ce fameux ennemy de l'heresie Arrienne, estant en Syrie fut aduerty qu'Abra sa fille vnique, qu'il auoit laissee pardeça auec sa mere, estoit poursuyuie en mariage par les plus apparens Seigneurs du païs, comme fille tres-bien nourrie, belle, riche, et en la fleur de son aage: il luy escriuit, comme nous voyons, qu'elle ostast son affection de tous ces plaisirs et aduantages qu'on luy presentoit: qu'il luy auoit trouué en son voyage vn party bien plus grand et plus digne, d'vn mary de bien autre pouuoir et magnificence, qui luy feroit presens de robes et de ioyaux, de prix inestimable. Son dessein estoit de luy faire perdre l'appetit et l'vsage des plaisirs mondains, pour la ioindre toute à Dieu.

Saint Hilary, Bishop of Poitiers, that famous enemy of the Arian heresy, was in Syria when he learned that Abra, his only daughter, whom he had left at home with her mother, was being sought in marriage by the most eminent lords of the land, as a girl very well brought up, beautiful, rich, and in the flower of her youth. He wrote to her (as we can still see) that she should withdraw her affection from all these pleasures and advantages that were being offered her; that on his journey he had found her a much greater and worthier match, a husband of far greater power and magnificence, who would give her presents of robes and jewels of inestimable value. His aim was to make her lose the appetite for worldly pleasures and the habit of them, so as to join her wholly to God.[4]

Mais à cela, le plus court et plus certain moyen luy semblant estre la mort de sa fille, il ne cessa par vœux, prieres, et oraisons, de faire requeste à Dieu de l'oster de ce monde, et de l'appeller à soy: comme il aduint: car bien-tost apres son retour, elle luy mourut, dequoy il montra vne singuliere ioye. Cettuy-cy semble encherir sur les autres, de ce qu'il s'adresse à ce moyen de prime face, lequel ils ne prennent que subsidiairement, et puis que c'est à l'endroit de sa fille vnique. Mais ie ne veux obmettre le bout de cette histoire, encore qu'il ne soit pas de mon propos.

But since the shortest and surest way to this seemed to him to be his daughter's death, he never ceased, by vows, prayers and supplications, to petition God to take her from this world and call her to himself; and so it happened, for soon after his return she died, at which he showed a singular joy. This man seems to outdo the others, in that he turns to this means at the very outset, whereas they take it only as a last resort, and in that it concerns his only daughter. But I will not leave out the end of this story, even though it is beside my purpose.

La femme de Sainct Hilaire ayant entendu par luy, comme la mort de leur fille s'estoit conduite par son dessein et volonté, et combien elle auoit plus d'heur d'estre deslogee de ce monde, que d'y estre, print vne si viue apprehension de la beatitude eternelle et celeste, qu'elle solicita son mary auec extreme instance, d'en faire autant pour elle. Et Dieu à leurs prieres communes, l'ayant retiree à soy, bien tost apres, ce fut vne mort embrassée auec singulier contentement commun.

Saint Hilary's wife, having learned from him how their daughter's death had come about through his design and will, and how much happier she was to have left this world than to be in it, conceived so lively a sense of eternal and heavenly bliss that she begged her husband with the utmost insistence to do the same for her. And when God, at their joint prayers, took her to himself soon afterwards, it was a death embraced with singular contentment on both sides.

4 Hilary of Poitiers (c. AD 315–367), exiled to the East for his opposition to Arianism.

I.34 Fortune Is Often Found in the Path of Reason

La fortune se rencontre souuent au train de la raison
Fortune sometimes acts with apparent justice and skill, punishing poisoners and curing the sick by chance.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
1.34.1	L'INCONSTANCE du bransle diuers de la fortune, fait qu'elle nous doiue presenter toute espece de visages.	THE inconstancy of fortune's shifting motion means that she is bound to show us every kind of face.
1.34.2	Y a il action de iustice plus expresse que celle cy? Le Duc de Valentinois ayant resolu d'empoisonner Adrian Cardinal de Cornete, chez qui le Pape Alexandre sixiesme son pere, et luy alloyent soupper au Vatican: enuoya deuant, quelque bouteille de vin empoisonné, et commanda au sommelier qu'il la gardast bien soigneusement: le Pape y estant arriué auant le fils, et ayant demandé à boire, ce sommelier, qui pensoit ce vin ne luy auoir esté recommandé que pour sa bonté, en seruit au Pape, et le Duc mesme y arriuant sur le point de la collation, et se fiant qu'on n'auroit pas touché à sa bouteille, en prit à son tour; en maniere que le Pere en mourut soudain, et le fils apres auoir esté longuement tourmenté de maladie, fut reserué à vn' autre pire fortune.	Is there any act of justice more express than this? The Duke of Valentinois had resolved to poison Adrian, Cardinal of Corneto, with whom he and his father, Pope Alexander VI, were going to dine at the Vatican. He sent ahead a bottle of poisoned wine and ordered the butler to guard it very carefully. The Pope arrived before his son and asked for a drink; the butler, who thought the wine had been entrusted to him only for its quality, served some of it to the Pope. And the Duke himself, arriving just at the time of the meal and trusting that no one would have touched his bottle, drank some in his turn. So the father died suddenly, and the son, after being tormented by illness for a long time, was kept for another, worse fortune.[1]
1.34.3	Quelquefois il semble à point nommé qu'elle se ioüe à nous. Le Seigneur d'Estree, lors guidon de Monsieur de Vandosme, et le Seigneur de Liques, Lieutenant de la compagnie du Duc d'Ascot, estans tous deux seruiteurs de la sœur du Sieur de Founguesselles, quoi que de diuers partis (comme il aduient aux voisins de la frontiere) le Sieur de Licques l'emporta: mais le mesme iour des nopces, et qui pis est, auant le coucher, le marié ayant enuie de rompre vn bois en faueur de sa nouuelle espouse, sortit à l'escarmouche pres de S.	Sometimes she seems to play tricks on us on purpose. The Seigneur d'Estrées, then standard-bearer to Monsieur de Vendôme, and the Seigneur de Licques, lieutenant of the Duke of Aerschot's company, were both suitors of the sister of the Sieur de Founguesselles, though they were of different parties (as happens with neighbors on the frontier). The Sieur de Licques won her; but on the very day of the wedding, and what is worse, before the wedding night, the bridegroom, wanting to break a lance in honor of his new bride, went out to skirmish near Saint-
	Omer, où le Sieur d'Estree se trouuant le plus fort, le feit son prisonnier: et pour faire valoir son aduantage, encore fallut-il que la Damoiselle, *Coniugis antè coacta noui dimittere collum,* *Quàm veniens vna atque altera rursus hyems* *Noctibus in longis auidum saturasset amorem,* luy fist elle mesme requeste par courtoisie de luy rendre son	Omer, where the Sieur d'Estrées, proving the stronger, took him prisoner. And to make the most of his advantage, the young lady, *Forced to let go of her new husband's neck* *Before one winter, and then another, coming round* *Had sated her eager love in the long nights,* had to

1 Cesare Borgia, Duke of Valentinois, was the son of Pope Alexander VI, who died in August 1503.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
	prisonnier: comme il fit, la noblesse Françoise, ne refusant iamais rien aux Dames.	come herself and beg him, as a courtesy, to hand over his prisoner to her. This he did, for French nobility never refuses ladies anything.[2]
1.34.4	Semble-il pas que ce soit vn sort artiste? Constantin fils d'Helene fonda l'Empire de Constantinople: et tant de siecles apres Constantin fils d'Helene le finit. Quelquefois il luy plaist enuier sur nos miracles. Nous tenons que le Roy Clouis assiegeant Angoulesme, les murailles cheurent d'elles mesmes par faueur diuine. Et Bouchet emprunte de quelqu'autheur, que le Roy Robert assiegeant vne ville, et s'estant desrobé du siege, pour aller à Orleans solemnizer la feste Sainct Aignan, comme il estoit en deuotion, sur certain point de la Messe, les murailles de la ville assiegee, s'en allerent sans aucun effort en ruine.	Does it not seem like a fate with an artist's touch? Constantine, son of Helena, founded the Empire of Constantinople; and so many centuries later Constantine, son of Helena, brought it to an end. Sometimes she likes to outdo our miracles. We hold that when King Clovis was besieging Angoulême, the walls fell of their own accord by divine favor. And Bouchet takes from some author the story that King Robert, besieging a town, slipped away from the siege to go to Orléans to celebrate the feast of Saint Aignan; and while he was at his devotions, at a certain point in the Mass, the walls of the besieged town fell into ruin without any effort.[3]
	Elle fit tout à contrepoil en nos guerres de Milan: car le Capitaine Rense assiegeant pour nous la ville d'Eronne, et ayant faict mettre la mine soubs vn grand pan de mur, et le mur en estant brusquement enleué hors de terre, recheut toutes-fois tout empenné, si droit dans son fondement, que les assiegez n'en vausirent pas moins.	She did just the opposite in our wars in Milan. Captain Renzo, besieging the town of Arona for us, had a mine laid under a great stretch of wall; and the wall, abruptly lifted off the ground, nevertheless fell back all in one piece, so squarely onto its foundation that the besieged were none the worse for it.[4]
1.34.5	Quelquefois elle fait la medecine. Iason Phereus estant abandonné des medecins, pour vne aposteme, qu'il auoit dans la poitrine, ayant enuie de s'en défaire, au moins par la mort, se ietta en vne bataille à corps perdu dans la presse des ennemis, où il fut blessé à trauers le corps, si à point, que son aposteme en creua, et guerit. Surpassa elle pas le peintre Protogenes en la science de son art?	Sometimes she plays the doctor. Jason of Pherae, given up by the physicians because of an abscess in his chest, and wanting to be rid of it, at least by death, threw himself recklessly into the thick of the enemy in a battle, where he was wounded right through the body so aptly that his abscess burst and he was cured. Did she not surpass the painter Protogenes in the mastery of his art?[5]
	Cettuy-cy ayant parfaict l'image d'vn chien las et recreu, à son contentement en toutes les autres parties, mais ne pouuant representer à son gré l'escume et la baue, despité contre sa besongne, prit son esponge, et comme elle estoit abreuuee de diuerses peintures, la ietta contre, pour tout effacer: la fortune porta tout à propos le coup à l'endroit de la bouche du chien, et y parfournit ce à quoy l'art n'auoit peu attaindre. N'adresse elle pas quelquefois nos conseils, et les corrige?	He had finished the picture of a tired, exhausted dog, and was satisfied with it in every other respect, but could not render the foam and slaver to his liking. Vexed with his work, he took his sponge, which was soaked with various paints, and threw it at the picture to wipe everything out. Fortune carried the blow precisely to the dog's mouth, and there completed what art had been unable to achieve. Does she not sometimes guide our plans and correct them?

2 Catullus, Poems 68.
3 Constantine XI, the last Byzantine emperor, whose mother was also named Helena, fell in 1453. Jean Bouchet wrote the Annals of Aquitaine (1524).
4 Renzo da Ceri, an Italian captain in French service; Arona is on Lake Maggiore.
5 Jason was tyrant of Pherae in Thessaly in the 4th century BC; Protogenes was a Greek painter of the same century.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
	Isabel Royne d'Angleterre, ayant à repasser de Zelande en son Royaume, auec vne armee, en faueur de son fils contre son mary, estoit perdue, si elle fust arriuee au port qu'elle auoit proietté, y estant attendue par ses ennemis: mais la fortune la ietta contre son vouloir ailleurs, où elle print terre en toute seureté. Et cet ancien qui ruant la pierre à vn chien, en assena et tua sa marastre, eut-il pas raison de prononcer ce vers: Ταυτοματον ἡμων καλλιω βουλευεται; La fortune a meilleur aduis que nous.	Isabella, Queen of England, had to cross back from Zeeland to her kingdom with an army, on behalf of her son and against her husband. She would have been lost if she had reached the port she had planned on, for her enemies were waiting for her there; but fortune threw her elsewhere against her will, and there she landed in complete safety. And that ancient who threw a stone at a dog and struck and killed his stepmother—was he not right to pronounce this line: *Chance takes better counsel than we do*? Fortune has better judgment than we have.[6]
1.34.6	Icetes auoit prattiqué deux soldats, pour tuer Timoleon, seiournant à Adrane en la Sicile. Ils prindrent heure, sur le point qu'il feroit quelque sacrifice. Et se meslans parmy la multitude, comme ils se guignoyent l'vn l'autre, que l'occasion estoit propre à leur besoigne: voicy vn tiers, qui d'vn grand coup d'espee, en assene l'vn par la teste, et le rue mort par terre, et s'en fuit. Le compagnon se tenant pour descouuert et perdu, recourut à l'autel, requerant franchise, auec promesse de dire toute la verité. Ainsi qu'il faisoit le compte de la coniuration, voicy le tiers qui auoit esté attrapé, lequel comme meurtrier, le peuple pousse et saboule au trauers la presse, vers Timoleon, et les plus apparents de l'assemblee.	Hicetas had bribed two soldiers to kill Timoleon while he was staying at Adranum in Sicily. They chose their moment for when he would be performing a sacrifice. And as they were mingling with the crowd, signaling to each other that the opportunity was right for their business, along comes a third man who, with a great sword stroke, strikes one of them on the head, lays him dead on the ground, and runs off. The accomplice, thinking himself discovered and lost, ran to the altar asking for sanctuary and promising to tell the whole truth. While he was giving his account of the conspiracy, along comes the third man, who had been caught; the people, taking him for a murderer, were shoving and jostling him through the crowd toward Timoleon and the leading men of the assembly.[7]
	Là il crie mercy: et dit auoir justement tué l'assassin de son pere: verifiant sur le champ, par des tesmoings que son bon sort luy fournit, tout à propos, qu'en la ville des Leontins son pere, de vray, auoit esté tué par celuy sur lequel il s'estoit vengé. On luy ordonna dix mines Attiques, pour auoir eu cet heur, prenant raison de la mort de son pere, de retirer de mort le pere commun des Siciliens. Cette fortune surpasse en reglement, les regles de l'humaine prudence.	There he cries for mercy, and says he has justly killed his father's murderer; and he proves on the spot, through witnesses whom his good luck supplied most opportunely, that in the town of the Leontines his father had indeed been killed by the man on whom he had taken revenge. They awarded him ten Attic minas for having had the good fortune, in avenging his father's death, to rescue from death the common father of the Sicilians. This fortune surpasses in its ordering the rules of human prudence.
1.34.7	Pour la fin: en ce faict icy, se descouure il pas vne bien expresse application de sa faueur, de bonté et pieté singuliere? Ignatius Pere et fils, proscripts par les Triumuirs à Rome, se resolurent à ce genereux office, de rendre leurs vies, entre les mains l'vn de l'autre, et en frustrer la cruauté des Tyrans: ils se coururent sus,	To finish: in this case, do we not see a very express application of her favor, of singular goodness and piety? The Ignatii, father and son, proscribed at Rome by the triumvirs, resolved on this generous office: to give up their lives into each other's hands, and so cheat the cruelty of the tyrants.

6 Isabella of France landed in England in 1326 against Edward II; the Greek line is from Menander.
7 Timoleon of Corinth, who freed Syracuse from its tyrants in the 4th century BC; the story is from Plutarch's Life of Timoleon.

FRENCH	ENGLISH
l'espee au poing: elle en dressa les pointes, et en fit deux coups esgalement mortels: et donna à l'honneur d'vne si belle amitié, qu'ils eussent iustement la force de retirer encore des playes leurs bras sanglants et armés, pour s'entrembrasser en cet estat, d'vne si forte estrainte, que les bourreaux couperent ensemble leurs deux testes, laissans les corps tousiours pris en ce noble neud; et les playes iointes, humans amoureusement, le sang et les restes de la vie, l'vne de l'autre.	They ran at each other, sword in hand. She guided the points and made of them two equally mortal blows; and she granted to the honor of so beautiful a friendship that they had just enough strength left to pull their bloody arms, swords still in hand, out of the wounds, and to embrace each other in that state, so tightly that the executioners cut off both their heads together, leaving the bodies still held in that noble knot, and their wounds joined, lovingly drinking in each other's blood and the last of each other's life.[8]

8 The proscriptions of 43 BC; the story is told by Appian, Civil Wars IV.

I.35 Of a Lack in Our Administrations

D'vn defaut de nos polices
Montaigne's father proposed a public registry matching needs and offers; Montaigne also praises his household diary.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
1.35.1	FEV mon pere, homme pour n'estre aydé que de l'experience et du naturel, d'vn iugement bien net, m'a dict autrefois, qu'il auoit desiré mettre en train, qu'il y eust és villes certain lieu designé, auquel ceux qui auroient besoin de quelque chose, se peussent rendre, et faire enregistrer leur affaire à vn officier estably pour cet effect: comme, ie cherche à vendre des perles: ie cherche des perles à vendre; tel veut compagnie pour aller à Paris; tel s'enquiert d'vn seruiteur de telle qualité, tel d'vn maistre; tel demande vn ouurier: qui cecy, qui cela, chacun selon son besoing. Et semble que ce moyen de nous entr'aduertir, apporteroit non legere commodité au commerce publique.	MY late father, a man of very clear judgment for one helped only by experience and natural gifts, once told me that he had wanted to set up a scheme whereby in towns there would be a certain designated place where those who needed something could go and have their business registered with an officer appointed for the purpose. For instance: I am looking to sell some pearls; I am looking for pearls for sale; so-and-so wants company for a journey to Paris; so-and-so is looking for a servant of such a kind, another for a master; another wants a workman; one this, another that, each according to his need. And it seems that this means of informing one another would bring no slight convenience to public dealings.
	Car à tous coups, il y a des conditions, qui s'entrecherchent, et pour ne s'entr'entendre, laissent les hommes en extreme necessité.	For all the time there are situations looking for each other, and because they fail to make contact, they leave men in extreme need.
1.35.2	I'entens auec vne grande honte de nostre siecle, qu'à nostre veuë, deux tres-excellens personnages en sçauoir, sont morts en estat de n'auoir pas leur saoul à manger: Lilius Gregorius Giraldus en Italie, et Sebastianus Castalio en Allemaigne. Et croy qu'il y a mil'hommes qui les eussent appellez auec tres-aduantageuses conditions, ou secourus où ils estoient s'ils l'eussent sçeu.	I hear, to the great shame of our age, that before our very eyes two men of the greatest learning have died without having enough to eat: Lilius Gregorius Giraldus in Italy and Sebastianus Castalio in Germany. And I believe there are a thousand men who would have invited them on very advantageous terms, or helped them where they were, if they had known.[1]
	Le monde n'est pas si generalement corrompu, que ie ne sçache tel homme, qui souhaitteroit de bien grande affection, que les moyens que les siens luy ont mis en main, se peussent employer tant qu'il plaira à la fortune qu'il en iouisse, à mettre à l'abry de la necessité, les personnages rares et remarquables en quelque espece de valeur, que le mal-heur combat quelquefois iusques à l'extremité: et qui les mettroit pour le moins en tel estat, qu'il ne tiendroit qu'à faute de bon discours, s'ils n'estoyent contens.	The world is not so universally corrupt that I do not know a certain man who would wish with all his heart that the means his family has put into his hands could be used, for as long as it pleases fortune to let him enjoy them, to shelter from want those persons rare and remarkable in some kind of merit whom misfortune sometimes assails to the utmost; and who would at least put them in such a position that, if they were not content, it could only be for want of good sense.

1 Lilio Gregorio Giraldi (1479–1552), Italian humanist; Sébastien Castellion (1515–1563), Protestant theologian at Basel.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
1.35.3	En la police œconomique mon pere auoit cet ordre, que ie sçay loüer, mais nullement ensuiure. C'est qu'outre le registre des negoces du mesnage, où se logent les menus comptes, payements, marchés, qui ne requierent la main du Notaire, lequel registre, vn Receueur a en charge: il ordonnoit à celuy de ses gents, qui luy seruoit à escrire, vn papier iournal, à inserer toutes les suruenances de quelque remarque, et iour par iour les memoires de l'histoire de sa maison: tres-plaisante à veoir, quand le temps commence à en effacer la souuenance, et tres à propos pour nous oster souuent de peine.	In the management of his household my father had this practice, which I can praise but by no means follow. Besides the register of household business, where the small accounts, payments and transactions not needing a notary are entered, a register kept by a steward, he had the servant who acted as his secretary keep a journal recording every happening of any note, and day by day the memoirs of the history of his house. It is very pleasant to look at when time begins to wipe out the memory of things, and very handy for often saving us trouble.
	Quand fut entamee telle besoigne, quand acheuee: quels trains y ont passé, combien arresté: noz voyages, noz absences, mariages, morts: la reception des heureuses ou malencontreuses nouuelles: changement des seruiteurs principaux: telles matieres. Vsage ancien, que ie trouue bon à rafraichir, chacun en sa chacuniere: et me trouue vn sot d'y auoir failly.	When such a piece of work was begun, when it was finished; what households passed through, how long they stayed; our journeys, our absences, marriages, deaths; the arrival of happy or unhappy news; changes of the chief servants; matters of that kind. An ancient custom, which I think it good to revive, each in his own little home; and I think myself a fool for having failed to do it.

I.36 Of the Custom of Wearing Clothes

De l'vsage de se vestir

Were humans meant to go naked like other creatures? Montaigne argues that custom, not nature, makes cold unbearable to us.

FRENCH

1.36.1 OV que ie vueille donner, il me faut forcer quelque barriere de la coustume, tant ell'a soigneusement bridé toutes nos auenues. Ie deuisoy en cette saison frilleuse, si la façon d'aller tout nud de ces nations dernierement trouuees, est vne façon forcee par la chaude temperature de l'air, comme nous disons des Indiens, et des Mores, ou si c'est l'originelle des hommes. Les gens d'entendement, d'autant que tout ce qui est soubs le ciel, comme dit la saincte Parole, est subiect à mesmes loix, ont accoustumé en pareilles considerations à celles icy, où il faut distinguer les loix naturelles des controuuees, de recourir à la generale police du monde, où il n'y peut auoir rien de contrefaict.

Or tout estant exactement fourny ailleurs de filet et d'éguille, pour maintenir son estre, il est mécreable, que nous soyons seuls produits en estat deffectueux et indigent, et en estat qui ne se puisse maintenir sans secours estranger. Ainsi ie tiens que comme les plantes, arbres, animaux, et tout ce qui vit, se treuue naturellement equippé de suffisante couuerture, pour se deffendre de l'iniure du temps, *Proptereáque ferè res omnes, aut corio sunt, / Aut seta, aut conchis, aut callo, aut cortice, tectæ,* aussi estions nous: mais comme ceux qui esteignent par artificielle lumiere celle du iour, nous auons esteint nos propres moyens, par les moyens empruntez.

1.36.2 Et est aisé à voir que c'est la coustume qui nous fait impossible ce qui ne l'est pas. Car de ces nations qui n'ont aucune cognoissance de vestemens, il s'en trouue d'assises enuiron soubs mesme ciel, que le nostre, et soubs bien plus rude ciel que le nostre. Et puis la plus delicate partie de nous est celle qui se tient tousiours descouuerte: les yeux, la bouche, le nez, les oreilles; à noz contadins, comme à noz ayeulx, la partie pectorale et le ventre.

ENGLISH

WHEREVER I want to turn, I have to force some barrier of custom, so carefully has it bridled all our approaches. In this chilly season I was pondering whether the habit of going completely naked among those recently discovered nations is forced on them by the hot temperature of the air, as we say of the Indians and the Moors, or whether it is the original way of mankind. Men of understanding, since everything under heaven, as Holy Scripture says, is subject to the same laws, are accustomed, in considerations like these, where natural laws must be distinguished from invented ones, to have recourse to the general order of the world, in which there can be nothing counterfeit.

Now since everything else is precisely furnished with needle and thread to maintain its being, it is unbelievable that we alone should have been produced in a defective and needy state, a state that cannot be maintained without outside help. So I hold that, just as plants, trees, animals and everything that lives are naturally equipped with enough covering to protect themselves from the harshness of the weather, *And so almost all things are covered with hide, / Or bristles, or shells, or callus, or bark,* so were we too. But like those who blot out the light of day with artificial light, we have blotted out our own means with borrowed ones.[1]

And it is easy to see that it is custom that makes impossible for us what is not impossible. For among those nations that have no knowledge of clothing, some are situated under roughly the same sky as ours, and some under a much harsher sky than ours. And then, the most delicate part of us is the part that is always left uncovered: the eyes, the mouth, the nose, the ears; and for our

1 Lucretius, On the Nature of Things IV.

FRENCH

Si nous fussions nez auec condition de cotillons et de greguesques, il ne faut faire doubte, que nature n'eust armé d'vne peau plus espoisse ce qu'elle eust abandonné à la baterie des saisons, comme elle a faict le bout des doigts et plante des pieds. Pourquoy semble il difficile à croire? entre ma façon d'estre vestu, et celle du païsan de mon païs, ie trouue bien plus de distance, qu'il n'y a de sa façon, à celle d'vn homme, qui n'est vestu que de sa peau. Combien d'hommes, et en Turchie sur tout, vont nuds par deuotion?

Ie ne sçay qui demandoit à vn de nos gueux, qu'il voyoit en chemise en plein hyuer, aussi scarbillat que tel qui se tient ammitonné dans les martes iusques aux oreilles, comme il pouuoit auoir patience: Et vous monsieur, respondit-il, vous auez bien la face descouuerte: or moy ie suis tout face. Les Italiens content du fol du Duc de Florence, ce me semble, que son maistre s'enquerant comment ainsi mal vestu, il pouuoit porter le froid, à quoy il estoit bien empesché luy-mesme: Suiuez, dit-il, ma recepte de charger sur vous tous vos accoustrements, comme ie fay les miens, vous n'en souffrirez non plus que moy.

Le Roy Massinissa iusques à l'extreme vieillesse, ne peut estre induit à aller la teste couuerte par froid, orage, et pluye qu'il fist, ce qu'on dit aussi de l'Empereur Seuerus. Aux batailles donnees entre les Ægyptiens et les Perses, Herodote dit auoir esté remarqué et par d'autres, et par luy, que de ceux qui y demeuroient morts, le test estoit sans comparaison plus dur aux Ægyptiens qu'aux Perses: à raison que ceux cy portent tousiours leurs testes couuertes de beguins, et puis de turbans: ceux la rases des l'enfance et descouuertes. Et le Roy Agesilaus obserua iusques à sa decrepitude, de porter pareille vesture en hyuer qu'en esté.

Cæsar, dit Suetone, marchoit tousiours deuant sa troupe, et le plus souuent à pied, la teste descouuerte, soit qu'il fist Soleil, ou qu'il pleust, et autant en dit-on de Hannibal, *tum vertice nudo / Excipere insanos imbres, cælique ruinam.* Vn Venitien, qui s'y est tenu long temps, et qui ne fait que d'en venir, escrit qu'au Royaume du Pegu, les autres parties du corps vestues, les hommes et les femmes vont

ENGLISH

peasants, as for our forefathers, the chest and the belly.

If we had been born needing petticoats and breeches, there is no doubt that nature would have armed with a thicker skin whatever she left exposed to the battering of the seasons, as she has done with our fingertips and the soles of our feet. Why does this seem hard to believe? Between my way of dressing and that of a peasant of my region, I find far more distance than there is between his way and that of a man dressed in nothing but his skin. How many men, especially in Turkey, go naked out of religious devotion?

Someone, I forget who, saw one of our beggars in nothing but his shirt in the depth of winter, as lively as any man muffled up to the ears in marten fur, and asked him how he could bear it. "And you, sir," he replied, "you keep your face uncovered; well, I am all face." The Italians tell a story, I believe, about the Duke of Florence's fool. His master asked him how, so poorly dressed, he could stand the cold, which the Duke himself found hard to bear. "Follow my recipe," said the fool, "and pile on all the clothes you have, as I do with mine, and you will suffer from the cold no more than I do."

King Masinissa, even in extreme old age, could not be persuaded to go about with his head covered, whatever cold, storm or rain there might be; the same is said of the Emperor Severus. In the battles fought between the Egyptians and the Persians, Herodotus says it was noticed both by others and by himself that among those left dead on the field, the skulls of the Egyptians were incomparably harder than those of the Persians. The reason was that the Persians always kept their heads covered, first with caps and then with turbans, while the Egyptians were shaved from childhood and went bareheaded. And King Agesilaus kept up, into his decrepit old age, the practice of wearing the same clothes in winter as in summer.[2]

Caesar, says Suetonius, always marched at the head of his troops, most often on foot and bareheaded, whether it was sunny or raining; and the same is said of Hannibal: *then, with bare head, / to take the raging downpours and the collapse of the sky.* A Venetian who lived there a long time and has only just come back writes that in the kingdom of

2 Masinissa (c. 240–148 BC) was king of Numidia in North Africa.

FRENCH

tousiours les pieds nuds, mesme à cheual. Et Platon conseille merueilleusement pour la santé de tout le corps, de ne donner aux pieds et à la teste autre couuerture, que celle que nature y a mise.

Celuy que les Polonnois ont choisi pour leur Roy, apres le nostre, qui est à la verité l'vn des plus grands Princes de nostre siecle, ne porte iamais gands, ny ne change pour hyuer et temps qu'il face, le mesme bonnet qu'il porte au couuert. Comme ie ne puis souffrir d'aller deboutonné et destaché, les laboureurs de mon voisinage se sentiroient entrauez de l'estre. Varro tient, que quand on ordonna que nous tinsions la teste descouuerte, en presence des Dieux ou du Magistrat, on le fit plus pour nostre santé, et nous fermir contre les iniures du temps, que pour compte de la reuerence.

1.36.3 Et puis que nous sommes sur le froid, et François accoustumez à nous biguarrer, (non pas moy, car ie ne m'habille guiere que de noir ou de blanc, à l'imitation de mon pere) adioustons d'vne autre piece, que le Capitaine Martin du Bellay recite, au voyage de Luxembourg, auoir veu les gelees si aspres, que le vin de la munition se coupoit à coups de hache et de coignee, se debitoit aux soldats par poix, et qu'ils l'emportoient dans des panniers: et Ouide, *Nudáque consistunt, formam seruantia testæ, / Vina; nec hausta meri, sed data frusta, bibunt.* Les gelees sont si aspres en l'emboucheure des Palus Mæotides, qu'en la mesme place où le Lieutenant de Mithridates auoit liuré bataille aux ennemis à pied sec, et les y auoit desfaicts, l'esté venu, il y gaigna contre eux encore vne bataille naualle.

Les Romains souffrirent grand desaduantage au combat qu'ils eurent contre les Carthaginois pres de Plaisance, de ce qu'ils allerent à la charge, le sang figé, et les membres contreints de froid: là où Hannibal auoit faict espandre du feu par tout son ost, pour eschaufer ses soldats: et distribuer de l'huyle par les bandes, afin que s'oignants, ils rendissent leurs nerfs plus souples et desgourdis, et encroustassent les pores contre les coups de l'air et du vent gelé, qui couroit lors. La retraitte des Grecs, de

ENGLISH

Pegu, though the other parts of the body are clothed, men and women always go barefoot, even on horseback. And Plato strongly advises, for the health of the whole body, that we give the feet and the head no covering other than the one nature has put there.[3]

The man the Poles chose as their king after ours, who is truly one of the greatest princes of our age, never wears gloves, nor does he change, whatever the winter or the weather, the cap he wears indoors. Just as I cannot bear to go about unbuttoned and untrussed, the farm laborers of my neighborhood would feel hobbled if they were buttoned up. Varro holds that when it was decreed that we should uncover our heads in the presence of the gods or of the magistrate, it was done more for our health, and to toughen us against the harshness of the weather, than out of reverence.[4]

And since we are on the subject of cold, and since we French are used to dressing in motley (not I, for I dress almost only in black or white, in imitation of my father), let us stitch on another piece. Captain Martin du Bellay relates that on the Luxembourg campaign he saw frosts so severe that the army's wine supply was cut with axes and hatchets and handed out to the soldiers by weight, and they carried it off in baskets. And Ovid: *The wine stands bare, keeping the shape of the jar; / they drink not draughts of it but chunks handed out.* The frosts are so severe at the mouth of the Maeotian marshes that in the very place where Mithridates' lieutenant had fought the enemy on dry ground and defeated them, when summer came he won another battle against them there, this time at sea.[5]

The Romans were at a great disadvantage in the battle they fought against the Carthaginians near Piacenza, because they went into the charge with their blood congealed and their limbs stiff with cold. Hannibal, by contrast, had had fires lit throughout his camp to warm his soldiers, and oil handed out among the companies so that, by rubbing it on, they would make their sinews more supple and limber and coat over their pores against the blasts of air and the freezing wind that

3 The verse is from Silius Italicus, Punica. Pegu was a kingdom in what is now Myanmar (Burma).
4 Stephen Báthory, elected king of Poland in 1576 after Henri of Valois left the throne to become Henri III of France.
5 Martin du Bellay wrote memoirs of the wars of Francis I. The Maeotian marshes are the Sea of Azov.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
	Babylone en leurs païs, est fameuse des difficultez et mesaises, qu'ils eurent à surmonter.	was blowing then. The retreat of the Greeks from Babylon to their own country is famous for the hardships and difficulties they had to overcome.[6]
	Cette cy en fut, qu'accueillis aux montaignes d'Armenie d'vn horrible rauage de neiges, ils en perdirent la cognoissance du païs et des chemins: et en estants assiegés tout court, furent vn iour et vne nuict, sans boire et sans manger, la plus part de leurs bestes mortes: d'entre eux plusieurs morts, plusieurs aueugles du coup du gresil, et lueur de la neige: plusieurs estropiés par les extremitez: plusieurs roides transis et immobiles de froid, ayants encore le sens entier. Alexandre veit vne nation en laquelle on enterre les arbres fruitiers en hyuer pour les defendre de la gelee: et nous en pouuons aussi voir.	This was one of them: caught in the mountains of Armenia by a terrible onslaught of snow, they lost all sense of the country and the roads. Hemmed in by it, they went a day and a night without eating or drinking, most of their animals dead; and of the men, many died, many were blinded by the sting of the sleet and the glare of the snow, many were maimed in their hands and feet, many were stiff, frozen and unable to move from the cold while still fully conscious. Alexander saw a nation where fruit trees are buried in winter to protect them from the frost; and we can see this too.
1.36.4	Sur le subiect de vestir, le Roy de la Mexique changeoit quatre fois par iour d'accoustremens, iamais ne les reiteroit, employant sa desferre à ses continuelles liberalitez et recompenses: comme aussi ny pot, ny plat, ny vtensile de sa cuisine, et de sa table, ne luy estoient seruis à deux fois.	On the subject of dress: the king of Mexico changed his clothes four times a day and never wore them again, using his castoffs for his continual gifts and rewards; likewise no pot, no dish, no utensil of his kitchen or his table was ever served to him twice.[7]

6 The battle of the Trebia (218 BC). The retreat of the Ten Thousand (401–400 BC) is told in Xenophon's Anabasis.
7 Montezuma II, the Aztec ruler, as described by the Spanish historian López de Gómara.

I.37 Of Cato the Younger

Du ieune Caton

Montaigne refuses to measure others by himself and defends the greatness of heroic figures like Cato against detractors.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
1.37.1	IE n'ay point cette erreur commune, de iuger d'vn autre selon que ie suis. I'en croy aysément des choses diuerses à moy. Pour me sentir engagé à vne forme, ie n'y oblige pas le monde, comme chascun fait, et croy, et conçoy mille contraires façons de vie: et au rebours du commun, reçoy plus facilement la difference, que la ressemblance en nous. Ie descharge tant qu'on veut, vn autre estre, de mes conditions et principes: et le considere simplement en luy mesme, sans relation, l'estoffant sur son propre modelle. Pour n'estre continent, ie ne laisse d'aduoüer sincerement, la continence des Feuillans et des Capuchins, et de bien trouuer l'air de leur train.	I do not share that common error of judging another by what I am. I readily believe that others have qualities different from mine. Though I feel myself committed to one form, I do not oblige everyone else to follow it, as everyone does. I believe in and can conceive a thousand contrary ways of life; and, unlike most people, I more readily accept the difference between us than the likeness. I relieve another being, as much as you like, of my own qualities and principles, and consider him simply in himself, without relation to me, shaping him on his own model. Though I am not continent myself, I still sincerely acknowledge the continence of the Feuillants and the Capuchins, and think well of their way of life.[1]
	Ie m'insinue par imagination fort bien en leur place: et les ayme et les honore d'autant plus, qu'ils sont autres que moy. Ie desire singulierement, qu'on nous iuge chascun à part soy: et qu'on ne me tire en consequence des communs exemples. Ma foiblesse n'altere aucunement les opinions que ie dois auoir de la force et vigueur de ceux qui le méritent. *Sunt, qui nihil suadent, quàm quod se imitari posse confidunt.* Rampant au limon de la terre, ie ne laisse pas de remarquer iusques dans les nuës la hauteur inimitable d'aucunes ames heroïques. C'est beaucoup pour moy d'auoir le iugement reglé, si les effects ne le peuuent estre, et maintenir au moins cette maistresse partie, exempte de corruption.	I slip very easily in imagination into their place, and I love and honor them all the more because they are different from me. I particularly want each of us to be judged on his own, and not to be measured by the common run. My weakness in no way alters the opinions I ought to have of the strength and vigor of those who deserve it. *There are those who recommend nothing but what they are confident they can imitate themselves.* Crawling in the slime of the earth, I still note, up in the clouds, the inimitable loftiness of certain heroic souls. It is a great deal for me to have my judgment well ordered, if my actions cannot be, and to keep at least this sovereign part free from corruption.[2]
	C'est quelque chose d'auoir la volonté bonne, quand les iambes me faillent.	It is something to have good will, when my legs fail me.
1.37.2	Ce siecle, auquel nous viuons, au moins pour nostre climat, est si plombé, que ie ne dis pas l'execution, mais l'imagination mesme de la vertu en est à dire: et semble que ce ne soit autre chose qu'vn iargon de college.	This age we live in, at least in our part of the world, is so leaden that not merely the practice but even the idea of virtue is lacking, and it seems to be nothing but schoolroom jargon. *They think*

1 The Feuillants were a strict reformed branch of the Cistercians; the Capuchins, a strict reformed branch of the Franciscans.
2 Adapted from Cicero.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
	Virtutem verba putant, vt / Lucum ligna; quam vereri deberent, etiam si percipere non possent. C'est vn affiquet à pendre en vn cabinet, ou au bout de la langue, comme au bout de l'oreille, pour parement.	*virtue is mere words, as / a sacred grove is mere wood; yet they ought to revere it even if they could not grasp it.* It is a trinket to hang in a cabinet, or on the tip of the tongue, as on the tip of an ear, for ornament.[3]
1.37.3	Il ne se recognoist plus d'action vertueuse: celles qui en portent le visage, elles n'en ont pas pourtant l'essence: car le profit, la gloire, la crainte, l'accoutumance, et autres telles causes estrangeres nous acheminent à les produire. La iustice, la vaillance, la debonnaireté, que nous exerçons lors, elles peuuent estre ainsi nommees, pour la consideration d'autruy, et du visage qu'elles portent en public: mais chez l'ouurier, ce n'est aucunement vertu. Il y a vne autre fin proposee, autre cause mouuante. Or la vertu n'aduoüe rien, que ce qui se faict par elle, et pour elle seule.	Virtuous action is no longer to be found: the actions that wear its face do not have its essence, for profit, glory, fear, habit and other such outside causes lead us to perform them. The justice, valor and kindness we then exercise may be called so in the eyes of others and for the face they wear in public; but in the doer it is in no way virtue. There is another end in view, another moving cause. Now virtue acknowledges nothing but what is done by it and for it alone.
1.37.4	En cette grande bataille de Potidee, que les Grecs sous Pausanias gaignerent contre Mardonius, et les Perses: les victorieux suiuant leur coustume, venants à partir entre eux la gloire de l'exploit, attribuerent à la nation Spartiate la precellence de valeur en ce combat. Les Spartiates excellents iuges de la vertu, quand ils vindrent à decider, à quel particulier de leur nation debuoit demeurer l'honneur d'auoir le mieux faict en cette iournee, trouuerent qu'Aristodemus s'estoit le plus courageusement hasardé: mais pourtant ils ne luy en donnerent point de prix, par ce que sa vertu auoit esté incitee du desir de se purger du reproche, qu'il auoit encouru au faict des Thermopyles: et d'vn appetit de mourir courageusement, pour garantir sa honte passee.	In that great battle of Potidaea, which the Greeks under Pausanias won against Mardonius and the Persians, the victors, following their custom, came to share out among themselves the glory of the exploit, and awarded the Spartan nation preeminence for valor in that battle. The Spartans, excellent judges of virtue, when they came to decide which individual of their nation should have the honor of having done best that day, found that Aristodemus had risked himself most courageously. Yet they gave him no prize for it, because his valor had been stirred by the desire to clear himself of the reproach he had incurred over Thermopylae, and by a longing to die courageously to redeem his past shame.[4]
1.37.5	Nos iugemens sont encores malades, et suyuent la deprauation de nos mœurs. Ie voy la pluspart des esprits de mon temps faire les ingenieux à obscurcir la gloire des belles et genereuses actions anciennes, leur donnant quelque interpretation vile, et leur controuuant des occasions et des causes vaines. Grande subtilité. Qu'on me donne l'action la plus excellente et pure, ie m'en vois y fournir vraysemblablement cinquante vitieuses intentions. Dieu sçait, à qui les veut estendre, quelle diuersité d'images ne souffre nostre interne volonté. Ils ne font pas tant malitieusement, que lourdement et grossierement, les ingenieux, à tout leur mesdisance.	Our judgments are still sick, and follow the depravity of our morals. I see most of the minds of my time showing off their cleverness by obscuring the glory of the fine and noble deeds of antiquity, giving them some base interpretation and inventing vain occasions and causes for them. Great subtlety! Give me the most excellent and pure action, and I will supply it with fifty plausible vicious intentions. God knows, for anyone who wants to stretch them, what a variety of images our inner will allows. These clever fellows, for all their slander, act not so much maliciously as clumsily and crudely.

3 Horace, Epistles, followed by a sentence from Cicero.
4 Montaigne means the battle of Plataea (479 BC). Aristodemus was one of the Spartans who did not die at Thermopylae, and was disgraced for it.

FRENCH

ENGLISH

1.37.6 La mesme peine, qu'on prent à detracter de ces grands noms, et la mesme licence, ie la prendroye volontiers à leur prester quelque tour d'espaule pour les hausser. Ces rares figures, et triees pour l'exemple du monde, par le consentement des sages, ie ne me feindroy pas de les recharger d'honneur, autant que mon inuention pourroit, en interpretation et fauorable circonstance. Et il faut croire, que les efforts de nostre inuention sont loing au dessous de leur merite. C'est l'office des gents de bien, de peindre la vertu la plus belle qui se puisse. Et ne messieroit pas, quand la passion nous transporteroit à la faueur de si sainctes formes.

The same pains people take to detract from these great names, and the same license, I would gladly take to lend them a shoulder and lift them higher. These rare figures, picked out by the consent of the wise as examples for the world, I would not hesitate to load with fresh honor, as far as my invention could, by interpretation and favorable circumstance. And we must believe that the efforts of our invention fall far below their merit. It is the office of good men to portray virtue as beautiful as it can be. And it would not be unseemly if passion should carry us away in favor of such holy forms.

Ce que ceux cy font au contraire, ils le font ou par malice, ou par ce vice de ramener leur creance à leur portee, dequoy ie viens de parler: ou comme ie pense plustost, pour n'auoir pas la veuë assez forte et assez nette ny dressee à conceuoir la splendeur de la vertu en sa pureté naifue. Comme Plutarque dit, que de son temps, aucuns attribuoient la cause de la mort du ieune Caton, à la crainte qu'il auoit eu de Cæsar: dequoy il se picque auecques raison: et peut on iuger par là, combien il se fust encore plus offencé de ceux qui l'ont attribuee à l'ambition. Sottes gents.

What these people do to the contrary, they do either from malice, or from that vice I have just spoken of, of bringing their belief down to their own level; or, as I rather think, because their sight is not strong enough, clear enough or trained to conceive the splendor of virtue in its natural purity. So Plutarch says that in his time some attributed the cause of the younger Cato's death to the fear he had of Caesar; and he is rightly indignant at this. We can judge from that how much more offended he would have been by those who attributed it to ambition. Foolish people![5]

Il eust bien faict vne belle action, genereuse et iuste plustost auec ignominie, que pour la gloire. Ce personnage là fut veritablement vn patron, que nature choisit, pour montrer iusques où l'humaine vertu et fermeté pouuoit atteindre.

He would have done a fine, noble and just deed in disgrace rather than for glory. That man was truly a model whom nature chose to show how far human virtue and firmness could reach.

1.37.7 Mais ie ne suis pas icy à mesmes pour traicter ce riche argument. Ie veux seulement faire luiter ensemble, les traicts de cinq poëtes Latins, sur la louange de Caton, et pour l'interest de Caton: et par incident, pour le leur aussi. Or deura l'enfant bien nourry, trouuer au prix des autres, les deux premiers trainants. Le troisiesme, plus verd: mais qui s'est abattu par l'extrauagance de sa force. Il estimera que là il y auroit place à vn ou deux degrez d'inuention encore, pour arriuer au quatriesme, sur le point duquel il ioindra ses mains par admiration. Au dernier, premier de quelque espace: mais laquelle espace, il iurera ne pouuoir estre remplie par nul esprit humain, il s'estonnera, il se transira.

But I am in no position here to treat this rich subject. I only want to set five Latin poets wrestling together in praise of Cato—for Cato's sake, and incidentally for their own as well. Now a well-brought-up child should find, compared with the others, the first two dragging; the third more vigorous, but brought down by the extravagance of its own strength. He will judge that there would be room for one or two more degrees of invention before reaching the fourth, at the high point of which he will clasp his hands in admiration. At the last—first by some distance, but a distance that he will swear no human mind could fill—he will be stunned, he will be awestruck.

1.37.8 Voicy merueilles. Nous auons bien plus de poëtes, que de iuges et interpretes de poësie. Il est plus aisé de la faire,

Here is a marvel: we have far more poets than judges and interpreters of poetry. It is easier to

5 Cato the Younger (95–46 BC) killed himself at Utica rather than submit to Caesar.

FRENCH

que de la cognoistre. A certaine mesure basse, on la peut iuger par les preceptes et par art. Mais la bonne, la supreme, la diuine, est au dessus des regles et de la raison. Quiconque en discerne la beauté, d'vne veuë ferme et rassise, il ne la void pas: non plus que la splendeur d'vn esclair. Elle ne pratique point nostre iugement: elle le rauit et rauage. La fureur, qui espoinçonne celuy qui la sçait penetrer, fiert encores vn tiers, à la luy ouyr traitter et reciter.

Comme l'aymant attire non seulement vne aiguille, mais infond encores en icelle, sa faculté d'en attirer d'autres: et il se void plus clairement aux theatres, que l'inspiration sacree des muses, ayant premierement agité le poëte à la cholere, au deuil, à la hayne, et hors de soy, où elles veulent, frappe encore par le poëte, l'acteur, et par l'acteur, consecutiuement tout vn peuple. C'est l'enfileure de noz aiguilles, suspendues l'vne de l'autre. Dés ma premiere enfance, la poësie a eu cela, de me transpercer et transporter. Mais ce ressentiment bien vif, qui est naturellement en moy, a esté diuersement manié, par diuersité de formes, non tant, plus hautes et plus basses, car c'estoient tousiours des plus hautes en chasque espece, comme differentes en couleur.

Premierement, vne fluidité gaye et ingenieuse: depuis vne subtilité aiguë et releuee. En fin, vne force meure et constante. L'exemple le dira mieux. Ouide, Lucain, Vergile.

1.37.9 Mais voyla nos gens sur la carriere. *Sit Cato, dum viuit, sanè vel Cæsare maior,* dit l'vn: *Et inuictum, deuicta morte, Catonem,* dit l'autre. Et l'autre, parlant des guerres ciuiles d'entre Cæsar et Pompeius, *Victrix causa diis placuit, sed victa Catoni.* Et le quatriesme sur les louanges de Cæsar: *Et cuncta terrarum subacta, / Præter atrocem animum Catonis.* Et le maistre du cœur, apres auoir étalé les noms des plus grands Romains en sa peinture, finit en cette maniere: *His dantem iura Catonem.*

ENGLISH

write it than to understand it. At a certain low level, it can be judged by precepts and by skill. But the good, the supreme, the divine is above rules and reason. Whoever discerns its beauty with a firm and steady gaze does not see it, any more than the splendor of a flash of lightning. It does not work on our judgment; it ravishes and ravages it. The frenzy that goads the man who can penetrate it also strikes a third person who hears him discuss and recite it.

Just as the magnet not only attracts a needle but also infuses into it its own power to attract others. And it is seen more clearly in the theater that the sacred inspiration of the Muses, having first stirred the poet to anger, grief, hatred and out of himself, wherever they please, strikes through the poet the actor, and through the actor, in turn, a whole people. It is the chain of our needles, hanging one from another. From my earliest childhood, poetry has had the power to pierce me through and carry me away. But this very lively sensitivity, which is natural in me, has been variously affected by various forms—not so much higher and lower (for they were always the highest of each kind) as different in color.

First, a gay and ingenious fluency; later, a keen and lofty subtlety; finally, a mature and steady strength. The example will say it better: Ovid, Lucan, Virgil.

But here are our poets on the racecourse. *Granted, let Cato in his lifetime be greater even than Caesar,* says one. *And Cato unconquered, having conquered death,* says another. And another, speaking of the civil wars between Caesar and Pompey: *The winning cause pleased the gods, but the losing cause pleased Cato.* And the fourth, praising Caesar: *And all the lands subdued, / except the fierce soul of Cato.* And the master of the choir, after setting out in his picture the names of the greatest Romans, ends in this way: *Cato giving them laws.*[6]

6 The five are Martial, Manilius, Lucan, Horace and Virgil (Aeneid VIII, on the shield of Aeneas).

I.38 How We Weep and Laugh at the Same Thing

Comme nous pleurons et rions d'vne mesme chose
Conflicting feelings can be equally sincere; Montaigne shows how the soul shifts between grief and joy over the same thing.

FRENCH

1.38.1 QVAND nous rencontrons dans les histoires, qu'Antigonus sçeut tres-mauuais gré à son fils de luy auoir presenté la teste du Roy Pyrrhus son ennemy, qui venoit sur l'heure mesme d'estre tué combatant contre luy: et que l'ayant veuë il se print bien fort à pleurer: et que le Duc René de Lorraine, pleingnit aussi la mort du Duc Charles de Bourgoigne, qu'il venoit de deffaire, et en porta le deuil en son enterrement: et qu'en la bataille d'Auroy (que le Comte de Montfort gaigna contre Charles de Blois sa partie, pour le Duché de Bretaigne) le victorieux rencontrant le corps de son ennemy trespassé, en mena grand deuil, il ne faut pas s'escrier soudain, *Et cosi auen che l'animo ciascuna*
Sua passion sotto el contrario manto
Ricopre, con la vista hor' chiara, hor bruna. Quand on presenta à Cæsar la teste de Pompeius, les histoires disent qu'il en destourna sa veuë, comme d'vn vilain et mal plaisant spectacle.

Il y auoit eu entr'eux vne si longue intelligence, et societé au maniement des affaires publiques, tant de communauté de fortunes, tant d'offices reciproques et d'alliance, qu'il ne faut pas croire que cette contenance fust toute fauce et contrefaicte, comme estime cet autre: *Tutúmque putauit*
Iam bonus esse socer, lacrymas non sponte cadentes
Effudit, gemitúsque expressit pectore læto. Car bien qu'à la verité la pluspart de nos actions ne soient que masque et fard, et qu'il puisse quelquefois estre vray, *Heredis fletus sub persona risus est.* si est-ce qu'au iugement de ces accidens, il faut considerer, comme nos ames se trouuent souuent agitees de diuerses passions.

1.38.2 Et tout ainsi qu'en nos corps ils disent qu'il y a vne assemblee de diuerses humeurs, desquelles celle là est

ENGLISH

When we come across in the histories that Antigonus was very displeased with his son for presenting him with the head of King Pyrrhus, his enemy, who had just been killed fighting against him, and that on seeing it he burst into tears; and that Duke René of Lorraine likewise lamented the death of Duke Charles of Burgundy, whom he had just defeated, and wore mourning at his funeral; and that at the battle of Auray (which the Count of Montfort won against Charles of Blois, his rival for the duchy of Brittany) the victor, coming upon the body of his dead enemy, mourned him greatly—we must not immediately exclaim: *And so it happens that the mind hides each*
of its passions beneath a contrary cloak,
with a face now bright, now dark. When Caesar was presented with Pompey's head, the histories say he turned his eyes away as from an ugly and unpleasant sight.[1]

There had been between them such a long understanding and partnership in managing public affairs, so much sharing of fortunes, so many mutual services and ties of kinship, that we must not believe this countenance was entirely false and feigned, as this other poet thinks: *And thinking it now safe*
to be a good father-in-law, he shed tears that did not fall of themselves,
and forced groans from a glad heart. For although in truth most of our actions are nothing but mask and paint, and it may sometimes be true that *The heir's weeping is laughter behind a mask,* still, in judging these events we must consider how our souls are often stirred by different passions.[2]

And just as they say that in our bodies there is a gathering of different humors, of which the mas-

1 The Italian verse is from Petrarch.

FRENCH

maistresse, qui commande le plus ordinairement en nous, selon nos complexions: aussi en nostre ame, bien qu'il y ait diuers mouuements, qui l'agitent, si faut-il qu'il y en ayt vn à qui le champ demeure. Mais ce n'est pas auec si entier auantage, que pour la volubilité et soupplesse de nostre ame, les plus foibles par occasion ne regaignent encores la place, et ne facent vne courte charge à leur tour.

D'où nous voyons non seulement les enfans, qui vont tout naifuement apres la nature, pleurer et rire souuent de mesme chose: mais nul d'entre nous ne se peut vanter, quelque voyage qu'il face à son souhait, qu'encore au départir de sa famille, et de ses amis, il ne se sente frissonner le courage: et si les larmes ne luy en eschappent tout à faict, au moins met-il le pied à l'estrié d'vn visage morne et contristé.

Et quelque gentille flamme qui eschauffe le cœur des filles bien nees, encore les despend on à force du col de leurs meres, pour les rendre à leur espoux: quoy que die ce bon compagnon, *Estne nouis nuptis odio Venus, ánne parentum*
Frustrantur falsis gaudia lacrymulis,
Vbertim thalami quas intra limina fundunt?
Non, ita me diui, vera gemunt, iuuerint. Ainsin il n'est pas estrange de plaindre celuy-là mort, qu'on ne voudroit aucunement estre en vie.

1.38.3 Quand ie tance auec mon valet, ie tance du meilleur courage que i'aye: ce sont vrayes et non feintes imprecations: mais cette fumee passee, qu'il ayt besoing de moy, ie luy bien-feray volontiers, ie tourne à l'instant le fueillet. Quand ie l'appelle vn badin, vn veau: ie n'entrepren pas de luy coudre à iamais ces titres: ny ne pense me desdire, pour le nommer honeste homme tantost apres. Nulle qualité nous embrasse purement et vniuersellement. Si ce n'estoit la contenance d'vn fol, de parler seul, il n'est iour ny heure à peine, en laquelle on ne m'ouist gronder en moy-mesme, et contre moy, Bren du fat: et si n'enten pas, que ce soit ma definition.

Qui pour me voir vne mine tantost froide, tantost amoureuse enuers ma femme, estime que l'vne ou l'autre soit feinte, il est vn sot. Neron prenant congé de sa mere, qu'il enuoioit noyer, sentit toutefois l'émotion de cet adieu maternel: et en eust horreur et pitié. On dit que la lumiere du Soleil, n'est pas d'vne piece continuë: mais

ENGLISH

ter is the one that most usually commands in us, according to our constitutions, so in our soul, although various impulses stir it, one of them must hold the field. But not with so complete an advantage that, because of the volatility and suppleness of our soul, the weaker ones do not on occasion regain ground and make a brief charge in their turn.

Hence we see not only children, who follow nature quite artlessly, often crying and laughing at the same thing; but none of us can boast that, however much he may want the journey he is setting out on, he does not still feel his heart quiver at parting from his family and friends. And if tears do not quite escape him, at least he puts his foot in the stirrup with a gloomy and saddened face.

And whatever noble flame warms the hearts of well-born girls, still they have to be pried by force from their mothers' necks to be handed over to their husbands, whatever this good fellow may say: *Do new brides hate Venus, or do they cheat*
their parents' joy with false little tears
which they shed in floods inside the bedroom door?
No, so help me the gods, their groans are not true. So it is not strange to lament the death of a man whom one would by no means want alive.[3]

When I scold my valet, I scold him with all the heart I have; these are real curses, not feigned. But once that smoke has passed, let him need me and I will gladly do him good: I turn the page instantly. When I call him a buffoon, a dull calf, I do not undertake to stitch those titles on him forever; nor do I think I am contradicting myself when I call him a decent fellow shortly after. No quality embraces us purely and universally. If talking to oneself were not the mark of a fool, there is hardly a day or an hour when I would not be heard grumbling to myself and against myself, "Dung on the fool!"—and yet I do not mean that as my definition.

Anyone who, seeing me look now cold, now loving toward my wife, thinks that one or the other is feigned, is a fool. Nero, taking leave of his mother, whom he was sending to be drowned, nevertheless felt the emotion of that maternal farewell, and was struck with horror and pity. They say that the

2 Lucan, Pharsalia; the line on the heir is from Publilius Syrus. Pompey had married Caesar's daughter Julia.
3 Catullus.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
	qu'il nous élance si dru sans cesse nouueaux rayons les vns sur les autres, que nous n'en pouuons apperceuoir l'entre deux. *Largus enim liquidi fons luminis, ætherius sol* *Inrigat assiduè cœlum candore recenti,* *Suppeditátque nouo confestim lumine lumen:* ainsin eslance nostre ame ses pointes diuersement et imperceptiblement.	sun's light is not one continuous piece, but that the sun darts new rays at us so thickly and incessantly, one upon another, that we cannot perceive the gap between them. *For the sun in the heavens, abundant fountain of liquid light,* *constantly floods the sky with fresh brightness,* *and instantly supplies light with new light.* In the same way our soul darts out its points variously and imperceptibly.[4]
1.38.4	Artabanus surprint Xerxes son nepueu, et le tança de la mutation soudaine de sa contenance. Il estoit à considerer la grandeur desmesurée de ses forces, au passage de l'Hellespont, pour l'entreprinse de la Grece. Il luy print premierement vn tressaillement d'aise, à veoir tant de milliers d'hommes à son seruice, et le tesmoigna par l'allegresse et feste de son visage. Et tout soudain en mesme instant, sa pensée luy suggerant, comme tant de vies auoient à defaillir au plus loing, dans vn siecle, il refroigna son front, et s'attrista iusques aux larmes.	Artabanus caught his nephew Xerxes off guard and chided him for the sudden change in his countenance. Xerxes was surveying the immeasurable size of his forces at the crossing of the Hellespont for the expedition against Greece. First a thrill of joy came over him at seeing so many thousands of men in his service, and he showed it by the gladness and festivity of his face. And all of a sudden, in the same instant, as his thoughts suggested to him that so many lives would have to perish within a century at most, he knit his brow and grew sad to the point of tears.
1.38.5	Nous auons poursuiuy auec resoluë volonté la vengeance d'vne iniure, et ressenty vn singulier contentement de la victoire; nous en pleurons pourtant: ce n'est pas de cela que nous pleurons: il n'y a rien de changé; mais nostre ame regarde la chose d'vn autre œil, et se la represente par vn autre visage: car chasque chose a plusieurs biais et plusieurs lustres.	We have pursued revenge for an injury with resolute will, and felt singular satisfaction at our victory; and yet we weep over it. It is not that we weep for; nothing has changed. But our soul looks at the thing with a different eye and pictures it to itself with a different face; for each thing has many angles and many lights.
1.38.6	La parenté, les anciennes accointances et amitiez, saisissent nostre imagination, et la passionnent pour l'heure, selon leur condition; mais le contour en est si brusque, qu'il nous eschappe. *Nil adeo fieri celeri ratione videtur,* *Quàm si mens fieri proponit, et inchoat ipsa* *Ocius ergo animus, quàm res se perciet vlla,* *Ante oculos quarum in promptu natura videtur.* Et à cette cause, voulans de toute cette suitte continuer vn corps, nous nous trompons. Quand Timoleon pleure le meurtre qu'il auoit commis d'vne si meure et genereuse deliberation, il ne pleure pas la liberté rendue à sa patrie, il ne pleure pas le Tyran, mais il pleure son frere. L'vne partie de son deuoir est iouée, laissons luy en iouer l'autre.	Kinship, old acquaintances and friendships seize our imagination and stir it for the moment according to their nature; but the turn is so abrupt that it escapes us. *Nothing seems to happen as swiftly* *as what the mind proposes and itself begins.* *So the mind stirs itself more swiftly than any of the things* *whose nature we see plainly before our eyes.* And for this reason, when we try to make one continuous body out of this whole sequence, we deceive ourselves. When Timoleon weeps for the murder he had committed after such mature and noble deliberation, he does not weep for the liberty restored to his country, he does not weep for the tyrant; he weeps for his brother. One part of his duty has been played; let us let him play the other.[5]

4 Lucretius, On the Nature of Things.
5 Timoleon had his brother Timophanes killed for making himself tyrant of Corinth.

I.39 Of Solitude

De la solitude

True solitude is inward: Montaigne urges freeing ourselves from attachments and keeping a back room of the mind for ourselves.

FRENCH

1.39.1 LAISSONS à part cette longue comparaison de la vie solitaire à l'actiue. Et quant à ce beau mot, dequoy se couure l'ambition et l'auarice, Que nous ne sommes pas naiz pour nostre particulier, ains pour le publicq; rapportons nous en hardiment à ceux qui sont en la danse; et qu'ils se battent la conscience, si au contraire, les estats, les charges, et cette tracasserie du monde, ne se recherche plustost, pour tirer du publicq son profit particulier. Les mauuais moyens par où on s'y pousse en nostre siecle, montrent bien que la fin n'en vaut gueres. Respondons à l'ambition que c'est elle mesme qui nous donne goust de la solitude. Car que fuit elle tant que la societé?

que cherche elle tant que ses coudées franches? Il y a dequoy bien et mal faire par tout. Toutesfois si le mot de Bias est vray, que la pire part c'est la plus grande, ou ce que dit l'Ecclesiastique, que de mille il n'en est pas vn bon: *Rari quippe boni: numero vix sunt totidem quot / Thebarum portæ, vel diuitis ostia Nili:* la contagion est tres-dangereuse en la presse. Il faut ou imiter les vitieux, ou les haïr. Tous les deux sont dangereux; et de leur ressembler, par ce qu'ils sont beaucoup, et d'en haïr beaucoup par ce qu'ils sont dissemblables.

Et les marchands, qui vont en mer, ont raison de regarder, que ceux qui se mettent en mesme vaisseau, ne soyent dissolus, blasphemateurs, meschans: estimants telle societé infortunée. Parquoy Bias plaisamment, à ceux qui passoient auec luy le danger d'vne grande tourmente, et appelloient le secours des Dieux: Taisez vous, feit-il, qu'ils ne sentent point que vous soyez icy auec moy. Et d'vn plus pressant exemple: Albuquerque Vice-Roy en l'Inde, pour Emanuel Roy de Portugal, en vn extreme peril de fortune de mer, print sur ses espaules vn ieune garçon pour cette seule fin, qu'en la societé de leur peril, son

ENGLISH

Let us leave aside that long comparison between the solitary life and the active one. And as for that fine saying with which ambition and avarice cloak themselves, that we are born not for our private good but for the public, let us boldly appeal to those who are in the dance; and let them search their consciences whether, on the contrary, ranks, offices and all this bustle of the world are not sought rather to draw private profit from the public. The bad means by which people push themselves forward in our age show clearly that the end is hardly worth much. Let us answer ambition that it is ambition itself that gives us a taste for solitude. For what does it shun so much as company?

What does it seek so much as elbowroom? There is room for doing good and evil everywhere. Yet if Bias's saying is true, that the worse part is the larger, or what Ecclesiastes says, that out of a thousand there is not one good: *For good men are rare: there are hardly as many / as the gates of Thebes or the mouths of the rich Nile,* then contagion is very dangerous in a crowd. We must either imitate the vicious or hate them. Both are dangerous: to resemble them, because they are many, and to hate many of them, because they are unlike us.[1]

And merchants who go to sea are right to make sure that those who board the same ship are not dissolute, blasphemers or wicked men, since they regard such company as unlucky. That is why Bias said wittily to those who were going through the danger of a great storm with him and calling on the gods for help: "Be quiet, so that they do not notice you are here with me." And a more pressing example: Albuquerque, viceroy in India for Manuel, king of Portugal, in extreme peril at sea,

1 Bias of Priene was one of the Seven Sages of Greece. The verse is from Juvenal.

FRENCH	ENGLISH
innocence luy seruist de garant, et de recommandation enuers la faueur diuine, pour le mettre à bord.	took a young boy on his shoulders for this one purpose: that, sharing the peril, the boy's innocence might serve him as surety and recommendation to divine favor, and bring him safe to shore.[2]
1.39.2 Ce n'est pas que le sage ne puisse par tout viure content, voire et seul, en la foule d'vn palais: mais s'il est à choisir, il en fuira, dit-il, mesmes la veue. Il portera s'il est besoing cela, mais s'il est en luy, il eslira cecy. Il ne luy semble point suffisamment s'estre desfait des vices, s'il faut encores qu'il conteste auec ceux d'autruy. Charondas chastioit pour mauuais ceux qui estoient conuaincus de hanter mauuaise compagnie. Il n'est rien si dissociable et sociable que l'homme: l'vn par son vice, l'autre par sa nature. Et Antisthenes ne me semble auoir satisfait à celuy, qui luy reprochoit sa conuersation auec les meschants, en disant, que les medecins viuent bien entre les malades.	It is not that the wise man cannot live contented anywhere, even alone in the crowd of a palace; but if he has the choice, he will shun even the sight of it, he says. He will put up with the one if need be, but if it is up to him he will choose the other. It does not seem to him that he has sufficiently rid himself of vices if he must still contend with those of others. Charondas punished as wicked those convicted of keeping bad company. There is nothing so unsociable and so sociable as man: the one by his vice, the other by his nature. And Antisthenes does not seem to me to have satisfied the man who reproached him for associating with the wicked, when he said that doctors live well enough among the sick.
Car s'ils seruent à la santé des malades, ils deteriorent la leur, par la contagion, la veuë continuelle, et pratique des maladies.	For if they serve the health of the sick, they impair their own through contagion and through constantly seeing and handling diseases.
1.39.3 Or la fin, ce crois-ie, en est tout'vne, d'en viure plus à loisir et à son aise. Mais on n'en cherche pas tousiours bien le chemin. Souuent on pense auoir quitté les affaires, on ne les a que changez. Il n'y a guere moins de tourment au gouuernement d'vne famille que d'vn estat entier. Où que l'ame soit empeschée, elle y est toute. Et pour estre les occupations domestiques moins importantes, elles n'en sont pas moins importunes. D'auantage, pour nous estre deffaicts de la Cour et du marché, nous ne sommes pas deffaits des principaux tourmens de nostre vie.	Now the aim, I believe, is the same in every case: to live more at leisure and at ease. But people do not always look for the right road to it. Often they think they have left business behind, when they have only exchanged it. There is hardly less torment in governing a family than an entire state. Wherever the soul is occupied, it is wholly occupied. And though domestic occupations are less important, they are no less importunate. Moreover, though we have rid ourselves of the court and the marketplace, we have not rid ourselves of the principal torments of our life.
Ratio et prudentia curas, / Non locus effusi latè maris arbiter, aufert. L'ambition, l'auarice, l'irresolution, la peur et les concupiscences, ne nous abandonnent point pour changer de contrée: *Et post equitem sedet atra cura.* Elles nous suiuent souuent iusques dans les cloistres, et dans les escoles de Philosophie. Ny les desers, ny les rochers creusez, ny la here, ny les ieusnes, ne nous en démeslent: *Hæret lateri lethalis arundo.*	*It is reason and wisdom that take away cares, / not a place commanding a wide view of the sea.* Ambition, avarice, irresolution, fear and lusts do not leave us when we change our country: *And behind the horseman sits black care.* They often follow us even into cloisters and schools of philosophy. Neither deserts, nor caves hollowed out of rock, nor hair shirts, nor fasts can disentangle us from them: *The deadly arrow clings to her side.*[3]
1.39.4 On disoit à Socrates, que quelqu'vn ne s'estoit aucunement amendé en son voyage: Ie croy bien, dit-il, il	Someone told Socrates that a certain man had not improved at all by his travels. "I can well believe

2 Afonso de Albuquerque (1453–1515), Portuguese governor of India.

FRENCH

s'estoit emporté auecques soy. *Quid terras alio calentes Sole mutamus? patria quis exsul Se quoque fugit?* Si on ne se descharge premierement et son ame, du faix qui la presse, le remuement la fera fouler dauantage; comme en vn nauire, les charges empeschent moins, quand elles sont rassises. Vous faictes plus de mal que de bien au malade de luy faire changer de place. Vous ensachez le mal en le remuant: comme les pals s'enfoncent plus auant, et s'affermissent en les branslant et secouant.

Parquoy ce n'est pas assez de s'estre escarté du peuple; ce n'est pas assez de changer de place, il se faut escarter des conditions populaires, qui sont en nous: il se faut sequestrer et r'auoir de soy. *Rupi iam vincula, dicas: Nam luctata canis nodum arripit; attamen illa Cùm fugit, à collo trahitur pars longa catenæ.* Nous emportons nos fers quand et nous. Ce n'est pas vne entiere liberté, nous tous tournons encore la veuë vers ce que nous auons laissé; nous en auons la fantasie pleine. Nisi purgatum est pectus, quæ prælia nobis Atque pericula tunc ingratis insinuandum? Quantæ conscindunt hominem cuppedinis acres Sollicitum curæ? quantique perinde timores? Quidue superbia, spurcitia, ac petulantia, quantas Efficiunt clades?

quid luxus desidiésque?

ENGLISH

it," he said; "he took himself along with him." *Why do we exchange our land for lands warmed by another sun? What exile from his country has ever escaped himself as well?* If we do not first unburden ourselves and our soul of the weight that oppresses it, moving about will only make it press harder; just as on a ship, cargo is less of a hindrance when it is settled. You do a sick man more harm than good by moving him. You lodge the illness deeper by stirring it, just as stakes sink further in and grow firmer when you shake and work them.

Therefore it is not enough to have withdrawn from the crowd; it is not enough to change place; we must withdraw from the crowd's dispositions that are within us; we must sequester ourselves and take possession of ourselves again. *"I have broken my chains," you say.*
So does a dog that struggles snap its knot; yet as it runs off, a long length of chain trails from its neck.
We carry our irons along with us. It is not complete freedom; we still turn our eyes back toward what we have left behind; our imagination is full of it. Unless the heart is purged, what battles and perils must we then enter against our will! How many sharp cares of desire tear the anxious man, and how many fears as well! And pride, filth and wantonness—what havoc they cause![4]

and what of luxury and sloth?

WITHDRAWING INTO ONESELF

True solitude is inward: keep a back shop of one's own, free of every tie.

FRENCH

1.39.5 Nostre mal nous tient en l'ame: or elle ne se peut eschapper à elle mesme, *In culpa est animus, qui se non effugit vnquam,* Ainsin il la faut ramener et retirer en soy. C'est la vraye solitude, et qui se peut ioüir au milieu des villes et des cours des Roys; mais elle se iouyt plus commodément à part. Or puis que nous entreprenons de viure seuls, et de nous passer de compagnie, faisons que nostre contentement despende de nous: desprenons nous de toutes les liaisons qui nous attachent à autruy: gaignons sur nous, de pouuoir à bon escient viure seuls, et y viure à nostr'aise.

ENGLISH

Our ill has its grip on our soul, and the soul cannot escape from itself: *The fault lies in the mind, which never escapes itself.* So we must bring it back and withdraw it into itself. That is true solitude, and it can be enjoyed in the midst of cities and the courts of kings; but it is enjoyed more comfortably apart. Now since we are undertaking to live alone and to do without company, let us make our contentment depend on ourselves; let us free ourselves from all the ties that bind us to others;

3 Horace, Epistles and Odes; the last line is from Virgil, Aeneid IV, of a wounded deer.
4 Persius, Satires; the second quotation is from Lucretius.

FRENCH

ENGLISH

let us win from ourselves the power to live truly alone, and to live so at our ease.

1.39.6 Stilpon estant eschappé de l'embrasement de sa ville, où il auoit perdu femme, enfans, et cheuance; Demetrius Poliorcetes, le voyant en vne si grande ruine de sa patrie, le visage non effrayé, luy demanda, s'il n'auoit pas eu du dommage; il respondit que non, et qu'il n'y auoit Dieu mercy rien perdu de sien. C'est ce que le Philosophe Antisthenes disoit plaisamment, Que l'homme se deuoit pourueoir de munitions, qui flottassent sur l'eau, et peussent à nage auec luy eschapper du naufrage. Certes l'homme d'entendement n'a rien perdu, s'il a soy mesme.

Stilpo had escaped from the burning of his city, where he had lost wife, children and goods. Demetrius Poliorcetes, seeing him with an unshaken face amid such great ruin of his country, asked him whether he had not suffered loss. He replied no, and that, thank God, he had lost nothing of his own. That is what the philosopher Antisthenes meant when he said wittily that a man should provide himself with provisions that would float on the water and could swim with him to escape from shipwreck. Certainly the man of understanding has lost nothing if he has himself.[5]

Quand la ville de Nole fut ruinée par les Barbares, Paulinus qui en estoit Euesque, y ayant tout perdu, et leur prisonnier, prioit ainsi Dieu; Seigneur garde moy de sentir cette perte: car tu sçais qu'ils n'ont encore rien touché de ce qui est à moy. Les richesses qui le faisoyent riche, et les biens qui le faisoient bon, estoyent encore en leur entier. Voyla que c'est de bien choisir les thresors qui se puissent affranchir de l'iniure: et de les cacher en lieu, où personne n'aille, et lequel ne puisse estre trahi que par nous mesmes. Il faut auoir femmes, enfans, biens, et sur tout de la santé, qui peut, mais non pas s'y attacher en maniere que nostre heur en despende.

When the city of Nola was ruined by the barbarians, Paulinus, its bishop, having lost everything there and being their prisoner, prayed to God thus: "Lord, keep me from feeling this loss, for you know that they have not yet touched anything that is mine." The riches that made him rich and the goods that made him good were still intact. That is what it means to choose well the treasures that can be safe from harm, and to hide them in a place where no one goes and which can be betrayed only by ourselves. We should have wives, children, goods, and above all health, if we can; but not be so attached to them that our happiness depends on them.[6]

Il se faut reseruer vne arriere-boutique, toute nostre, toute franche, en laquelle nous establissions nostre vraye liberté et principale retraicte et solitude. En cette-cy faut-il prendre nostre ordinaire entretien, de nous à nous mesmes, et si priué, que nulle accointance ou communication de chose estrangere y trouue place: discourir et y rire, comme sans femme, sans enfans, et sans biens, sans train, et sans valetz: afin que quand l'occasion aduiendra de leur perte, il ne nous soit pas nouueau de nous en passer.

We must keep back for ourselves a back shop all our own, entirely free, in which to establish our real liberty and our principal retreat and solitude. Here our ordinary conversation must be between us and ourselves, and so private that no outside acquaintance or communication can find a place in it; here we must reason and laugh as if we had no wife, no children, no goods, no retinue and no servants, so that when the time comes to lose them, it will be nothing new to us to do without them.

Nous auons vne ame contournable en soy mesme; elle se peut faire compagnie, elle a dequoy assaillir et dequoy deffendre, dequoy receuoir, et dequoy donner: ne craignons pas en cette solitude, nous croupir d'oisiueté ennuyeuse, *In solis sis tibi turba locis.* La vertu se contente de soy: sans discipline, sans paroles, sans effects.

We have a soul that can turn in upon itself; it can keep itself company; it has the means to attack and the means to defend, the means to receive and the means to give. Let us not fear that in this solitude we shall stagnate in wearisome idleness: *In lonely places, be a crowd to yourself.* Virtue is con-

5 Stilpo was a philosopher of Megara; Demetrius "the Besieger" (c. 336–283 BC) was a Macedonian king who took the city.
6 Paulinus, bishop of Nola near Naples (d. 431); the story is told by Saint Augustine in The City of God.

FRENCH

ENGLISH

tent with itself, without discipline, without words, without deeds.[7]

1.39.7 En noz actions accoustumees, de mille il n'en est pas vne qui nous regarde. Celuy que tu vois grimpant contremont les ruines de ce mur, furieux et hors de soy, en bute de tant de harquebuzades: et cet autre tout cicatricé, transi et pasle de faim, deliberé de creuer plustost que de luy ouurir la porte; penses-tu qu'ils y soyent pour eux? pour tel à l'aduenture, qu'ils ne virent onques, et qui ne se donne aucune peine de leur faict, plongé cependant en l'oysiueté et aux delices. Cettuy-cy tout pituiteux, chassieux et crasseux, que tu vois sortir apres minuict d'vn estude, penses-tu qu'il cherche parmy les liures, comme il se rendra plus homme de bien, plus content et plus sage? nulles nouuelles.

In our usual actions, not one in a thousand concerns ourselves. That man you see climbing up the ruins of that wall, furious and beside himself, the target of so many arquebus shots; and that other one, covered in scars, numb and pale with hunger, determined to die rather than open the gate to him —do you think they are there for themselves? They are there perhaps for someone they have never seen, who takes no trouble over what they are doing, sunk meanwhile in idleness and pleasures. This fellow, all phlegm, bleary-eyed and grimy, whom you see coming out of his study after midnight—do you think he is searching among his books for how to become a better man, more contented and wiser? Not a bit of it.

Il y mourra, ou il apprendra à la posterité la mesure des vers de Plaute, et la vraye orthographe d'vn mot Latin. Qui ne contre-change volontiers la santé, le repos, et la vie, à la reputation et à la gloire? la plus inutile, vaine et fauce monnoye, qui soit en nostre vsage. Nostre mort ne nous faisoit pas assez de peur, chargeons nous encores de celle de nos femmes, de noz enfans, et de nos gens. Noz affaires ne nous donnoyent pas assez de peine, prenons encores à nous tourmenter, et rompre la teste, de ceux de noz voisins et amis. Vah!

He will die at it, or else he will teach posterity the meter of Plautus's verses and the correct spelling of a Latin word. Who does not gladly exchange health, rest and life for reputation and glory—the most useless, vain and false coin in circulation among us? Our own death did not frighten us enough; let us burden ourselves besides with that of our wives, our children and our household. Our own affairs did not give us enough trouble; let us take on, besides, tormenting ourselves and racking our brains over those of our neighbors and friends. Ah![8]

quemquámne hominem in animum instituere, aut / Parare, quod sit charius, quàm ipse est sibi? La solitude me semble auoir plus d'apparence, et de raison, à ceux qui ont donné au monde leur aage plus actif et fleurissant, à l'exemple de Thales. C'est assez vescu pour autruy, viuons pour nous au moins ce bout de vie: ramenons à nous, et à nostre aise nos pensées et nos intentions. Ce n'est pas vne legere partie que de faire seurement sa retraicte; elle nous empesche assez sans y mesler d'autres entreprinses.

that any man should set his heart on, or / acquire, something dearer to him than he is to himself! Solitude seems to me more plausible and reasonable for those who have given the world their most active and flourishing years, following the example of Thales. We have lived enough for others; let us live for ourselves at least this tail end of life; let us bring our thoughts and intentions back to ourselves and our own ease. It is no small matter to make a safe retreat; it keeps us busy enough without mixing other undertakings with it.

Puis que Dieu nous donne loisir de disposer de notre deslogement; preparons nous y; plions bagage; prenons de bon'heure congé de la compagnie; despétrons nous de ces violentes prinses, qui nous engagent ailleurs, et esloignent de nous.

Since God gives us leisure to arrange our departure, let us prepare for it; let us pack our bags; let us take leave of the company in good time; let us break free of those violent grips that engage us elsewhere and draw us away from ourselves.

7 Tibullus.
8 Terence, The Brothers.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
1.39.8	Il faut desnoüer ces obligations si fortes: et meshuy aymer cecy et cela, mais n'espouser rien que soy. C'est à dire, le reste soit à nous: mais non pas ioint et colé en façon, qu'on ne le puisse desprendre sans nous escorcher, et arracher ensemble quelque piece du nostre. La plus grande chose du monde c'est de sçauoir estre à soy. Il est temps de nous desnoüer de la societé, puis que nous n'y pouuons rien apporter. Et qui ne peut prester, qu'il se deffende d'emprunter. Nos forces nous faillent: retirons les, et resserrons en nous. Qui peut renuerser et confondre en soy les offices de tant d'amitiez, et de la compagnie, qu'il le face.	We must untie these strong bonds, and from now on love this and that, but be wedded to nothing but ourselves. That is to say, let the rest be ours, but not joined and glued to us so tightly that it cannot be detached without flaying us and tearing away a piece of us along with it. The greatest thing in the world is to know how to belong to oneself. It is time to untie ourselves from society, since we can bring nothing to it. And let him who cannot lend refrain from borrowing. Our strength is failing us; let us draw it back and gather it within ourselves. Whoever can turn upside down and merge within himself the offices of so many friendships and of company, let him do so.
	En cette cheute, qui le rend inutile, poisant, et importun aux autres, qu'il se garde d'estre importun à soy mesme, et poisant et inutile. Qu'il se flatte et caresse, et sur tout se regente, respectant et craignant sa raison et sa conscience: si qu'il ne puisse sans honte, broncher en leur presence. *Rarum est enim, vt satis se quisque vereatur.*	In this decline, which makes him useless, burdensome and troublesome to others, let him take care not to be troublesome to himself, or burdensome and useless. Let him pamper and caress himself, and above all govern himself, respecting and fearing his reason and his conscience, so that he cannot stumble in their presence without shame. *For it is rare for anyone to respect himself enough.*[9]
1.39.9	Socrates dit, que les ieunes se doiuent faire instruire; les hommes s'exercer à bien faire: les vieux se retirer de toute occupation ciuile et militaire, viuants à leur discretion, sans obligation à certain office. Il y a des complexions plus propres à ces preceptes de la retraite les vnes que les autres. Celles qui ont l'apprehension molle et lasche, et vn' affection et volonté delicate, et qui ne s'asseruit et ne s'employe pas aysément, desquels ie suis, et par naturelle condition et par discours, ils se plieront mieux à ce conseil, que les ames actiues et occupées, qui embrassent tout, et s'engagent par tout, qui se passionnent de toutes choses: qui s'offrent, qui se presentent, et qui se donnent à toutes occasions.	Socrates says that the young should get instruction; grown men should practice doing good; old men should withdraw from all civil and military occupation, living as they please, without obligation to any fixed office. Some temperaments are better suited than others to these precepts of retirement. Those whose apprehension is soft and slack, and whose affection and will are delicate and do not readily submit or commit themselves—and I am one of them, both by natural disposition and by reasoning—will bend more easily to this advice than active and busy souls, which embrace everything and engage themselves everywhere, which grow passionate about everything, which offer themselves, present themselves and give themselves on every occasion.
1.39.10	Il se faut seruir de ces commoditez accidentales et hors de nous, en tant qu'elles nous sont plaisantes; mais sans en faire nostre principal fondement. Ce ne l'est pas; ny la raison, ny la nature ne le veulent. Pourquoy contre ses loix asseruirons nous nostre contentement à la puissance d'autruy?	We should make use of these accidental advantages outside ourselves insofar as they are pleasant to us, but without making them our main foundation. They are not that; neither reason nor nature wants it so. Why, against their laws, should we enslave our contentment to the power of others?
	D'anticiper aussi les accidens de fortune, se priuer des commoditez qui nous sont en main, comme plusieurs ont	Then again, to anticipate the accidents of fortune; to deprive ourselves of the advantages we have in

FRENCH

faict par deuotion, et quelques Philosophes par discours, se seruir soy-mesmes, coucher sur la dure, se creuer les yeux, ietter ses richesses emmy la riuiere, rechercher la douleur (ceux-là pour par le tourment de cette vie, en acquerir la beatitude d'vne autre: ceux-cy pour s'estans logez en la plus basse marche, se mettre en seureté de nouuelle cheute) c'est l'action d'vne vertu excessiue. Les natures plus roides et plus fortes facent leur cachette mesmes, glorieuse et exemplaire.

Tuta et paruula laudo,
Cúm res deficiunt, satis inter vilia fortis:
Verùm, vbi quid melius contingit et vnctius, idem
Hos sapere, et solos aio benè viuere, quorum
Conspicitur nitidis fundata pecunia villis. Il y a pour moy assez affaire sans aller si auant. Il me suffit souz la faueur de la fortune, me preparer à sa défaueur; et me representer estant à mon aise, le mal aduenir, autant que l'imagination y peut attaindre: tout ainsi que nous nous accoustumons aux iouxtes et tournois, et contrefaisons la guerre en pleine paix.

Ie n'estime point Arcesilaus le Philosophe moins reformé, pour le sçauoir auoir vsé d'vtensiles d'or et d'argent, selon que la condition de sa fortune le luy permettoit: et l'estime mieux, que s'il s'en fust demis, de ce qu'il en vsoit moderément et liberalement.

1.39.11 Ie voy iusques à quels limites va la necessité naturelle: et considerant le pauure mendiant à ma porte, souuent plus enioué et plus sain que moy, ie me plante en sa place: i'essaye de chausser mon ame à son biaiz. Et courant ainsi par les autres exemples, quoy que ie pense la mort, la pauureté, le mespris, et la maladie à mes talons, ie me resous aisément de n'entrer en effroy, de ce qu'vn moindre que moy prend auec telle patience. Et ne veux croire que la bassesse de l'entendement, puisse plus que la vigueur, ou que les effects du discours, ne puissent arriuer aux effects de l'accoustumance.

Et cognoissant combien ces commoditez accessoires tiennent à peu, ie ne laisse pas en pleine iouyssance, de supplier Dieu pour ma souueraine requeste, qu'il me rende content de moy-mesme, et des biens qui naissent

ENGLISH

hand, as many have done out of devotion and some philosophers by reasoning; to wait on ourselves, sleep on the hard ground, put out our own eyes, throw our riches into the river, seek out pain (the former in order to win, through the torment of this life, the bliss of another; the latter in order, having settled on the lowest step, to secure themselves against a new fall)—that is the action of an excessive virtue. Let the tougher and stronger natures make even their hiding place glorious and exemplary.

I praise a safe and modest lot
when means are lacking, brave enough amid cheap things;
but when something better and richer comes my way, I too
say that they alone are wise and live well whose money is seen invested in handsome country houses.
There is enough for me to do without going so far. It is enough for me, while I enjoy fortune's favor, to prepare for her disfavor, and, while at my ease, to picture the evil to come as far as imagination can reach; just as we train ourselves with jousts and tournaments and imitate war in the midst of peace.

I do not consider the philosopher Arcesilaus any less reformed because I know he used utensils of gold and silver, as the state of his fortune allowed him; and I esteem him more for using them moderately and generously than if he had given them up.

I see how far natural necessity goes; and considering the poor beggar at my door, often merrier and healthier than I am, I put myself in his place; I try to fit my soul to his last. And running through other examples in this way, though I imagine death, poverty, contempt and sickness at my heels, I easily resolve not to be terrified of what a lesser man than I accepts with such patience. And I refuse to believe that a lowly understanding can do more than a vigorous one, or that the effects of reasoning cannot match the effects of habit.

And knowing how little these accessory comforts hang by, I do not fail, even in full enjoyment of them, to beg God, as my supreme request, to make me content with myself and with the goods that

9 Quintilian.

FRENCH	ENGLISH
de moy. Ie voy des ieunes hommes gaillards, qui portent nonobstant dans leurs coffres vne masse de pillules, pour s'en seruir quand le rhume les pressera; lequel ils craignent d'autant moins, qu'ils en pensent auoir le remede en main. Ainsi faut il faire: et encore si on se sent subiect à quelque maladie plus forte, se garnir de ces medicamens qui assoupissent et endorment la partie.	are born of me. I see sturdy young men who nevertheless carry a mass of pills in their trunks, to use when a cold comes upon them; and they fear it all the less because they think they have the remedy at hand. That is what we must do; and further, if we feel ourselves subject to some more serious illness, we should provide ourselves with those medicines that numb and put to sleep the affected part.

HOW TO LIVE IN RETIREMENT

Choose easy occupations, spare one's health, and hold on to the pleasures that remain.

FRENCH	ENGLISH
1.39.12 L'occupation qu'il faut choisir à vne telle vie, ce doit estre vne occupation non penible ny ennuyeuse; autrement pour neant ferions nous estat d'y estre venuz chercher le seiour. Cela depend du goust particulier d'vn chacun. Le mien ne s'accommode aucunement au ménage. Ceux qui l'aiment, ils s'y doiuent addonner auec moderation, *Conentur sibi res, non se submittere rebus.* C'est autrement vn office seruile que la mesnagerie, comme le nomme Saluste. Elle a des parties plus excusables, comme le soing des iardinages que Xenophon attribue à Cyrus.	The occupation to choose for such a life must be one that is neither laborious nor tedious; otherwise there would be no point in our having come there in search of rest. That depends on each person's particular taste. Mine does not take at all to household management. Those who like it should devote themselves to it in moderation: *Let them try to subject things to themselves, not themselves to things.* Otherwise household management is a servile office, as Sallust calls it. It has more excusable parts, such as the care of gardens that Xenophon attributes to Cyrus.
Et se peut trouuer vn moyen, entre ce bas et vil soing, tendu et plein de solicitude, qu'on voit aux hommes qui s'y plongent du tout; et cette profonde et extreme nonchalance laissant tout aller à l'abandon, qu'on voit en d'autres: *Democriti pecus edit agellos / Cultáque, dum peregrè est animus sine corpore velox.* Mais oyons le conseil que donne le ieune Pline à Cornelius Rufus son amy, sur ce propos de la solitude: Ie te conseille en cette pleine et grasse retraicte, où tu es, de quitter à tes gens ce bas et abiect soing du mesnage, et t'addonner à l'estude des lettres, pour en tirer quelque chose qui soit toute tienne.	And a middle way can be found between that low and mean care, tense and full of anxiety, which we see in men who plunge into it entirely, and that deep and extreme carelessness that lets everything go to ruin, which we see in others: *Democritus's flock eats up his fields / and crops, while his swift mind travels abroad without his body.* But let us hear the advice that the younger Pliny gives his friend Cornelius Rufus on this subject of solitude: "I advise you, in that full and rich retreat where you are, to leave to your servants that low and abject care of the household, and devote yourself to the study of letters, so as to draw from it something that is entirely your own."[10]
Il entend la reputation: d'vne pareille humeur à celle de Cicero, qui dit vouloir employer sa solitude et seiour des affaires publiques, à s'en acquerir par ses escrits vne vie immortelle. *Vsque adeóne / Scire tuum nihil est, nisi te scire hoc, sciat alter?* Il semble, que ce soit raison, puis qu'on parle de se retirer du monde, qu'on regarde hors de luy. Ceux-cy ne le font qu'à demy. Ils dressent bien leur	He means reputation—in a humor like that of Cicero, who says he wants to use his solitude and his rest from public affairs to win himself an immortal life through his writings. *Is your knowing nothing at all / unless someone else knows that you know it?* It seems reasonable, since we are talking about withdrawing from the world, that we should

10 Pliny the Younger (c. AD 61–113), Letters.

FRENCH

partie, pour quand ils n'y seront plus: mais le fruit de leur dessein, ils pretendent le tirer encore lors, du monde, absens, par vne ridicule contradiction.

ENGLISH

look outside it. These people do it only halfway. They arrange their affairs well for when they will no longer be in the world; but the fruit of their design they still expect to draw from the world then, when they are absent—a ridiculous contradiction.

1.39.13 L'imagination de ceux qui par deuotion, cerchent la solitude, remplissants leur courage, de la certitude des promesses diuines, en l'autre vie, est bien plus sainement assortie. Ils se proposent Dieu, obiect infini en bonté et en puissance. L'ame a dequoy y rassasier ses desirs, en toute liberté. Les afflictions, les douleurs, leur viennent à profit, employées à l'acquest d'vne santé et resiouyssance eternelle. La mort, à souhait: passage à vn si parfaict estat. L'aspreté de leurs regles est incontinent applanie par l'accoustumance: et les appetits charnels, rebutez et endormis par leur refus: car rien ne les entretient que l'vsage et l'exercice. Cette seule fin, d'vne autre vie heureusement immortelle, merite loyalement que nous abandonnions les commoditez et douceurs de cette vie nostre.

The notion held by those who seek solitude out of devotion, filling their hearts with the certainty of God's promises in the other life, is far more soundly matched. They set before themselves God, an object infinite in goodness and in power. There the soul has the means to satisfy its desires in complete freedom. Afflictions and sufferings turn to their profit, since they are spent on acquiring an everlasting health and joy. Death is welcome to them: a passage to so perfect a state. The harshness of their rules is soon smoothed out by habit, and their carnal appetites are rebuffed and lulled to sleep by being refused, for nothing keeps those appetites alive but use and exercise. This single end, another life of blissful immortality, truly deserves that we give up the comforts and sweetness of this life of ours.

Et qui peut embraser son ame de l'ardeur de cette viue foy et esperance, reellement et constamment, il se bastit en la solitude, vne vie voluptueuse et delicieuse, au delà de toute autre sorte de vie.

And whoever can set his soul on fire with the ardor of this living faith and hope, really and constantly, builds himself in solitude a life of pleasure and delight beyond any other kind of life.

1.39.14 Ny la fin donc ny le moyen de ce conseil ne me contente: nous retombons tousiours de fieure en chaud mal. Cette occupation des liures, est aussi penible que toute autre; et autant ennemie de la santé, qui doit estre principalement considerée. Et ne se faut point laisser endormir au plaisir qu'on y prend: c'est ce mesme plaisir qui perd le mesnager, l'auaricieux, le voluptueux, et l'ambitieux. Les sages nous apprennent assez, à nous garder de la trahison de noz appetits; et à discerner les vrays plaisirs et entiers, des plaisirs meslez et bigarrez de plus de peine.

So neither the end nor the means of this advice satisfies me: we keep falling from one fever into a worse one. This occupation with books is as laborious as any other, and as much an enemy to health, which ought to be our chief consideration. And we must not let ourselves be lulled by the pleasure we take in it: it is this same pleasure that ruins the man absorbed in his estate, the miser, the sensualist and the ambitious man. The sages teach us well enough to guard against the treachery of our appetites, and to tell true and whole pleasures from pleasures that are mixed and streaked with a greater share of pain.

Car la pluspart des plaisirs, disent ils, nous chatouillent et embrassent pour nous estrangler, comme faisoyent les larrons que les Ægyptiens appelloyent Philistas: et si la douleur de teste nous venoit auant l'yuresse, nous nous garderions de trop boire; mais la volupté, pour nous tromper, marche deuant, et nous cache sa suitte. Les liures sont plaisans: mais si de leur frequentation nous en perdons en fin la gayeté et la santé, nos meilleures pieces,

For most pleasures, they say, tickle and embrace us only to strangle us, like the thieves the Egyptians called Philistae; and if the headache came before the drunkenness, we would take care not to drink too much. But pleasure, to deceive us, walks in front and hides what follows her. Books are pleasant; but if by keeping company with them we end up losing our cheerfulness and our health, the

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
	quittons les. Ie suis de ceux qui pensent leur fruit ne pouuoir contrepeser cette perte.	best things we have, let us leave them. I am one of those who think that their fruit cannot outweigh that loss.
	Comme les hommes qui se sentent de long temps affoiblis par quelque indisposition, se rengent à la fin à la mercy de la medecine; et se font desseigner par art certaines regles de viure, pour ne les plus outrepasser: aussi celuy qui se retire ennuié et desgousté de la vie commune, doit former cette-cy, aux regles de la raison; l'ordonner et renger par premeditation et discours.	Men who have long felt themselves weakened by some ailment end up putting themselves at the mercy of medicine, and have its skill lay down certain rules of living for them, so as never to overstep them again. In the same way, the man who withdraws, weary and disgusted with ordinary life, should shape this new life by the rules of reason, ordering and arranging it by forethought and reasoning.
1.39.15	Il doit auoir prins congé de toute espece de trauail, quelque visage qu'il porte; et fuïr en general les passions, qui empeschent la tranquillité du corps et de l'ame; et choisir la route qui est plus selon son humeur: *Vnusquisque sua nouerit ire via.* Au mesnage, à l'estude, à la chasse, et tout autre exercice, il faut donner iusques aux derniers limites du plaisir; et garder de s'engager plus auant, ou la peine commence à se mesler parmy. Il faut reseruer d'embesoignement et d'occupation, autant seulement, qu'il en est besoing, pour nous tenir en haleine, et pour nous garantir des incommoditez que tire apres soy l'autre extremité d'vne lasche oysiueté et assoupie.	He must have taken leave of every kind of toil, whatever face it wears; he must shun in general the passions that disturb the tranquillity of body and soul, and choose the road that best suits his temperament: *Let each one know his own way to go.* In managing the household, in study, in hunting and every other exercise, we should go as far as the last limits of pleasure, and take care not to engage further, where pain begins to mingle in. We should keep only as much business and occupation as we need to keep ourselves in trim, and to protect ourselves from the troubles that the other extreme, slack and drowsy idleness, brings in its train.[11]
	Il y a des sciences steriles et épineuses, et la plus part forgées pour la presse: il les faut laisser à ceux qui sont au seruice du monde. Ie n'ayme pour moy, que des liures ou plaisans et faciles; qui me chatouillent; ou ceux qui me consolent, et conseillent à regler ma vie et ma mort. *Tacitum syluas inter reptare salubres, / Curantem quidquid dignum sapiente bonòque est.*	There are sterile and thorny branches of learning, most of them devised for the busy crowd: they should be left to those who are in the service of the world. For my part, I love only books that are either pleasant and easy, that tickle me, or those that console me and counsel me how to order my life and my death. *To stroll in silence among the healthful woods, / Pondering whatever is worthy of a wise and good man.*
1.39.16	Les gens plus sages peuuent se forger vn repos tout spirituel, ayant l'ame forte et vigoureuse. Moy qui l'ay commune, il faut que i'ayde à me soustenir par les commoditez corporelles. Et l'aage m'ayant tantost desrobé celles qui estoient plus à ma fantasie, i'instruis et aiguise mon appetit à celles qui restent plus sortables à cette autre saison. Il faut retenir à tout nos dents et nos griffes, l'vsage des plaisirs de la vie, que nos ans nous arrachent des poings, les vns apres les autres: *Carpamus dulcia, nostrum est / Quod viuis, cinis et manes et fabula fies.*	Wiser people, having a strong and vigorous soul, can forge themselves a wholly spiritual repose. I, whose soul is ordinary, must help hold myself up with bodily comforts. And since age has lately robbed me of those that were most to my fancy, I am training and sharpening my appetite for those that remain, which better suit this later season. We must hold on tooth and claw to the enjoyment of life's pleasures, which our years snatch from our grasp one after another. *Let us pluck life's*

11 The Latin line is from Propertius, Elegies.

FRENCH	ENGLISH
	sweets; the time you live is ours; / You will become ash, a shade, a tale.

GLORY HAS NO PLACE IN RETREAT

Pliny and Cicero seek fame from retirement; Epicurus and Seneca advise giving it up.

FRENCH	ENGLISH
1.39.17 Or quant à la fin que Pline et Cicero nous proposent, de la gloire, c'est bien loing de mon conte. La plus contraire humeur à la retraicte, c'est l'ambition. La gloire et le repos sont choses qui ne peuuent loger en mesme giste: à ce que ie voy, ceux-cy n'ont que les bras et les iambes hors de la presse; leur ame, leur intention y demeure engagée plus que iamais. *Tun', vetule, auriculis alienis colligis escas?* Ils se sont seulement reculez pour mieux sauter, et pour d'vn plus fort mouuement faire vne plus viue faucée dans la trouppe.	Now as for the end that Pliny and Cicero propose to us, glory, that is far from my reckoning. The temperament most contrary to retirement is ambition. Glory and repose are things that cannot lodge under the same roof. As far as I can see, these men have only their arms and legs out of the crowd; their soul, their intention, remains caught up in it more than ever. *Are you, old man, gathering food for other people's ears?* They have only stepped back to jump the better, and to make, with a stronger momentum, a livelier charge into the throng.
1.39.18 Vous plaist-il voir comme ils tirent court d'vn grain? Mettons au contrepoix, l'aduis de deux philosophes, et de deux sectes tres-differentes, escriuans l'vn à Idomeneus, l'autre à Lucilius leurs amis, pour du maniement des affaires et des grandeurs, les retirer à la solitude. Vous auez, disent-ils, vescu nageant et flottant iusques à present, venez vous en mourir au port. Vous auez donné le reste de vostre vie à la lumiere, donnez cecy à l'ombre. Il est impossible de quitter les occupations, si vous n'en quittez le fruit; à cette cause desfaictes vous de tout soing de nom et de gloire. Il est danger que la lueur de voz actions passées, ne vous esclaire que trop, et vous suiue iusques dans vostre taniere.	Would you like to see how they fall short by a hair? Let us set against them the advice of two philosophers of two very different schools, one writing to Idomeneus, the other to Lucilius, their friends, to draw them away from the handling of affairs and high office into solitude. You have lived until now, they say, swimming and floating; come and die in the harbor. You have given the rest of your life to the light; give this part to the shade. It is impossible to give up your occupations unless you give up their fruits; for this reason, rid yourself of all concern for name and glory. There is a danger that the glow of your past actions may light you up only too well and follow you right into your den.[12]
Quittez auecq les autres voluptez, celle qui vient de l'approbation d'autruy. Et quant à vostre science et suffisance, ne vous chaille, elle ne perdra pas son effect, si vous en valez mieux vous mesme. Souuienne vous de celuy, à qui comme on demandast, à quoy faire il se pénoit si fort en vn art, qui ne pouuoit venir à la cognoissance de guere de gens: I'en ay assez de peu, respondit-il, i'en ay assez d'vn, i'en ay assez de pas vn. Il disoit vray: vous et vn compagnon estes assez suffisant theatre l'vn à l'autre, ou vous à vous-mesmes. Que le peuple vous soit vn, et vn vous soit tout le peuple.	Along with the other pleasures, give up the one that comes from the approval of others. And as for your learning and ability, do not worry: they will not lose their effect if you yourself are the better for them. Remember the man who was asked why he took such pains over an art that could come to the knowledge of hardly anyone. "A few are enough for me," he replied; "one is enough for me; none at all is enough for me." He spoke the truth: you and one companion are theater enough for each other, or you for yourself. Let the people be one to you, and let one be the whole people to you.

12 Epicurus wrote to Idomeneus and Seneca to Lucilius; the advice that follows comes from Seneca's Letters to Lucilius.

FRENCH

C’est vne lâche ambition de vouloir tirer gloire de son oysiueté, et de sa cachette. Il faut faire comme les animaux, qui effacent la trace, à la porte de leur taniere. Ce n’est plus ce qu’il vous faut chercher, que le monde parle de vous, mais comme il faut que vous parliez à vous-mesmes. Retirez vous en vous, mais preparez vous premierement de vous y receuoir: ce seroit folie de vous fier à vous mesmes, si vous ne vous sçauez gouuerner.

Il y a moyen de faillir en la solitude, comme en la compagnie: iusques à ce que vous vous soyez rendu tel, deuant qui vous n’osiez clocher, et iusques à ce que vous ayez honte et respect de vous mesmes, *obuersentur species honestæ animo*: presentez vous tousiours en l’imagination Caton, Phocion, et Aristides, en la presence desquels les fols mesme cacheroient leurs fautes, et establissez les contrerolleurs de toutes vos intentions.

Si elles se detraquent, leur reuerence vous remettra en train: ils vous contiendront en cette voye, de vous contenter de vous mesmes, de n’emprunter rien que de vous, d’arrester et fermir vostre ame en certaines et limitées cogitations, où elle se puisse plaire: et ayant entendu les vrays biens, desquels on iouyt à mesure qu’on les entend, s’en contenter, sans desir de prolongement de vie ny de nom. Voyla le conseil de la vraye et naifue philosophie, non d’vne philosophie ostentatrice et parliere, comme est celle des deux premiers.

ENGLISH

It is a mean ambition to want to draw glory from one’s idleness and one’s hiding place. We must do as the animals do that wipe out their tracks at the entrance of their den. What you must seek is no longer that the world should talk about you, but how you should talk to yourself. Withdraw into yourself, but first prepare yourself to receive yourself there: it would be folly to trust yourself if you do not know how to govern yourself.

One can go wrong in solitude as in company. Until you have made yourself someone before whom you would not dare to limp, and until you feel shame and respect for yourself, *let honorable images be kept before the mind*: always picture Cato, Phocion and Aristides, in whose presence even fools would hide their faults, and make them the overseers of all your intentions.[13]

If your intentions go astray, your reverence for these men will set you back on course. They will keep you on this path: to be content with yourself, to borrow nothing except from yourself, to stop and settle your soul on definite and limited thoughts in which it can take pleasure; and, having understood the true goods, which we enjoy in proportion as we understand them, to be content with them, without any desire to prolong either life or name. That is the advice of true and natural philosophy, not of a showy and talkative philosophy like that of the first two.

13 The Latin phrase is from Cicero, Tusculan Disputations.

I.40 A Consideration upon Cicero

Consideration sur Ciceron

Cicero and Pliny's craving for literary fame is unworthy of statesmen; Montaigne also reflects on his own letters and style.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
1.40.1	ENCOR' vn traict à la comparaison de ces couples. Il se tire des escrits de Cicero, et de ce Pline peu retirant, à mon aduis, aux humeurs de son oncle, infinis tesmoignages de nature outre mesure ambitieuse: entre autres qu'ils sollicitent au sceu de tout le monde, les historiens de leur temps, de ne les oublier en leurs registres: et la fortune comme par despit, a faict durer iusques à nous la vanité de ces requestes, et pieça faict perdre ces histoires.	ONE more stroke for the comparison of these pairs. From the writings of Cicero, and of that Pliny who, in my opinion, takes very little after his uncle's temperament, one can draw countless testimonies of a nature ambitious beyond measure. Among others, they solicit the historians of their time, in full view of everyone, not to forget them in their records; and Fortune, as if out of spite, has made the vanity of these requests last down to us, and long ago caused those histories to be lost.[1]
1.40.2	Mais cecy surpasse toute bassesse de cœur, en personnes de tel rang, d'auoir voulu tirer quelque principale gloire du cacquet, et de la parlerie, iusques à y employer les lettres priuées escriptes à leurs amis: en maniere, que aucunes ayans failly leur saison pour estre enuoyées, ils les font ce neantmoins publier auec cette digne excuse, qu'ils n'ont pas voulu perdre leur trauail et veillées. Sied-il pas bien à deux consuls Romains, souuerains magistrats de la chose publique emperiere du monde, d'employer leur loisir, à ordonner et fagotter gentiment vne belle missiue, pour en tirer la reputation, de bien entendre le langage de leur nourrisse? Que feroit pis vn simple maistre d'escole qui en gaignast sa vie?	But this surpasses all baseness of heart in persons of such rank: to have wanted to draw some chief glory from chatter and talk, to the point of using for it the private letters written to their friends; so much so that when some of these had missed the moment for being sent, they nevertheless had them published, with this worthy excuse, that they did not want to waste their labor and their late nights. Is it not fitting for two Roman consuls, sovereign magistrates of the commonwealth that was empress of the world, to spend their leisure arranging and neatly trussing up a fine missive, so as to win the reputation of understanding their nurse's language well? What worse could a mere schoolmaster do, who earned his living by it?
	Si les gestes de Xenophon et de Cæsar, n'eussent de bien loing surpassé leur eloquence, ie ne croy pas qu'ils les eussent iamais escrits. Ils ont cherché à recommander non leur dire, mais leur faire. Et si la perfection du bien parler pouuoit apporter quelque gloire sortable à vn grand personnage, certainement Scipion et Lælius n'eussent pas resigné l'honneur de leurs comedies, et toutes les mignardises et delices du langage Latin, à vn serf Afriquain. Car que cet ouurage soit leur, sa beauté et son excellence le maintient assez, et Terence l'aduoüe luy	If the deeds of Xenophon and Caesar had not far surpassed their eloquence, I do not believe they would ever have written them down. They sought to commend not their saying but their doing. And if perfection in speaking well could bring any glory suitable to a great personage, certainly Scipio and Laelius would not have resigned the honor of their comedies, and all the graces and delights of the Latin language, to an African slave. For that this work is theirs, its beauty and excellence suffi-

1 This is Pliny the Younger, nephew of the naturalist Pliny the Elder.

FRENCH

mesme: et me feroit on desplaisir de me desloger de cette creance.

1.40.3 C'est vne espece de mocquerie et d'iniure, de vouloir faire valoir vn homme, par des qualitez mes-aduenantes à son rang; quoy qu'elles soient autrement loüables; et par les qualitez aussi qui ne doiuent pas estre les siennes principales. Comme qui loüeroit vn Roy d'estre bon peintre, ou bon architecte, ou encore bon arquebuzier, ou bon coureur de bague. Ces loüanges ne font honneur, si elles ne sont presentées en foule, et à la suitte de celles qui luy sont propres: à sçauoir de la iustice, et de la science de conduire son peuple en paix et en guerre. De cette façon faict honneur à Cyrus l'agriculture, et à Charlemaigne l'eloquence, et cognoissance des bonnes lettres.

I'ay veu de mon temps, en plus forts termes, des personnages, qui tiroient d'escrire, et leurs tiltres, et leur vocation, desaduoüer leur apprentissage, corrompre leur plume, et affecter l'ignorance de qualité si vulgaire, et que nostre peuple tient, ne se rencontrer guere en mains sçauantes: et prendre souci, de se recommander par meilleures qualitez. Les compagnons de Demosthenes en l'ambassade vers Philippus, loüoyent ce Prince d'estre beau, eloquent, et bon beuueur: Demosthenes disoit que c'estoient louanges qui appartenoient mieux à vne femme, à vn Aduocat, à vne esponge, qu'à vn Roy.

Imperet bellante prior, iacentem
Lenis in hostem. Ce n'est pas sa profession de sçauoir, ou bien chasser, ou bien dancer, *Orabunt causas alij, cœlique meæ us*
Describent radio, et fulgentia, sidera dicent,
Hic regere imperio populos sciat.

1.40.4 Plutarque dit d'auantage, que de paroistre si excellent en ces parties moins necessaires, c'est produire contre soy le tesmoignage d'auoir mal dispencé son loisir, et l'estude, qui deuoit estre employé à choses plus necessaires et vtiles. De façon que Philippus Roy de Macedoine, ayant ouy ce grand Alexandre son fils, chanter en vn festin, à l'enui des meilleurs musiciens; N'as-tu pas honte, luy dit-il, de chanter si bien? Et à ce mesme Philippus, vn

ENGLISH

ciently prove, and Terence admits it himself; and it would displease me to be dislodged from this belief.[2]

It is a kind of mockery and insult to try to make a man look good by qualities unbecoming to his rank, however praiseworthy they may be in other respects, and also by qualities that ought not to be his principal ones. As if one were to praise a king for being a good painter, or a good architect, or even a good shot with the arquebus, or good at running at the ring. Such praises bring no honor unless they are offered in a crowd, following those that are proper to him: namely justice, and the knowledge of how to lead his people in peace and in war. In this way agriculture does honor to Cyrus, and eloquence and knowledge of good letters to Charlemagne.

In my time I have seen an even stronger case: persons who owed both their titles and their calling to writing disowning their training, spoiling their pen, and affecting ignorance of so common a skill, one that our people hold is rarely found in learned hands, and taking care to recommend themselves by better qualities. The companions of Demosthenes on the embassy to Philip praised that prince for being handsome, eloquent and a good drinker. Demosthenes said these were praises better suited to a woman, a lawyer and a sponge than to a king.

Let him rule, superior to the foe in battle,
Lenient to the fallen enemy. It is not his profession to know how to hunt well or to dance well. *Others will plead causes, will trace the motions of the heavens*
With the rod, and tell of the shining stars;
Let this man know how to rule the peoples with his sway.[3]

Plutarch says further that to appear so excellent in these less necessary accomplishments is to bring forward evidence against oneself of having badly spent one's leisure and the study that should have been devoted to more necessary and useful things. So when Philip, king of Macedon, heard his son, the great Alexander, sing at a feast in rivalry with the best musicians, he said to him: "Are you not

2 Terence, the Roman comic playwright, was born in Africa and brought to Rome as a slave; it was rumored in antiquity that his patrons Scipio Aemilianus and Laelius had a hand in his plays.
3 The first quotation is from Horace, Secular Hymn; the second adapts Virgil, Aeneid, Book VI.

FRENCH

musicien contre lequel il debattoit de son art; Ia à Dieu ne plaise Sire, dit-il, qu'il t'aduienne iamais tant de mal, que tu entendes ces choses là, mieux que moy.

ENGLISH

ashamed to sing so well?" And to this same Philip, a musician with whom he was arguing about his art said: "God forbid, Sire, that so much harm should ever befall you that you understand these things better than I do."

Vn Roy doit pouuoir respondre, comme Iphicrates respondit à l'orateur qui le pressoit en son inuectiue de cette maniere: Et bien qu'es-tu, pour faire tant le braue? es-tu homme d'armes, es-tu archer, es-tu piquier? Ie ne suis rien de tout cela, mais ie suis celuy qui sçait commander à tous ceux-là. Et Antisthenes print pour argument de peu de valeur en Ismenias, dequoy on le vantoit d'estre excellent ioüeur de flustes.

A king should be able to answer as Iphicrates answered the orator who pressed him in his invective in this way: "Well, what are you, to swagger so much? Are you a man-at-arms? Are you an archer? Are you a pikeman?" "I am none of those, but I am the one who knows how to command all of them." And Antisthenes took it as proof of little worth in Ismenias that he was praised for being an excellent flute player.

1.40.5 Ie sçay bien, quand i'oy quelqu'vn, qui s'arreste au langage des Essais, que i'aimeroye mieux, qu'il s'en teust. Ce n'est pas tant esleuer les mots, comme deprimer le sens: d'autant plus picquamment, que plus obliquement. Si suis-ie trompé si guere d'autres donnent plus à prendre en la matiere: et comment que ce soit, mal ou bien, si nul escriuain l'a semée, ny guere plus materielle, ny au moins plus drue, en son papier. Pour en ranger d'auantage, ie n'en entasse que les testes. Que i'y attache leur suitte, ie multiplieray plusieurs fois ce volume. Et combien y ay-ie espandu d'histoires, qui ne disent mot, lesquelles qui voudra esplucher vn peu plus curieusement, en produira infinis Essais?

1.40.5 I know well, when I hear someone dwelling on the language of these Essays, that I would rather he kept quiet. It is not so much exalting the words as disparaging the sense, and all the more cuttingly for being more oblique. And yet I am much mistaken if many others give more to take hold of in their matter; and, be it bad or good, I am mistaken if any writer has sown his paper with matter much more substantial, or at any rate more thickly. To fit in more of it, I pile up only the heads. If I were to attach what follows from them, I would multiply this volume several times over. And how many stories have I scattered here that say not a word, but from which anyone who cares to pick them apart a little more carefully will produce countless essays?

Ny elles, ny mes allegations, ne seruent pas tousiours simplement d'exemple, d'authorité ou d'ornement. Ie ne les regarde pas seulement par l'vsage, que i'en tire. Elles portent souuent, hors de mon propos, la semence d'vne matiere plus riche et plus hardie: et souuent à gauche, vn ton plus delicat, et pour moy, qui n'en veux en ce lieu exprimer d'auantage, et pour ceux qui rencontreront mon air.

Neither they nor my quotations always serve simply as example, authority or ornament. I do not regard them only for the use I draw from them. They often carry, beyond my subject, the seed of a richer and bolder matter, and often, on the side, a subtler tone, both for myself, who do not wish to express more of it here, and for those who catch my drift.

1.40.6 Retournant à la vertu parliere, ie ne trouue pas grand choix, entre ne sçauoir dire que mal, ou ne sçauoir rien que bien dire. *Non est ornamentum virile, concinnitas.* Les Sages disent, que pour le regard du sçauoir, il n'est que la philosophie, et pour le regard des effects, que la vertu, qui generalement soit propre à tous degrez, et à tous ordres.

1.40.6 Returning to the talking virtue, I do not find much to choose between knowing how to say nothing but badly and knowing nothing but how to speak well. *Elegance is no manly ornament.* The sages say that in respect of knowledge there is only philosophy, and in respect of deeds only virtue, that is generally fitting for all ranks and all orders.[4]

4 The Latin is from Seneca, Letters to Lucilius.

FRENCH

ENGLISH

1.40.7 Il y a quelque chose de pareil en ces autres deux philosophes: car ils promettent aussi eternité aux lettres qu'ils escriuent à leurs amis. Mais c'est d'autre façon, et s'accommodans pour vne bonne fin, à la vanité d'autruy. Car ils leur mandent, que si le soing de se faire cognoistre aux siecles aduenir, et de la renommée les arreste encore au maniement des affaires, et leur fait craindre la solitude et la retraite, où ils les veulent appeller; qu'ils ne s'en donnent plus de peine: d'autant qu'ils ont assez de credit auec la posterité, pour leur respondre, que ne fust que par les lettres qu'ils leur escriuent, ils rendront leur nom aussi cogneu et fameux que pourroient faire leurs actions publiques.

There is something similar in those other two philosophers, for they too promise eternity to the letters they write to their friends. But it is in another manner, and they accommodate themselves to the vanity of others for a good end. For they write to them that if the concern to make themselves known to future ages, and the care for renown, still keeps them in the handling of affairs and makes them fear the solitude and retirement to which they want to call them, they should trouble themselves no further about it: they themselves have credit enough with posterity to promise that, were it only through the letters they write to them, they will make their friends' names as well known and famous as their public actions could.[5]

Et outre cette difference; encore ne sont-ce pas lettres vuides et descharnées, qui ne se soustiennent que par vn delicat chois de mots, entassez et rangez à vne iuste cadence; ains farcies et pleines de beaux discours de sapience, par lesquelles on se rend non plus eloquent, mais plus sage, et qui nous apprennent non à bien dire, mais à bien faire. Fy de l'eloquence qui nous laisse enuie de soy, non des choses. Si ce n'est qu'on die que celle de Cicero, estant en si extreme perfection, se donne corps elle mesme. I'adiousteray encore vn compte que nous lisons de luy, à ce propos, pour nous faire toucher au doigt son naturel.

And besides this difference, these are not empty, fleshless letters, held up only by a delicate choice of words piled up and arranged in an exact cadence, but letters stuffed full of fine reasonings of wisdom, by which one becomes not more eloquent but wiser, and which teach us not to speak well but to do well. Shame on eloquence that leaves us longing for itself and not for things! Unless one says that Cicero's, being of such extreme perfection, gives itself a body of its own. I will add one more story we read about him on this subject, to let us put our finger on his nature.

Il auoit à orer en public, et estoit vn peu pressé du temps, pour se preparer à son aise: Eros, l'vn de ses serfs, le vint aduertir, que l'audience estoit remise au lendemain: il en fut si aise, qu'il luy donna liberté pour cette bonne nouuelle.

He was to speak in public and was a little short of time to prepare at his ease. Eros, one of his slaves, came to tell him that the hearing had been put off until the next day. He was so delighted that he set him free for this good news.

1.40.8 Sur ce subiect de lettres, ie veux dire ce mot; que c'est vn ouurage, auquel mes amis tiennent, que ie puis quelque chose. Et eusse prins plus volontiers cette forme à publier mes verues, si i'eusse eu à qui parler. Il me falloit, comme ie l'ay eu autrefois, vn certain commerce, qui m'attirast, qui me soustinst, et sousleuast. Car de negocier au vent, comme d'autres, ie ne sçauroy, que de songe: ny forger des vains noms à entretenir, en chose serieuse: ennemy iuré de toute espece de falsification. I'eusse esté plus attentif, et plus seur, ayant vne addresse forte et amie, que regardant les diuers visages d'vn peuple: et suis deçeu, s'il ne m'eust mieux succedé. I'ay naturellement vn stile comique et priué.

On this subject of letters, I want to say this: it is a kind of work in which my friends hold that I have some ability. And I would more willingly have chosen this form for publishing my whims, if I had had someone to talk to. I needed, as I once had, a certain relationship that would draw me on, sustain me and lift me up. For I could not negotiate with the wind, as others do, except in dreams; nor forge empty names to address in a serious matter, being the sworn enemy of every kind of falsification. I would have been more attentive and more confident with a strong and friendly addressee than I am looking at the various faces of a

5 Epicurus and Seneca, mentioned in the previous essay.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
		public; and I am mistaken if it would not have turned out better for me. I naturally have a comic and private style.[6]
	Mais c'est d'vne forme mienne, inepte aux negotiations publiques, comme en toutes façons est mon langage, trop serré, desordonné, couppé, particulier.	But it is a form of my own, unfit for public dealings, as my language is in every way: too compressed, disorderly, abrupt, idiosyncratic.
1.40.9	Et ne m'entens pas en lettres ceremonieuses, qui n'ont autre substance, que d'vne belle enfileure de paroles courtoises. Ie n'ay ny la faculté, ny le goust de ces longues offres d'affection et de seruice. Ie n'en crois pas tant; et me desplaist d'en dire guere, outre ce que i'en crois. C'est bien loing de l'vsage present: car il ne fut iamais si abiecte et seruile prostitution de presentations: la vie, l'ame, deuotion, adoration, serf, esclaue, tous ces mots y courent si vulgairement, que quand ils veulent faire sentir vne plus expresse volonté et plus respectueuse, ils n'ont plus de maniere pour l'exprimer.	And I have no skill in ceremonious letters that have no other substance than a fine stringing together of courteous words. I have neither the faculty nor the taste for those long offers of affection and service. I do not believe in them so much, and I dislike saying much beyond what I believe. This is far from present usage: for there was never so abject and servile a prostitution of self-offerings. Life, soul, devotion, adoration, serf, slave: all these words are bandied about so commonly that when people want to convey a more explicit and more respectful intention, they no longer have any way to express it.
1.40.10	Ie hay à mort de sentir au flateur. Qui faict que ie me iette naturellement à vn parler sec, rond et cru, qui tire à qui ne me cognoit d'ailleurs, vn peu vers le desdaigneux. I'honnore le plus ceux que i'honnore le moins: et où mon ame marche d'vne grande allegresse, i'oublie les pas de la contenance: et m'offre maigrement et fierement, à ceux à qui ie suis: et me presente moins, à qui ie me suis le plus donné. Il me semble qu'ils le doiuent lire en mon cœur, et que l'expression de mes paroles, fait tort à ma conception.	I hate like death to smack of the flatterer. This makes me fall naturally into a dry, plain and blunt way of talking that, to those who do not otherwise know me, verges a little on the disdainful. Those I honor most are the ones I show least honor to; and where my soul moves with great eagerness, I forget the steps of good form. I offer myself meagerly and proudly to those whose I am, and present myself least to those to whom I have given myself most. It seems to me that they should read it in my heart, and that the expression of my words wrongs my thought.

6 The friend he once had was Étienne de La Boétie, who died in 1563.

FRENCH

A bienuienner, à prendre congé, à remercier, à salüer, à presenter mon seruice, et tels compliments verbeux des loix ceremonieuses de nostre ciuilité, ie ne cognois personne si sottement sterile de langage que moy. Et n'ay iamais esté employé à faire des lettres de faueur et recommendation, que celuy pour qui c'estoit, n'aye trouuées seches et lasches. Ce sont grands imprimeurs de lettres, que les Italiens, i'en ay, ce crois-ie, cent diuers volumes. Celles de Annibale Caro me semblent les meilleures. Si tout le papier que i'ay autresfois barbouillé pour les dames, estoit en nature, lors que ma main estoit veritablement emportée par ma passion, il s'en trouueroit à l'aduenture quelque page digne d'estre communiquée à la ieunesse oysiue, embabouinée de cette fureur.

1.40.11 I'escrits mes lettres tousiours en poste, et si precipiteusement, que quoy que ie peigne insupportablement mal, i'ayme mieux escrire de ma main, que d'y en employer vn' autre, car ie n'en trouue point qui me puisse suiure, et ne les transcrits iamais. I'ay accoustumé les grands, qui me cognoissent, à y supporter des litures et des trasseures, et vn papier sans plieure et sans marge. Celles qui me coustent le plus, sont celles qui valent le moins. Depuis que ie les traine, c'est signe que ie n'y suis pas. Ie commence volontiers sans proiect; le premier traict produit le second. Les lettres de ce temps, sont plus en bordures et prefaces, qu'en matiere.

Comme i'ayme mieux composer deux lettres, que d'en clorre et plier vne; et resigne tousiours cette commission à quelque autre: de mesme quand la matiere est acheuée, ie donrois volontiers à quelqu'vn la charge d'y adiouster ces longues harangues, offres, et prieres, que nous logeons sur la fin, et desire que quelque nouuel vsage nous en descharge. Comme aussi de les inscrire d'vne legende de qualitez et tiltres, pour ausquels ne broncher, i'ay maintesfois laissé d'escrire, et notamment à gens de iustice et de finance. Tant d'innouations d'offices, vne si difficile dispensation et ordonnance de diuers noms d'honneur; lesquels estans si cherement achetez, ne peuuent estre eschangez, ou oubliez sans offence.

Ie trouue pareillement de mauuaise grace, d'en charger le front et inscription des liures, que nous faisons imprimer.

ENGLISH

In welcoming, taking leave, thanking, greeting, offering my service, and such wordy compliments of the ceremonious laws of our civility, I know no one so stupidly barren of language as I am. And I have never been employed to write letters of favor and recommendation without the person they were for finding them dry and feeble. The Italians are great printers of letters; I have, I believe, a hundred different volumes of them. Those of Annibale Caro seem to me the best. If all the paper I once scribbled for the ladies, when my hand was truly carried away by my passion, still existed, there might perhaps be found some page worth showing to idle youth, besotted with that frenzy.[7]

I always write my letters post-haste, and so hurriedly that, although my handwriting is unbearably bad, I prefer to write with my own hand than to use another's, for I find no one who can keep up with me; and I never copy them out. I have accustomed the great who know me to put up with crossings-out and overwritings in them, and with paper without folds or margins. The letters that cost me most are the ones worth least. As soon as I drag them out, it is a sign that I am not in them. I like to begin without a plan; the first stroke produces the second. The letters of our time consist more of borders and prefaces than of matter.

Just as I would rather compose two letters than close and fold one, and always hand that task over to someone else, so too, when the matter is finished, I would gladly give someone the job of adding those long harangues, offers and prayers that we lodge at the end, and I wish some new usage would relieve us of them. Likewise with addressing them with a legend of qualities and titles: for fear of stumbling over these, I have many times given up writing, especially to men of the law and of finance. So many newly created offices, so difficult an allotment and arrangement of different titles of honor, which, being so dearly bought, cannot be exchanged or forgotten without giving offense.[8]

I likewise find it graceless to load the front and title page of the books we have printed with them.

7 Annibale Caro (1507–1566) was an Italian poet and translator whose letters were published after his death.
8 In Montaigne's France many public offices, with their titles, were bought and sold.

I.41 Of Not Sharing One's Glory

De ne communiquer sa gloire

Glory is the hardest vanity to shed, yet some men have rare greatness enough to give their glory to others.

FRENCH

1.41.1 DE toutes les resueries du monde, la plus receuë et plus vniuerselle, est le soing de la reputation et de la gloire, que nous espousons iusques à quitter les richesses, le repos, la vie et la santé, qui sont biens effectuels et substantiaux, pour suyure cette vaine image, et cette simple voix, qui n'a ny corps ny prise: *La fama*
ch'inuaghisce a vn dolce suono
Gli superbi mortali, et par' si bella,
E vn echo, vn sogno, anzi d'vn sogno vn' ombra
Ch' ad ogni vento si delegua et sgombra.

1.41.2 Et des humeurs des-raisonnables des hommes, il semble que les philosophes mesmes se défacent plus tard et plus enuis de cette-cy que de nulle autre: c'est la plus reuesche et opiniastre. *Quia etiam bene proficientes animos tentare non cessat.* Il n'en est guiere de laquelle la raison accuse si clairement la vanité: mais elle a ses racines si vifues en nous, que ie ne sçay si iamais aucun s'en est peu nettement descharger. Apres que vous auez tout dict et tout creu, pour la desaduouer, elle produict contre vostre discours vne inclination si intestine, que vous auez peu que tenir à l'encontre.

Car comme dit Cicero, ceux mesmes qui la combatent, encores veulent-ils, que les liures, qu'ils en escriuent, portent au front leur nom, et se veulent rendre glorieux de ce qu'ils ont mesprisé la gloire.

1.41.3 Toutes autres choses tombent en commerce. Nous prestons nos biens et nos vies au besoin de nos amis: mais de communiquer son honneur, et d'estrener autruy de sa gloire, il ne se voit gueres. Catulus Luctatius en la guerre contre les Cymbres, ayant faict tous efforts pour arrester ses soldats qui fuioient deuant les ennemis, se mit luy-mesmes entre les fuyards, et contrefit le coüard, affin qu'ils semblassent plustost suiure leur Capitaine, que

ENGLISH

OF all the fancies in the world, the most accepted and most universal is concern for reputation and glory, which we espouse to the point of giving up wealth, rest, life and health, which are real and substantial goods, to follow that empty image and that mere voice that has neither body nor anything to grasp. *Fame, which with sweet sound beguiles*
Proud mortals and seems so fair,
Is an echo, a dream, nay, the shadow of a dream,
That at every wind melts and vanishes.[1]

And of all the unreasonable dispositions of men, it seems that even the philosophers rid themselves of this one later and more reluctantly than of any other: it is the most intractable and stubborn. *Because it does not cease to tempt even souls that are making good progress.* There is hardly any whose vanity reason exposes so clearly; but it has its roots so alive in us that I do not know whether anyone has ever been able to rid himself of it cleanly. After you have said everything and believed everything to disown it, it produces against your reasoning an inclination so deep within you that you have little to hold out against it.[2]

For, as Cicero says, even those who fight it still want the books they write about it to bear their name on the title page, and want to win glory from having despised glory.

All other things can be shared. We lend our goods and our lives to our friends in need; but to share one's honor and make a present of one's glory to another is hardly ever seen. Catulus Lutatius, in the war against the Cimbri, having made every effort to stop his soldiers who were fleeing before the enemy, put himself among the fugitives and played the coward, so that they would seem to be

1 The Italian lines are from Tasso, Jerusalem Delivered.
2 The Latin is from Saint Augustine, The City of God.

FRENCH

fuyr l'ennemy: c'estoit abandonner sa reputation, pour couurir la honte d'autruy.

Quand Charles cinquiesme passa en Prouence, l'an mil cinq cens trente sept, on tient que Antoine de Leue voyant l'Empereur resolu de ce voyage, et l'estimant luy estre merueilleusement glorieux, opinoit toutesfois le contraire, et le desconseilloit, à cette fin que toute la gloire et honneur de ce conseil, en fust attribué à son maistre: et qu'il fust dict, son bon aduis et sa preuoyance auoit esté telle, que contre l'opinion de tous, il eust mis à fin vne si belle entreprinse: qui estoit l'honorer à ses despens.

Les Ambassadeurs Thraciens, consolans Archileonide mere de Brasidas, de la mort de son fils, et le haut-louans, iusques à dire, qu'il n'auoit point laissé son pareil: elle refusa cette louange priuee et particuliere, pour la rendre au public: Ne me dites pas cela, fit-elle, ie sçay que la ville de Sparte a plusieurs citoyens plus grands et plus vaillans qu'il n'estoit.

En la bataille de Crecy, le Prince de Gales, encores fort ieune, auoit l'auant-garde à conduire: le principal effort du rencontre, fust en cet endroit: les Seigneurs qui l'accompagnoient se trouuans en dur party d'armes, manderent au Roy Edoüard de s'approcher, pour les secourir: il s'enquit de l'estat de son fils, et luy ayant esté respondu, qu'il estoit viuant et à cheual: Ie luy ferois, dit-il, tort de luy aller maintenant desrober l'honneur de la victoire de ce combat, qu'il a si long temps soustenu: quelque hazard qu'il y ait, elle sera toute sienne: et n'y voulut aller ny enuoyer: sçachant s'il y fust allé, qu'on eust dit que tout estoit perdu sans son secours, et qu'on luy eust attribué l'aduantage de cet exploit.

Semper enim quod postremum adiectum est, id rem totam videtur traxisse. Plusieurs estimoient à Rome, et se disoit communément que les principaux beaux-faits de Scipion estoient en partie deuz à Lælius, qui toutesfois alla tousiours promouuant et secondant la grandeur et gloire de Scipion, sans aucun soing de la sienne. Et Theopompus Roy de Sparte à celuy qui luy disoit que la chose publique

ENGLISH

following their captain rather than fleeing the enemy: that was abandoning his reputation to cover the shame of others.[3]

When Charles the Fifth came into Provence in the year 1537, it is said that Antonio de Leyva, seeing the Emperor resolved on this expedition and judging that it would bring him marvelous glory, nevertheless argued the opposite and advised against it, so that all the glory and honor of the decision would be attributed to his master, and it would be said that his good judgment and foresight had been such that, against everyone's opinion, he had carried so fine an enterprise through to the end: which was honoring him at his own expense.

When the Thracian ambassadors were consoling Archileonis, mother of Brasidas, for the death of her son, and praising him so highly as to say that he had left no equal behind him, she refused this private and personal praise in order to give it back to the public. "Do not tell me that," she said; "I know that the city of Sparta has many citizens greater and more valiant than he was."[4]

At the battle of Crécy, the Prince of Wales, still very young, had the vanguard to lead, and the main brunt of the encounter fell at that point. The lords accompanying him, finding themselves hard pressed in the fighting, sent word to King Edward to come nearer and help them. He asked how his son was, and when told that he was alive and on horseback, he said: "I would wrong him if I went now and robbed him of the honor of victory in this combat he has sustained so long; whatever the risk, it shall be all his." And he would neither go nor send anyone, knowing that if he had gone, people would have said that all was lost without his help, and the credit for this feat would have been given to him.[5]

For it is always the last thing added that seems to have accomplished the whole. Many in Rome believed, and it was commonly said, that Scipio's chief fine deeds were partly owed to Laelius, who nevertheless always went on promoting and supporting Scipio's greatness and glory, with no concern for his own. And Theopompus, king of Sparta, said to

3 Quintus Lutatius Catulus was a Roman consul who fought the invading Cimbri in 102–101 BC.
4 Brasidas was a Spartan general killed at Amphipolis in 422 BC.
5 Crécy (1346) was won by Edward III of England; his son was Edward, the Black Prince.

FRENCH

demeuroit sur ses pieds, pour autant qu'il sçauoit bien commander: C'est plustost, dit-il, parce que le peuple sçait bien obeyr.

1.41.4 Comme les femmes, qui succedoient aux pairries, auoient, nonobstant leur sexe, droit d'assister et opiner aux causes, qui appartiennent à la iurisdiction des pairs: aussi les pairs ecclesiastiques, nonobstant leur profession, estoient tenus d'assister nos Roys en leurs guerres, non seulement de leurs amis et seruiteurs, mais de leur personne. Aussi l'Euesque de Beauuais, se trouuant auec Philippe Auguste en la bataille de Bouuines, participoit bien fort courageusement à l'effect: mais il luy sembloit, ne deuoir toucher au fruit et gloire de cet exercice sanglant et violent. Il mena de sa main plusieurs des ennemis à raison, ce iour là, et les donnoit au premier Gentilhomme qu'il trouuoit, à esgosiller, ou prendre prisonniers, luy en resignant toute l'execution.

Et le feit ainsi de Guillaume Comte de Salsberi à messire Iean de Nesle. D'vne pareille subtilité de conscience, à cet autre: il vouloit bien assommer, mais non pas blesser: et pourtant ne combattoit que de masse. Quelcun en mes iours, estant reproché par le Roy d'auoir mis les mains sur vn prestre, le nioit fort et ferme: c'estoit qu'il l'auoit battu et foulé aux pieds.

ENGLISH

the man who told him that the state stood firm because he knew how to command well: "It is rather because the people know how to obey well."[6]

Just as women who succeeded to peerages had, notwithstanding their sex, the right to attend and give their opinion in cases belonging to the jurisdiction of the peers, so the ecclesiastical peers, notwithstanding their profession, were obliged to assist our kings in their wars, not only with their friends and servants but in person. So the Bishop of Beauvais, being with Philip Augustus at the battle of Bouvines, took a very courageous part in the action; but it seemed to him that he ought not to touch the fruit and glory of that bloody and violent exercise. With his own hand he brought several of the enemy to submission that day, and handed them over to the first gentleman he found, to cut their throats or take them prisoner, leaving the whole execution to him.[7]

And so he did with William, Earl of Salisbury, whom he handed over to Sir Jean de Nesle. His was a subtlety of conscience like that of another man, who was quite willing to club men down but not to wound them, and so fought only with a mace. Someone in my day, reproached by the King for having laid hands on a priest, denied it flatly: the fact was that he had beaten him and trampled him underfoot.

6 The Latin is from Livy, History of Rome.
7 At Bouvines (1214) Philip Augustus of France defeated the Emperor Otto IV and his allies, among them William, Earl of Salisbury.

I.42 Of the Inequality That Is Between Us

De l'inegualité qui est entre nous
Men should be valued by their own qualities, not their trappings; Montaigne shows how kingship weighs on those who hold it.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
1.42.1	PLVTARQVE dit en quelque lieu, qu'il ne trouue point si grande distance de beste à beste, comme il trouue d'homme à homme. Il parle de la suffisance de l'ame et qualitez internes. A la verité ie trouue si loing d'Epaminundas, comme ie l'imagine, iusques à tel que ie cognois, ie dy capable de sens commun, que i'encherirois volontiers sur Plutarque: et dirois qu'il y a plus de distance de tel à tel homme, qu'il n'y a de tel homme à telle beste: *Hem! vir viro quid præstat!* et qu'il y a autant de degrez d'esprits, qu'il y a d'icy au ciel de brasses, et autant innumerables.	PLUTARCH says somewhere that he does not find so great a distance between beast and beast as he finds between man and man. He is speaking of the ability of the soul and inner qualities. In truth, I find so great a distance between Epaminondas, as I imagine him, and some men I know (men capable of common sense, I mean) that I would gladly go further than Plutarch and say that there is more distance between one man and another than there is between some men and some beasts. *Ah! how one man surpasses another!* And I would say that there are as many degrees of minds as there are fathoms from here to heaven, and just as innumerable.[1]
1.42.2	Mais à propos de l'estimation des hommes, c'est merueille que sauf nous, aucune chose ne s'estime que par ses propres qualitez. Nous loüons vn cheual de ce qu'il est vigoureux et adroit, *Volucrem* *Sic laudamus equum, facili cui plurima palma* *Feruet, et exultat rauco victoria circo,* non de son harnois: vn leurier, de sa vistesse, non de son colier: vn oyseau, de son aile, non de ses longes et sonnettes. Pourquoy de mesmes n'estimons nous vn homme par ce qui est sien? Il a vn grand train, vn beau palais, tant de credit, tant de rente: tout cela est autour de luy, non en luy.	But speaking of how men are valued, it is a marvel that, except for ourselves, nothing is valued except by its own qualities. We praise a horse for being vigorous and nimble, *Thus we praise* *The swift horse, for whom many palms* *Glow from easy wins, and victory exults in the roaring circus*, not for its harness; a greyhound for its speed, not for its collar; a bird for its wing, not for its jesses and bells. Why do we not likewise value a man by what is his own? He has a large retinue, a fine palace, so much influence, so much income: all that is around him, not in him.[2]
	Vous n'achetez pas vn chat en poche: si vous marchandez vn cheual, vous luy ostez ses bardes, vous le voyez nud et à descouuert. Ou s'il est couuert, comme on les presentoit anciennement aux Princes à vendre, c'est par les parties moins necessaires, à fin que vous ne vous amusiez pas à la beauté de son poil, ou largeur de sa croupe, et que vous vous arrestiez principalement à considerer les iambes, les yeux, et le pied, qui sont les membres les plus vtiles, *Regibus hic mos est: vbi equos mercantur, opertos* *Inspiciunt; ne si facies, vt sæpe, decora*	You do not buy a pig in a poke. If you are bargaining for a horse, you take off its trappings and see it bare and uncovered. Or if it is covered, as horses were presented for sale to princes in former times, it is covered in the less necessary parts, so that you will not be distracted by the beauty of its coat or the breadth of its rump, and will dwell chiefly on examining the legs, the eyes and the hooves, which are the most useful members. *This is the cus-*

1 The Latin is from Terence, The Eunuch.
2 The lines are from Juvenal, Satires.

FRENCH

Molli fulta pede est, emptorem inducat hiantem,
Quôd pulchræ clunes, breue quôd caput, ardua ceruix.
Pourquoy estimant vn homme l'estimez vous tout enueloppé et empacqueté?

Il ne nous faict montre que des parties, qui ne sont aucunement siennes: et nous cache celles, par lesquelles seules on peut vrayement iuger de son estimation. C'est le prix de l'espée que vous cerchez, non de la guaine: vous n'en donnerez à l'aduenture pas vn quatrain, si vous l'auez despouillée. Il le faut iuger par luy mesme, non par ses atours. Et comme dit tres-plaisamment vn ancien: Sçauez vous pourquoy vous l'estimez grand? vous y comptez la hauteur de ses patins. La base n'est pas de la statue. Mesurez le sans ses eschaces. Qu'il mette à part ses richesses et honneurs, qu'il se presente en chemise. A il le corps propre à ses functions, sain et allegre? Quelle ame a il?

Est elle belle, capable, et heureusement pourueue de toutes ses pieces? Est elle riche du sien, ou de l'autruy? La fortune n'y a elle que voir? Si les yeux ouuerts elle attend les espées traites: s'il ne luy chaut par où luy sorte la vie, par la bouche, ou par le gosier: si elle est rassise, equable et contente: c'est ce qu'il faut veoir, et iuger par là les extremes differences qui sont entre nous.

Est-il *sapiens, sibique imperiosus;*
Quem neque pauperies, neque mors, neque vincula terrent;
Responsare cupidinibus, contemnere honores
Fortis; et in seipso totus teres atque rotundus,
Externi ne quid valeat per læue morari,
In quem manca ruit semper fortuna? Vn tel homme est cinq cens brasses au dessus des Royaumes et des Duchez: il est luy mesmes à soy son empire. *Sapiens, pol! ipse fingit fortunam sibi.* Que luy reste il à desirer?

Nónne videmus,
Nil aliud sibi naturam latrare, nisi vt quoi
Corpore seiunctus dolor absit, mente fruatur
Iucundo sensu, cura semotus metúque? Comparez luy la tourbe de nos hommes, stupide, basse, seruile, instable, et continuellement flotante en l'orage des passions

ENGLISH

tom of kings: when they buy horses, they inspect them
Covered, lest, if a handsome forequarter, as often,
Is propped on a weak hoof, it should take in the gaping buyer
Because the haunches are fine, the head small, the neck high. Why, when you value a man, do you value him all wrapped up and packaged?[3]

He shows us only the parts that are in no way his own, and hides from us those by which alone one can truly judge his worth. It is the value of the sword you are after, not of the scabbard; perhaps you would not give a penny for it once you had stripped it. He must be judged by himself, not by his finery. And as one of the ancients says very wittily: "Do you know why you think him tall? You are counting the height of his thick soles." The pedestal is no part of the statue. Measure him without his stilts. Let him put aside his riches and honors, and present himself in his shirt. Has he a body fit for its functions, healthy and lively? What kind of soul has he?

Is it beautiful, capable, and happily furnished with all its parts? Is it rich with its own goods or with others'? Has Fortune nothing to do with it? Does it await drawn swords with open eyes? Does it care nothing by what way its life goes out, by the mouth or by the throat? Is it settled, even and content? That is what we must see, and by that judge the extreme differences between us.

Is he *wise, and master of himself;*
Whom neither poverty nor death nor chains dismay;
Who is strong to defy his desires, to scorn honors,
And complete in himself, smooth and round,
So that nothing outside can cling to his polished surface;
Against whom Fortune always charges and falls lame? Such a man is five hundred fathoms above kingdoms and duchies: he is his own empire to himself. *The wise man, by Pollux, shapes his own fortune.* What is left for him to desire?[4]

Do we not see
That nature clamors for nothing but that pain
Be absent and kept from the body, and that the mind enjoy
A pleasant feeling, free from care and fear? Compare with him the rabble of our men, stupid, base,

3 The lines are from Horace, Satires.
4 The second Latin line is from Plautus, Trinummus.

FRENCH	ENGLISH
diuerses, qui la poussent et repoussent, pendant toute d'autruy: il y a plus d'esloignement que du ciel à la terre: et toutefois l'aueuglement de nostre vsage est tel, que nous en faisons peu ou point d'estat.	servile, unstable, and continually tossed on the storm of conflicting passions that drive them back and forth, wholly dependent on others: there is more distance than from heaven to earth. And yet the blindness of our custom is such that we take little or no account of it.[5]

KINGS ARE ONLY MEN

Royal pomp hides an ordinary man, subject to fever, fear and passion like anyone.

FRENCH	ENGLISH
1.42.3 Là où, si nous considerons vn paisan et vn Roy, vn noble et vn villain, vn magistrat et vn homme priué, vn riche et vn pauure, il se presente soudain à nos yeux vn' extreme disparité, qui ne sont differents par maniere de dire qu'en leurs chausses. En Thrace, le Roy estoit distingué de son peuple d'vne plaisante maniere, et bien r'encherie. Il auoit vne religion à part: vn Dieu tout à luy, qu'il n'appartenoit à ses subiects d'adorer: c'estoit Mercure. Et luy, dedaignoit les leurs, Mars, Bacchus, Diane. Ce ne sont pourtant que peintures, qui ne font aucune dissemblance essentielle.	Whereas if we consider a peasant and a king, a noble and a commoner, a magistrate and a private man, a rich man and a poor one, an extreme disparity at once presents itself to our eyes, though they differ, so to speak, only in their breeches. In Thrace the king was distinguished from his people in an amusing and very far-fetched way. He had a religion of his own, a god all to himself, whom his subjects had no right to worship: it was Mercury. And he disdained theirs: Mars, Bacchus, Diana. Yet these are only paintings, which make no essential difference.
Car comme les ioüeurs de comedie, vous les voyez sur l'eschaffaut faire vne mine de Duc et d'Empereur, mais tantost apres, les voyla deuenuz valets et crocheteurs miserables, qui est leur nayfue et originelle condition: aussi l'Empereur, duquel la pompe vous esblouit en public: *Scilicet et grandes viridi cum luce smaragdi* *Auro includuntur, teritúrque thalassina vestis* *Assiduè, et Veneris sudorem exercita potat,* voyez le derriere le rideau, ce n'est rien qu'vn homme commun, et à l'aduenture plus vil que le moindre de ses subiects.	Take actors in a comedy: you see them on the stage putting on the airs of a duke or an emperor, but a moment later there they are, turned back into wretched valets and porters, which is their natural and original condition. So too with the emperor whose pomp dazzles you in public, *Indeed, great emeralds with their green light* *Are set in gold for him, and he constantly wears* *The sea-green robe, which, much used, drinks up the sweat of Venus*: see him behind the curtain, and he is nothing but an ordinary man, perhaps more base than the least of his subjects.
Ille beatus introrsum est: istius bracteata felicitas est. La coüardise, l'irresolution, l'ambition, le despit et l'enuie l'agitent comme vn autre: *Non enim gazæ, neque consularis* *Summouet lictor miseros tumultus* *Mentis et curas laqueata circum* *Tecta volantes:* et le soing et la crainte le tiennent à la gorge au milieu de ses armées. *Re veráque metus hominum, curæque sequaces,* *Nec metuunt sonitus armorum, nec fera tela,* *Audactérque inter reges, rerúmque potentes* *Versantur, neque fulgorem reuerentur ab auro.* La fieubre, la migraine et la goutte l'espargnent elles non plus que	*That man is happy within; this one's happiness is gilt on the surface.* Cowardice, irresolution, ambition, spite and envy agitate him like anyone else: *For neither treasures nor the consul's* *Lictor can drive away the wretched tumults* *Of the mind, nor the cares that flit around* *Coffered ceilings*; and care and fear hold him by the throat in the midst of his armies. *And truly the fears of men and the cares that dog them* *Fear neither the clash of arms nor cruel weapons;* *They mingle boldly among kings and the masters of the world,*

5 The lines are from Lucretius, On the Nature of Things.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
	nous? Quand la vieillesse luy sera sur les espaules, les archers de sa garde l'en deschargeront ils?	*And stand in no awe of the glitter of gold.* Do fever, migraine and gout spare him any more than us? When old age is on his shoulders, will the archers of his guard relieve him of it?[6]
	Quand la frayeur de la mort le transira, se r'asseurera il par l'assistance des Gentils-hommes de sa chambre? Quand il sera en ialousie et caprice, nos bonnettades le remettront elles? Ce ciel de lict tout enflé d'or et de perles, n'a aucune vertu à rappaiser les tranchées d'vne verte colique. *Nec calidæ citius decedunt corpore febres,* *Textilibus si in picturis ostróque rubenti* *Iacteris, quàm si plebeia in veste cubandum est.* Les flateurs du grand Alexandre, luy faisoyent à croire qu'il estoit fils de Iupiter: vn iour estant blessé, regardant escouler le sang de sa playe: Et bien qu'en dites vous? fit-il: est-ce pas icy vn sang vermeil, et purement humain?	When the terror of death chills him through, will he be reassured by the attendance of the gentlemen of his chamber? When he is in a fit of jealousy and caprice, will our doffings of the cap set him right again? That bed canopy all puffed out with gold and pearls has no power to soothe the gripes of a violent colic. *Nor do hot fevers leave your body any sooner* *If you toss on embroidered tapestries and blushing purple* *Than if you must lie in a commoner's blanket.* The flatterers of Alexander the Great made him believe that he was the son of Jupiter. One day, being wounded and watching the blood flow from his wound, he said: "Well, what do you say now? Is this not red blood, and purely human?
	il n'est pas de la trampe de celuy que Homere fait escouler de la playe des Dieux. Hermodorus le poëte auoit fait des vers en l'honneur d'Antigonus, où il l'appelloit fils du Soleil: et luy au contraire: Celuy, dit-il, qui vuide ma chaize percée, sçait bien qu'il n'en est rien.	It is not of the same temper as the blood that Homer makes flow from the wounds of the gods." Hermodorus the poet had written verses in honor of Antigonus in which he called him son of the Sun; and Antigonus, on the contrary, said: "The man who empties my chamber pot knows very well that there is nothing in it."
1.42.4	C'est vn homme pour tous potages. Et si de soy-mesmes c'est vn homme mal né, l'empire de l'vniuers ne le sçauroit rabiller. *Puellæ* *Hunc rapiant; quicquid calcauerit hic, rosa fiat.* Quoy pour cela, si c'est vne ame grossiere et stupide? la volupté mesme et le bon heur, ne s'apperçoiuent point sans vigueur et sans esprit. *Hæc perinde sunt, vt illius animus, qui ea possidet,* *Qui vti scit, ei bona; illi qui non vtitur rectè, mala.* Les biens de la fortune tous tels qu'ils sont, encores faut il auoir le sentiment propre à les sauourer. C'est le iouïr, non le posseder, qui nous rend heureux.	He is a man, and that is all. And if he is ill-born in himself, the empire of the universe could not mend him. *Let the girls* *Fight over him; wherever he treads, let roses spring.* So what, if his is a coarse and stupid soul? Even pleasure and happiness are not perceived without vigor and intelligence. *These things are as the mind of their possessor:* *Good to him who knows how to use them, bad to him who does not use them rightly.* The goods of fortune, such as they are, still require a sense fit to savor them. It is enjoying, not possessing, that makes us happy.[7]
	Non domus et fundus, non æris aceruus et auri, *Ægroto domini deduxit corpore febres,* *Non animo curas; valeat possessor oportet,* *Qui comportatis rebus benè cogitat vti.* *Qui cupit, aut metuit, iuuat illum sic domus aut res,* *Vt lippum pictæ tabulæ, fomenta podagram.* Il est vn sot, son	*Neither house nor estate, nor heaps of bronze and gold,* *Have ever driven the fevers from their owner's sick body,* *Or the cares from his mind; the owner must be healthy* *If he means to make good use of the things he has*

6 The first Latin sentence is from Seneca, Letters to Lucilius.
7 The first lines are from Persius, Satires.

FRENCH

goust est mousse et hebeté; il n'en iouït non plus qu'vn morfondu de la douceur du vin Grec, ou qu'vn cheual de la richesse du harnois, duquel on l'a paré. Tout ainsi comme Platon dit, que la santé, la beauté, la force, les richesses, et tout ce qui s'appelle bien, est egalement mal à l'iniuste, comme bien au iuste, et le mal au rebours.

Et puis, où le corps et l'ame sont en mauuais estat, à quoy faire ces commoditez externes? veu que la moindre picqueure d'espingle, et passion de l'ame, est suffisante à nous oster le plaisir de la monarchie du monde. A la premiere strette que luy donne la goutte, il a beau estre Sire et Majesté, *Totus et argento conflatus, totus et auro,* perd il pas le souuenir de ses palais et de ses grandeurs? S'il est en colere, sa principauté le garde elle de rougir, de paslir, de grincer les dents comme vn fol?

1.42.5 Or si c'est vn habile homme et bien né, la royauté adiouste peu à son bon heur: *Si ventri bene, si lateri est, pedibúsque tuis, nil / Diuitiæ poterunt regales addere maius:* il voit que ce n'est que biffe et piperie. Oui à l'aduenture il sera de l'aduis du Roy Seleucus, Que qui sçauroit le poix d'vn sceptre, ne daigneroit l'amasser quand il le trouueroit à terre: il le disoit pour les grandes et penibles charges, qui touchent vn bon Roy. Certes ce n'est pas peu de chose que d'auoir à regler autruy, puis qu'à regler nous mesmes, il se presente tant de difficultez.

Quant au commander, qui semble estre si doux; considerant l'imbecillité du iugement humain, et la difficulté du chois és choses nouuelles et doubteuses, ie suis fort de cet aduis, qu'il est bien plus aisé et plus plaisant de suiure, que de guider: et que c'est vn grand seiour d'esprit de n'auoir à tenir qu'vne voye tracée, et à respondre que de soy: *Vt satiùs multo iam sit, parere quietum, / Quàm regere imperio res velle.* Ioint que Cyrus disoit, qu'il n'appartenoit de commander à homme, qui ne vaille mieux que ceux à qui il commande.

ENGLISH

gathered.
The man who desires or fears enjoys his house or wealth
As a man with sore eyes enjoys paintings, or a gouty man warm compresses. He is a fool; his taste is dull and blunted; he enjoys it no more than a man with a head cold enjoys the sweetness of Greek wine, or a horse the richness of the harness it has been decked with. Just as Plato says that health, beauty, strength, riches and everything called good are as much evil to the unjust as good to the just, and evil the other way about.

And then, where body and soul are in a bad state, what good are these external comforts? For the slightest pinprick, or passion of the soul, is enough to take from us the pleasure of being monarch of the world. At the first twinge the gout gives him, it is no use his being Sire and Majesty, *All cast in silver, all in gold*: does he not lose the memory of his palaces and his grandeur? If he is angry, does his princely rank keep him from turning red, turning pale, gnashing his teeth like a fool?[8]

Now if he is a capable and well-born man, royalty adds little to his happiness: *If your belly, your sides and your feet are well, / A king's riches can add nothing greater.* He sees that it is nothing but sham and trickery. Yes, perhaps he will share the opinion of King Seleucus, that whoever knew the weight of a scepter would not deign to pick it up if he found it lying on the ground; he said this because of the great and painful responsibilities that fall on a good king. Indeed, it is no small thing to have to govern others, since in governing ourselves so many difficulties present themselves.

As for commanding, which seems so sweet: considering the weakness of human judgment and the difficulty of choosing in new and doubtful matters, I am strongly of the opinion that it is much easier and more pleasant to follow than to lead, and that it is a great rest for the mind to have only a marked-out path to keep to, and to answer only for oneself. *So that it is far better to obey in peace / Than to wish to rule the state with sovereign power.* Besides, Cyrus said that no man was fit to command who is not worth more than those he commands.

8 The Latin line is from Tibullus, Elegies.

THE BURDENS OF KINGSHIP

Following Xenophon's Hiero, princes are shown losing pleasure, freedom and true friendship.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
1.42.6	Mais le Roy Hieron en Xenophon dict d'auantage, qu'à la iouyssance des voluptez mesmes, ils sont de pire condition que les priuez: d'autant que l'aysance et la facilité, leur oste l'aigredouce pointe que nous y trouuons. *Pinguis amor nimiùmque potens, in tædia nobis / Vertitur, et, stomacho dulcis vt esca, nocet.* Pensons nous que les enfans de cœur prennent grand plaisir à la musique? La sacieté la leur rend plustost ennuyeuse. Les festins, les danses, les masquarades, les tournois reiouyssent ceux qui ne les voyent pas souuent, et qui ont desiré de les voir: mais à qui en faict ordinaire, le goust en deuient fade et mal plaisant: ny les dames ne chatouillent celuy qui en iouyt à cœur saoul.	But King Hiero, in Xenophon, says further that even in the enjoyment of pleasures, kings are worse off than private persons, since ease and facility take from them the bittersweet sting that we find in them. *Love that is too rich and too powerful turns to tedium for us, / And harms us, as sweet food harms the stomach.* Do we think choirboys take great pleasure in music? Satiety rather makes it tiresome to them. Feasts, dances, masquerades and tournaments delight those who do not see them often and have longed to see them; but for the man who makes them his daily fare, the taste becomes flat and unpleasant. Nor do women excite the man who enjoys them to his heart's content.[9]
	Qui ne se donne loisir d'auoir soif, ne sçauroit prendre plaisir à boire. Les farces des bateleurs nous resiouissent, mais aux ioüeurs elles seruent de coruée. Et qu'il soit ainsi, ce sont delices aux Princes, c'est leur feste, de se pouuoir quelque fois trauestir, et démettre à la façon de viure basse et populaire. *Plerumque gratæ principibus vices,* *Mundæque paruo sub lare pauperum* *Cœnæ, sine aulæis et ostro,* *Solicitam explicuere frontem.* Il n'est rien si empeschant, si desgouté que l'abondance. Quel appetit ne se rebuteroit, à veoir trois cents femmes à sa merci, comme les a le grand Seigneur en son serrail?	He who does not give himself time to be thirsty can take no pleasure in drinking. The farces of the mountebanks delight us, but for the players they are drudgery. And to show that this is so: it is a delight to princes, a holiday for them, to be able sometimes to disguise themselves and come down to the low, common way of living. *Often a change is welcome to the great,* *And a neat meal beneath the humble roof of the poor,* *Without hangings and purple,* *Has smoothed the anxious brow.* Nothing is so cumbersome, so cloying as abundance. What appetite would not be put off at seeing three hundred women at its mercy, as the Sultan has them in his seraglio?
	Et quel appetit et visage de chasse, s'estoit reserué celuy de ses ancestres, qui n'alloit iamais aux champs, à moins de sept mille fauconniers?	And what appetite and taste for hunting could that ancestor of his have kept for himself, who never went out into the field with fewer than seven thousand falconers?
1.42.7	Et outre cela, ie croy, que ce lustre de grandeur, apporte non legeres incommoditez à la iouyssance des plaisirs plus doux: ils sont trop esclairez et trop en butte. Et ie ne sçay comment on requiert plus d'eux de cacher et couurir leur faute. Car ce qui est à nous indiscretion, à eux le peuple iuge que ce soit tyrannie, mespris, et desdain des loix. Et outre l'inclination au vice, il semble qu'ils y adioustent encore le plaisir de gourmander, et	And besides that, I believe that this luster of greatness brings no slight inconveniences to the enjoyment of the gentler pleasures: princes are too brightly lit and too exposed. And somehow more is demanded of them in hiding and covering their faults. For what in us is indiscretion, in them the people judge to be tyranny, contempt and disdain

9 Xenophon's dialogue Hiero portrays the tyrant of Syracuse discussing the unhappiness of rulers. The Latin lines are from Ovid, Amores.

FRENCH

sousmettre à leurs pieds les obseruances publiques. De vray Platon en son Gorgias, definit tyran celuy qui a licence en vne cité d'y faire tout ce qui luy plaist.

Et souuent à cette cause, la montre et publication de leur vice, blesse plus que le vice mesme. Chacun craint à estre espié et contrerollé: ils le sont iusques à leurs contenances et à leurs pensees; tout le peuple estimant auoir droict et interest d'en iuger. Outre ce que les taches s'agrandissent selon l'eminence et clarté du lieu, où elles sont assises: et qu'vn seing et vne verrue au front, paroissent plus que ne faict ailleurs vne balafre. Voyla pourquoy les poëtes feignent les amours de Iupiter conduites soubs autre visage que le sien: et de tant de practiques amoureuses qu'ils luy attribuent, il n'en est qu'vne seule, ce me semble, où il se trouue en sa grandeur et Maiesté.

1.42.8 Mais reuenons à Hieron: il recite aussi combien il sent d'incommoditez en sa royauté, pour ne pouuoir aller et voyager en liberté, estant comme prisonnier dans les limites de son païs: et qu'en toutes ses actions il se trouue enueloppé d'vne facheuse presse. De vray, à voir les nostres tous seuls à table, assiegez de tant de parleurs et regardans inconnuz, i'en ay eu souuent plus de piété que d'enuie. Le Roy Alphonse disoit que les asnes estoyent en cela de meilleure condition que les Roys: leurs maistres les laissent paistre à leur aise, là où les Roys ne peuuent pas obtenir cela de leurs seruiteurs.

Et ne m'est iamais tombé en fantasie, que ce fust quelque notable commodité à la vie d'vn homme d'entendement, d'auoir vne vingtaine de contrerolleurs à sa chaise percée: ny que les seruices d'vn homme qui a dix mille liures de rente, ou qui a pris Casal, ou defendu Siene, luy soyent plus commodes et acceptables, que d'vn bon valet et bien experimenté. Les auantages principesques sont quasi auantages imaginaires. Chaque degré de fortune a quelque image de principauté. Cæsar appelle Roytelets, tous les Seigneurs ayans iustice en France de son temps.

ENGLISH

for the laws. And besides the inclination to vice, it seems that they add to it the pleasure of bullying public observances and trampling them underfoot. Indeed Plato, in his Gorgias, defines a tyrant as one who has license in a city to do whatever he pleases there.

And for this reason the display and publication of their vice often wounds more than the vice itself. Everyone dreads being spied on and watched. Princes are watched down to their expressions and their thoughts, since the whole people believe they have the right to judge them and a stake in doing so. Besides, stains grow larger according to the eminence and brightness of the place where they sit, and a mole or a wart on the forehead shows more than a gash does elsewhere. That is why the poets imagine Jupiter's love affairs carried on under some face other than his own; and of all the amorous intrigues they attribute to him, there is only one, it seems to me, in which he appears in his own greatness and majesty.

But let us return to Hiero. He also relates how many inconveniences he suffers in his kingship from being unable to go about and travel freely, being like a prisoner within the borders of his country, and how in all his actions he finds himself hemmed in by an irksome crowd. Indeed, when I have seen our own kings sitting alone at table, besieged by so many strangers talking and staring, I have often felt more pity for them than envy. King Alfonso used to say that in this respect donkeys were better off than kings: their masters let them graze at their ease, whereas kings cannot get that much from their servants.

And it has never entered my head that it was any notable advantage, in the life of a man of understanding, to have a score of supervisors at his close-stool. Nor that the services of a man with an income of ten thousand livres, or one who has taken Casale or defended Siena, are more convenient and acceptable to him than those of a good, well-practiced valet. Princely advantages are almost imaginary advantages. Each degree of fortune has some image of sovereignty in it. Caesar calls all the lords who held rights of justice in France in his day petty kings.[10]

10 Casale was taken from the Spanish by the Maréchal de Brissac in 1555; Siena was defended against the Imperial forces by Blaise de Monluc in 1554–1555.

FRENCH

ENGLISH

1.42.9 De vray, sauf le nom de Sire, on va bien auant auec nos Roys. Et voyez aux Prouinces esloingnées de la Cour, nommons Bretaigne pour exemple, le train, les subiects, les officiers, les occupations, le seruice et cerimonie d'vn Seigneur retiré et casanier, nourry entre ses valets; et voyez aussi le vol de son imagination, il n'est rien plus royal: il oyt parler de son maistre vne fois l'an, comme du Roy de Perse: et ne le recognoit, que par quelque vieux cousinage, que son secretaire tient en registre. A la verité nos loix sont libres assez; et le pois de la souueraineté ne touche vn Gentil-homme François, à peine deux fois en sa vie.

Truly, apart from the title of "Sire," people go a long way toward matching our kings. Look at the provinces far from the court—let us take Brittany as an example. Look at the retinue, the subjects, the officers, the occupations, the service and ceremony of a retired, stay-at-home lord, brought up among his servants; and look too at the flight of his imagination: there is nothing more royal. He hears his master spoken of once a year, as if he were the King of Persia, and acknowledges him only through some old kinship that his secretary keeps on record. In truth our laws are free enough, and the weight of sovereignty touches a French gentleman barely twice in his life.

La subiection essentielle et effectuelle, ne regarde d'entre nous, que ceux qui s'y conuient, et qui ayment à s'honnorer et enrichir par tel seruice: car qui se veut tapir en son foyer, et sçait conduire sa maison sans querelle, et sans procés, il est aussi libre que le Duc de Venise. *Paucos seruitus, plures seruitutem tenent.*

Essential and effective subjection concerns only those among us who invite themselves to it and like to gain honor and wealth by such service. For a man who is willing to stay tucked away by his own hearth, and knows how to run his household without quarrels and without lawsuits, is as free as the Doge of Venice. *Slavery holds few men; more men hold fast to slavery.*[11]

1.42.10 Mais sur tout Hieron faict cas, dequoy il se voit priué de toute amitié et societé mutuelle: en laquelle consiste le plus parfait et doux fruict de la vie humaine. Car quel tesmoignage d'affection et de bonne volonté, puis-ie tirer de celuy, qui me doit, vueille il ou non, tout ce qu'il peut? Puis-ie faire estat de son humble parler et courtoise reuerence, veu qu'il n'est pas en luy de me la refuser? L'honneur que nous receuons de ceux qui nous craignent, ce n'est pas honneur: ces respects se doiuent à la Royauté, non à moy.

But above all Hiero makes much of the fact that he finds himself deprived of all friendship and mutual fellowship, in which lies the most perfect and sweetest fruit of human life. For what testimony of affection and goodwill can I draw from a man who owes me, whether he likes it or not, everything in his power? Can I set any store by his humble speech and courteous reverence, when it is not in him to refuse them to me? The honor we receive from those who fear us is not honor: these respects are due to royalty, not to me.

Maximum hoc regni bonum est,
Quod facta domini cogitur populus sui
Quâm ferre, tam laudare. Vois-ie pas que le meschant, le bon Roy, celuy qu'on haït, celuy qu'on ayme, autant en a l'vn que l'autre: de mesmes apparences, de mesme ceremonie, estoit seruy mon predecesseur, et le sera mon successeur. Si mes subiects ne m'offencent pas, ce n'est tesmoignage d'aucune bonne affection: pourquoy le prendray-ie en cette part-là, puis qu'ils ne pourroient quand ils voudroient? Nul ne me suit pour l'amitié, qui soit entre luy et moy: car il ne s'y sçauroit coudre amitié, où il y a si peu de relation et de correspondance. Ma

This is the greatest boon of kingship,
that the people are forced to praise their master's deeds as much as to bear them. Do I not see that the wicked king and the good one, the hated and the loved, get as much of it, the one as the other? My predecessor was served with the same outward show and the same ceremony, and so my successor will be. If my subjects do not offend me, that is no evidence of any good affection: why should I take it that way, since they could not if they would? No one follows me for any friendship between him and me, for no friendship can be stitched together where there is so little relation

11 Seneca, Letters, 22.

FRENCH

hauteur m'a mis hors du commerce des hommes: il y a trop de disparité et de disproportion.

Ils me suiuent par contenance et par coustume, ou plus tost que moy ma fortune, pour en accroistre la leur. Tout ce qu'ils me dient, et font, ce n'est que fard, leur liberté estant bridée de toutes parts par la grande puissance que i'ay sur eux: ie ne voy rien autour de moy que couuert et masqué. Ses courtisans loüoient vn iour Iulian l'Empereur de faire bonne iustice: Ie m'enorgueillirois volontiers, dit-il, de ces loüanges, si elles venoient de personnes, qui ozassent accuser ou mesloüer mes actions contraires, quand elles y seroient.

1.42.11 Toutes les vraies commoditez qu'ont les Princes, leurs sont communes auec les hommes de moyenne fortune. C'est à faire aux Dieux, de monter des cheuaux aislez, et se paistre d'Ambrosie: ils n'ont point d'autre sommeil et d'autre appetit que le nostre: leur acier n'est pas de meilleure trempe, que celuy dequoy nous nous armons; leur couronne ne les couure ny du soleil, ny de la pluie.

Diocletian qui en portoit vne si reuerée et si fortunée, la resigna pour se retirer au plaisir d'vne vie priuée: et quelque temps apres, la necessité des affaires publiques, requerant qu'il reuinst à prendre la charge, il respondit à ceux qui l'en prioient: Vous n'entreprendriez pas de me persuader cela, si vous auiez veu le bel ordre des arbres, que i'ay moymesme planté chez moy, et les beaux melons que i'y ay semez.

1.42.12 A l'aduis d'Anacharsis le plus heureux estat d'vne police, seroit où toutes autres choses estants esgales, la precedence se mesureroit à la vertu, et le rebut au vice.

1.42.13 Quand le Roy Pyrrhus entreprenoit de passer en Italie, Cyneas son sage conseiller luy voulant faire sentir la vanité de son ambition: Et bien Sire, luy demanda-il, à quelle fin dressez vous cette grande entreprinse? Pour me faire maistre de l'Italie, respondit-il soudain: Et puis, suyuit Cyneas, cela faict? Ie passeray, dit l'autre, en Gaule et en Espaigne: Et apres? Ie m'en iray subiuguer l'Afrique, et en fin, quand i'auray mis le monde en ma subiection, ie me reposeray et viuray content et à mon aise. Pour Dieu, Sire, rechargea lors Cyneas, dictes moy, à quoy il tient

ENGLISH

and correspondence. My height has put me outside the company of men: there is too much disparity and disproportion.[12]

They follow me for form's sake and out of custom —or rather they follow not me but my fortune, to increase their own. Everything they say and do to me is mere paint, their freedom being bridled on every side by the great power I have over them. I see nothing around me but what is covered and masked. His courtiers were one day praising the Emperor Julian for dispensing good justice. "I would gladly be proud of these praises," he said, "if they came from people who would dare to accuse or blame my actions when they went the other way."

All the real advantages that princes have, they share with men of middling fortune. It is for the gods to ride winged horses and feed on ambrosia. Princes have no other sleep and no other appetite than ours; their steel is of no better temper than the steel we arm ourselves with; their crown shelters them neither from the sun nor from the rain.

Diocletian, who wore one so revered and so fortunate, resigned it to retire to the pleasure of a private life. Some time later, when the necessity of public affairs required him to come back and take up the charge again, he answered those who begged him to: "You would not undertake to persuade me of this if you had seen the fine rows of trees I have planted with my own hands at home, and the fine melons I have sown there."

In the opinion of Anacharsis, the happiest state of a government would be one where, all other things being equal, precedence would be measured by virtue and rejection by vice.[13]

When King Pyrrhus was undertaking to cross into Italy, Cineas, his wise counselor, wishing to make him feel the vanity of his ambition, asked him: "Well, Sire, to what end are you setting up this great enterprise?" "To make myself master of Italy," he answered at once. "And then," Cineas went on, "once that is done?" "I shall cross into Gaul and Spain," said the other. "And after that?" "I shall go and subjugate Africa; and finally, when I

12 Seneca, Thyestes.
13 Anacharsis was a Scythian prince of the 6th century BC, counted among the sages of Greece.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
	que vous ne soyez des à present, si vous voulez, en cet estat?	have brought the world under my subjection, I shall rest and live content and at my ease." "For God's sake, Sire," Cineas then pressed him, "tell me what keeps you from being in that state right now, if you wish?
	Pourquoy ne vous logez vous des cette heure, où vous dites aspirer, et vous espargnez tant de trauail et de hazard, que vous iettez entre deux? *Nimirum quia non bene norat quæ esset habendi / Finis, et omnino quoad crescat vera voluptas.*	Why not settle at once where you say you aspire to be, and spare yourself all the toil and hazard that you put in between?" *No doubt because he did not well know what the limit of possessing is, / and how far true pleasure can grow at all.*[14]
1.42.14	Ie m'en vais clorre ce pas par vn verset ancien, que ie trouue singulierement beau à ce propos: *Mores cuique sui fingunt fortunam.*	I am going to close this passage with an ancient line that I find singularly fine on this point: *Each man's character shapes his fortune.*[15]

14 Lucretius, On the Nature of Things, V.
15 The line is quoted by Cornelius Nepos in his Life of Atticus.

I.43 Of Sumptuary Laws

Des lois somptuaires

Laws restricting luxury to princes only make it more desirable; kings could end extravagance by giving it up themselves.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
1.43.1	LA façon dequoy nos loix essayent à regler les foles et vaines despences des tables, et vestemens, semble estre contraire à sa fin. Le vray moyen, ce seroit d'engendrer aux hommes le mespris de l'or et de la soye, comme de choses vaines et inutiles: et nous leur augmentons l'honneur et le prix, qui est vne bien inepte façon pour en dégouster les hommes. Car dire ainsi, Qu'il n'y aura que les Princes qui mangent du turbot, qui puissent porter du velours et de la tresse d'or, et l'interdire au peuple, qu'est-ce autre chose que mettre en credit ces choses là, et faire croistre l'enuie à chacun d'en vser?	The way in which our laws try to regulate foolish and vain spending on tables and clothes seems contrary to its own end. The true method would be to breed in men a contempt for gold and silk as vain and useless things; instead we increase their honor and value, which is a very inept way of giving men a distaste for them. For to say that only princes may eat turbot, and only they may wear velvet and gold braid, and to forbid these to the people—what is that but to bring such things into esteem and make everyone's desire to use them grow?
	Que les Roys quittent hardiment ces marques de grandeur, ils en ont assez d'autres; tels excez sont plus excusables à tout autre qu'à vn Prince. Par l'exemple de plusieurs nations, nous pouuons apprendre assez de meilleures façons de nous distinguer exterieurement, et nos degrez (ce que i'estime à la verité, estre bien requis en vn Estat) sans nourrir pour cet effect, cette corruption et incommodité si apparente.	Let kings boldly give up these marks of greatness; they have enough others. Such excesses are more excusable in anyone than in a prince. From the example of many nations we can learn plenty of better ways to distinguish ourselves and our ranks outwardly (which I truly consider very necessary in a state), without fostering for that purpose this corruption and this so evident harm.
1.43.2	C'est merueille comme la coustume en ces choses indifferentes plante aisément et soudain le pied de son authorité. A peine fusmes nous vn an, pour le dueil du Roy Henry second, à porter du drap à la Cour, il est certain que desia à l'opinion d'vn chacun, les soyes estoient venuës à telle vilité, que si vous en voyiez quelqu'vn vestu, vous en faisiez incontinent quelque homme de ville. Elles estoient demeurées en partage aux medecins et aux chirurgiens: et quoy qu'vn chacun fust à peu pres vestu de mesme, si y auoit-il d'ailleurs assez de distinctions apparentes, des qualitez des hommes.	It is a wonder how easily and how suddenly custom plants the foot of its authority in these indifferent matters. We had scarcely spent a year wearing woolen cloth at court in mourning for King Henry II when, certainly, silks had already sunk so low in everyone's opinion that if you saw someone dressed in them you immediately took him for some townsman. They had been left as the portion of physicians and surgeons; and although everyone was dressed in much the same way, there were still enough other visible marks distinguishing people's ranks.[1]
	Combien soudainement viennent en honneur parmy nos armées, les pourpoins crasseux de chamois et de toille; et la pollisseure et richesse des vestements à reproche et à mespris? Que les Roys commencent à quitter ces	How suddenly, in our armies, do greasy doublets of chamois leather and canvas come into honor, and polish and richness of dress into reproach and contempt! Let kings begin to give up these ex-

1 Henry II died in 1559 of a wound received in a tournament.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
	despences, ce sera faict en vn mois sans edict, et sans ordonnance; nous irons tous apres. La loy deuroit dire au rebours, Que le cramoisy et l'orfeuerie est defenduë à toute espece de gens, sauf aux basteleurs et aux courtisanes.	penses, and it will be done within a month, without edict or ordinance: we will all follow. The law ought to say the opposite: that crimson and goldsmith's work are forbidden to every sort of person except tumblers and courtesans.
1.43.3	De pareille inuention corrigea Zeleucus, les meurs corrompuës des Locriens. Ses ordonnances estoient telles: Que la femme de condition libre, ne puisse mener apres elle plus d'vne chambriere, sinon lors qu'elle sera yure: ny ne puisse sortir hors la ville de nuict, ny porter ioyaux d'or à l'entour de sa personne, ny robbe enrichie de broderie, si elle n'est publique et putain: que sauf les ruffiens, à homme ne loise porter en son doigt anneau d'or, ny robbe delicate, comme sont celles des draps tissus en la ville de Milet. Et ainsi par ces exceptions honteuses, il diuertissoit ingenieusement ses citoyens des superfluitez et delices pernicieuses. C'estoit vne tres-vtile maniere d'attirer par honneur et ambition, les hommes à leur deuoir et à l'obeissance.	With a similar device Zaleucus corrected the corrupt morals of the Locrians. His ordinances were these: that a freeborn woman might not take more than one maid along with her, unless she was drunk; nor go out of the city at night, nor wear gold jewelry on her person, nor a gown enriched with embroidery, unless she was a public woman and a prostitute; that, except for pimps, no man might wear a gold ring on his finger, nor a delicate gown such as those made of cloth woven in the city of Miletus. And so by these shameful exceptions he ingeniously turned his citizens away from superfluities and pernicious luxuries. It was a very useful way of drawing men to their duty and to obedience through honor and ambition.[2]
1.43.4	Nos Roys peuuent tout en telles reformations externes: leur inclination y sert de loy. *Quicquid principes faciunt, præcipere videntur.* Le reste de la France prend pour regle la regle de la Cour. Qu'ils se desplaisent de cette vilaine chaussure, qui montre si à descouuert nos membres occultes: ce lourd grossissement de pourpoins, qui nous faict tous autres que nous ne sommes, si incommode à s'armer: ces longues tresses de poil effeminees: cet vsage de baiser ce que nous presentons à nos compaignons, et nos mains en les saluant: ceremonie deuë autresfois aux seuls Princes:	Our kings can do anything in such outward reforms: their inclination serves as law. *Whatever princes do, they seem to command.* The rest of France takes the court's rule as its rule. Let them take a dislike to this ugly hose that displays our hidden parts so openly; this heavy padding of doublets that makes us all quite other than we are, and is so awkward when putting on armor; these long, foppish locks of hair; this practice of kissing what we hand to our companions, and our own hands when we greet them, a ceremony once due to princes alone;[3]
	et qu'vn Gentil-homme se trouue en lieu de respect, sans espée à son costé, tout esbraillé, et destaché, comme s'il venoit de la garde-robbe: et que contre la forme de nos peres, et la particuliere liberté de la Noblesse de ce Royaume, nous nous tenons descouuerts bien loing autour d'eux, en quelque lieu qu'ils soyent: et comme autour d'eux, autour de cent autres; tant nous auons de tiercelets et quartelets de Roys: et ainsi d'autres pareilles introductions nouuelles et vitieuses: elles se verront incontinent esuanouyes et descriées.	and the fact that a gentleman will appear in a place calling for respect without a sword at his side, all unbuttoned and untrussed, as if he had just come from the privy; and that, contrary to the custom of our fathers and the particular freedom of the nobility of this kingdom, we stand bareheaded at a great distance around them, wherever they are—and as around them, so around a hundred others, so many thirds and quarters of kings we have; and other such new and corrupt innovations: they will at once be seen to vanish and fall into discredit.
	Ce sont erreurs superficielles, mais pourtant de mauuais prognostique: et sommes aduertis que le massif se	These are superficial errors, but of bad omen all the same; and we are warned that the solid ma-

2 Zaleucus was the lawgiver of Locri, a Greek city in southern Italy, in the 7th century BC.

FRENCH

desment, quand nous voyons fendiller l'enduict, et la crouste de nos parois.

1.43.5 Platon en ses loix, n'estime peste au monde plus dommageable à sa cité, que de laisser prendre liberté à la ieunesse, de changer en accoustrements, en gestes, en danses, en exercices et en chansons, d'vne forme à vne autre: remuant son iugement, tantost en cette assiette, tantost en cette la: courant apres les nouuelletez, honorant leurs inuenteurs: par où les mœurs se corrompent, et les anciennes institutions, viennent à desdein et à mesprix. En toutes choses, sauf simplement aux mauuaises, la mutation est à craindre: la mutation des saisons, des vents, des viures, des humeurs.

Et nulles loix ne sont en leur vray credit, que celles ausquelles Dieu a donné quelque ancienne durée: de mode, que personne ne sçache leur naissance, ny qu'elles ayent iamais esté autres.

ENGLISH

sonry is giving way when we see the plaster and the outer crust of our walls cracking.

Plato, in his Laws, considers no plague in the world more harmful to his city than allowing the young the freedom to change from one form to another in dress, gestures, dances, exercises and songs: shifting their judgment now to this position, now to that, running after novelties and honoring their inventors. By this, morals are corrupted, and ancient institutions fall into disdain and contempt. In all things except simply bad ones, change is to be feared: change of seasons, of winds, of diet, of humors.

And no laws are held in true esteem except those to which God has granted some ancient duration, so that no one knows their birth, or that they were ever otherwise.

3 Quintilian, Declamations, 3.

I.44 Of Sleep

Du dormir

Great men like Alexander, Otho, and Cato slept soundly before battle or death, showing remarkable composure.

FRENCH

ENGLISH

1.44.1 LA raison nous ordonne bien d'aller tousiours mesme chemin, mais non toutesfois mesme train. Et ores que le sage ne doiue donner aux passions humaines, de se fouruoyer de la droicte carriere, il peut bien sans interest de son deuoir, leur quitter aussi, d'en haster ou retarder son pas, et ne se planter comme vn colosse immobile et impassible. Quand la vertu mesme seroit incarnée, ie croy que le poux luy battroit plus fort allant à l'assaut, qu'allant disner: voire il est necessaire qu'elle s'eschauffe et s'esmeuue. A cette cause i'ay remarqué pour chose rare, de voir quelquefois les grands personnages, aux plus hautes entreprinses et importans affaires, se tenir si entiers en leur assiette, que de n'en accourcir pas seulement leur sommeil.

Reason does indeed bid us always go the same road, but not always at the same pace. And although the wise man must not allow human passions to make him stray from the right course, he may well, without prejudice to his duty, leave it to them to quicken or slow his step, and not plant himself like an immovable, impassive colossus. Were virtue itself incarnate, I believe its pulse would beat harder going into an assault than going in to dinner; indeed it must needs grow heated and stirred. For this reason I have noted it as a rare thing to see great men sometimes, in the loftiest undertakings and the most important affairs, stay so wholly composed that they do not even cut short their sleep.

1.44.2 Alexandre le grand, le iour assigné à cette furieuse bataille contre Darius, dormit si profondement, et si haute matinée, que Parmenion fut contraint d'entrer en sa chambre, et approchant de son lict, l'appeler deux ou trois fois par son nom, pour l'esueiller, le temps d'aller au combat le pressant. L'Empereur Othon ayant resolu de se tuer, cette mesme nuit, apres auoir mis ordre à ses affaires domestiques, partagé son argent à ses seruiteurs, et affilé le tranchant d'vne espée dequoy il se vouloit donner, n'attendant plus qu'à sçauoir si chacun de ses amis s'estoit retiré en seureté, se print si profondement à dormir, que ses valets de chambre l'entendoient ronfler.

Alexander the Great, on the day appointed for that furious battle against Darius, slept so soundly and so late into the morning that Parmenion was forced to enter his room and, going up to his bed, call him two or three times by name to wake him, since the time to go into battle was pressing. The Emperor Otho, having resolved to kill himself, that same night, after putting his domestic affairs in order, sharing out his money among his servants and sharpening the edge of a sword with which he meant to strike himself, and waiting only to learn whether each of his friends had withdrawn to safety, fell into so deep a sleep that his valets heard him snoring.

La mort de cet Empereur a beaucoup de choses pareilles à celle du grand Caton, et mesmes cecy: car Caton estant prest à se deffaire, cependant qu'il attendoit qu'on luy rapportast nouuelles si les Senateurs qu'il faisoit retirer, s'estoient eslargis du port d'Vtique, se mit si fort à dormir, qu'on l'oyoit souffler de la chambre voisine: et celuy qu'il auoit enuoyé vers le port, l'ayant esueillé, pour luy dire que la tourmente empeschoit les Senateurs de faire voile à leur aise, il y en renuoya encore vn autre,

The death of this emperor has many things in common with that of the great Cato, including this one. For Cato, being ready to do away with himself, while he was waiting to be told whether the senators he was sending away had put out from the port of Utica, fell so soundly asleep that he could be heard breathing from the next room. And when the man he had sent to the port woke him to tell him that the storm was keeping the senators

FRENCH

et se r'enfonçant dans le lict, se remit encore à sommeiller, iusques à ce que ce dernier l'asseura de leur partement.

Encore auons nous dequoy le comparer au faict d'Alexandre, en ce grand et dangereux orage, qui le menassoit, par la sedition du Tribun Metellus, voulant publier le decret du rappel de Pompeius dans la ville auecques son armée, lors de l'émotion de Catilina: auquel decret Caton seul insistoit, et en auoient eu Metellus et luy, de grosses paroles et grandes menasses au Senat: mais c'estoit au lendemain en la place, qu'il falloit venir à l'execution; où Metellus, outre la faueur du peuple et de Cæsar conspirant lors aux aduantages de Pompeius, se deuoit trouuer, accompagné de force esclaues estrangers, et escrimeurs à outrance, et Caton fortifié de sa seule constance:

de sorte que ses parens, ses domestiques, et beaucoup de gens de bien, en estoyent en grand soucy: et en y eut qui passerent la nuict ensemble, sans vouloir reposer, ny boire, ny manger, pour le danger qu'ils luy voyoient preparé: mesme sa femme, et ses sœurs ne faisoyent que pleurer et se tourmenter en sa maison: là où luy au contraire, reconfortoit tout le monde: et apres auoir souppé comme de coustume, s'en alla coucher et dormir de fort profond sommeil, iusques au matin, que l'vn de ses compagnons au Tribunat, le vint esueiller pour aller à l'escarmouche.

La connoissance, que nous auons de la grandeur de courage, de cet homme, par le reste de sa vie, nous peut faire iuger en toute seureté, que cecy luy partoit d'vne ame si loing esleuée au dessus de tels accidents, qu'il n'en daignoit entrer en ceruelle, non plus que d'accidens ordinaires.

1.44.3 En la bataille nauale qu'Augustus gaigna contre Sextus Pompeius en Sicile, sur le point d'aller au combat, il se trouua pressé d'vn si profond sommeil, qu'il fallut que ses amis l'esueillassent, pour donner le signe de la bataille. Cela donna occasion à M. Antonius de luy reprocher depuis, qu'il n'auoit pas eu le cœur, seulement de regarder les yeux ouuerts, l'ordonnance de son armée; et de n'auoir osé se presenter aux soldats, iusques à ce qu'Agrippa luy vint annoncer la nouuelle de la victoire, qu'il auoit eu sur ses ennemis.

Mais quant au ieune Marius, qui fit encore pis (car le iour de sa derniere iournée contre Sylla, apres auoir ordonné son armée, et donné le mot et signe de la bataille, il se coucha dessoubs vn arbre à l'ombre, pour se reposer, et

ENGLISH

from setting sail easily, he sent another, and, burying himself back in the bed, went off to sleep again until this last one assured him of their departure.

We can also compare him to Alexander's case in that great and dangerous storm that threatened him through the sedition of the tribune Metellus, who wanted to publish the decree recalling Pompey into the city with his army at the time of Catiline's uprising. Cato alone opposed this decree, and he and Metellus had exchanged hot words and great threats over it in the Senate. But it was the next day, in the Forum, that the thing had to be carried out. There Metellus, besides the favor of the people and of Caesar, who was then conspiring to Pompey's advantage, was to appear accompanied by a host of foreign slaves and gladiators, and Cato fortified by his constancy alone;

so that his relatives, his household and many good people were greatly worried, and some of them spent the night together without being willing to rest, or drink, or eat, because of the danger they saw prepared for him. Even his wife and his sisters did nothing but weep and torment themselves in his house. He, on the contrary, comforted everyone, and after supping as usual, went to bed and slept very soundly until morning, when one of his colleagues in the tribunate came to wake him to go to the skirmish.

What we know of this man's greatness of courage from the rest of his life allows us to judge with complete assurance that this came from a soul raised so far above such accidents that he did not deign to let them into his head any more than ordinary ones.

In the naval battle that Augustus won against Sextus Pompeius off Sicily, just as he was about to go into combat, he was overcome by so deep a sleep that his friends had to wake him to give the signal for battle. This later gave Mark Antony occasion to reproach him that he had not had the heart even to look with open eyes at the array of his forces, and that he had not dared to show himself to the soldiers until Agrippa came to announce the news of the victory he had won over the enemy.

But as for the young Marius, who did even worse (for on the day of his last battle against Sulla, after drawing up his army and giving the word and signal for battle, he lay down in the shade under a

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
	s'endormit si serré, qu'à peine se peut-il esueiller de la route et fuitte de ses gens, n'ayant rien veu du combat) ils disent que ce fut pour estre si extremement aggraué de trauail, et de faute de dormir, que nature n'en pouuoit plus.	tree to rest and fell so fast asleep that he could hardly be woken by the rout and flight of his men, having seen nothing of the fighting), they say it was because he was so utterly weighed down by toil and lack of sleep that nature could hold out no longer.
1.44.4	Et à ce propos les medecins aduiseront si le dormir est si necessaire, que nostre vie en dépende; car nous trouuons bien, qu'on fit mourir le Roy Perseus de Macedoine prisonnier à Rome, luy empeschant le sommeil, mais Pline en allegue, qui ont vescu long temps sans dormir. Chez Herodote, il y a des nations, ausquelles les hommes dorment et veillent par demy années. Et ceux qui escriuent la vie du sage Epimenides, disent qu'il dormit cinquante sept ans de suitte.	And on this subject, let the physicians consider whether sleep is so necessary that our life depends on it. For we do find that King Perseus of Macedon, a prisoner in Rome, was put to death by being prevented from sleeping; but Pliny cites people who lived a long time without sleep. In Herodotus there are nations whose men sleep and wake by half-years. And those who write the life of the wise Epimenides say that he slept for fifty-seven years at a stretch.[1]

1 Epimenides of Crete was a semi-legendary seer and poet of the 6th century BC.

I.45 Of the Battle of Dreux

De la battaille de Dreux

Montaigne defends the Duke of Guise's waiting at Dreux: a soldier must aim at the whole victory, not partial rescues.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
1.45.1	IL y eut tout plein de rares accidens en nostre battaille de Dreux: mais ceux qui ne fauorisent pas fort la reputation de M. de Guyse, mettent volontiers en auant, qu'il ne se peut excuser d'auoir faict alte, et temporisé auec les forces qu'il commandoit, cependant qu'on enfonçoit Monsieur le Connestable chef de l'armée, auecques l'artillerie: et qu'il valoit mieux se hazarder, prenant l'ennemy par flanc, qu'attendant l'aduantage de le voir en queuë, souffrir vne si lourde perte.	There were any number of remarkable incidents in our battle of Dreux. But those who are not very favorable to the reputation of Monsieur de Guise readily put it about that he cannot be excused for having halted and held back with the forces he commanded while the Constable, commander of the army, was being overwhelmed along with the artillery; and that it would have been better to take the risk of attacking the enemy in the flank than to suffer so heavy a loss while waiting for the advantage of having him in the rear.[1]
	Mais outre ce, que l'issuë en tesmoigna, qui en debattra sans passion, me confessera aisément, à mon aduis, que le but et la visée, non seulement d'vn Capitaine, mais de chasque soldat, doit regarder la victoire en gros; et que nulles occurrences particulieres, quelque interest qu'il y ayt, ne le doiuent diuertir de ce point là.	But besides what the outcome demonstrated, anyone who debates the matter without passion will readily admit to me, I think, that the aim and target not only of a captain but of every soldier must be the victory as a whole, and that no particular occurrences, however much may be at stake in them, should divert him from that point.
	Philopœmen en vne rencontre de Machanidas, ayant enuoyé deuant pour attaquer l'escarmouche, bonne trouppe d'archers et gens de traict: et l'ennemy apres les auoir renuersez, s'amusant à les poursuiure à toute bride, et coulant apres sa victoire le long de la battaille où estoit Philopœmen, quoy que ses soldats s'en esmeussent, il ne fut d'aduis de bouger de sa place, ny de se presenter à l'ennemy, pour secourir ses gens: ains les ayant laissé chasser et mettre en pieces à sa veue, commença la charge sur les ennemis au battaillon de leurs gens de pied, lorsqu'il les vid tout à fait abandonnez de leurs gens de cheual: et bien que ce fussent Lacedemoniens, d'autant qu'il les prit à l'heure, que pour tenir tout gaigné, ils commençoient à se desordonner, il en vint aisément à bout, et cela fait se mit à poursuiure Machanidas.	Philopoemen, in an encounter with Machanidas, had sent ahead a good troop of archers and javelin men to open the skirmish. The enemy, after overthrowing them, busied themselves pursuing them at full gallop, and swept on in their victory along the main body where Philopoemen was. Though his soldiers were stirred by this, he did not see fit to budge from his position or to show himself to the enemy to rescue his men. Instead, having let them be chased and cut to pieces before his eyes, he launched the charge on the enemy's battalion of foot when he saw them completely abandoned by their cavalry. And although they were Lacedaemonians, since he caught them at the moment when, thinking the day was won, they were beginning to break ranks, he easily got the better of them; and that done, he set off in pursuit of Machanidas.[2]

1 At Dreux (19 December 1562), in the first War of Religion, François de Guise turned the battle against the Protestants after the Constable Anne de Montmorency had been routed and captured.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
	Ce cas est germain à celuy de Monsieur de Guise.	This case is first cousin to that of Monsieur de Guise.
1.45.2	En cette aspre battaille d'Agesilaus contre les Bœotiens, que Xenophon qui y estoit, dit estre la plus rude qu'il eust oncques veu, Agesilaus refusa l'auantage que fortune luy presentoit, de laisser passer le bataillon des Bœotiens, et les charger en queuë, quelque certaine victoire qu'il en preuist, estimant qu'il y auoit plus d'art que de vaillance; et pour montrer sa prouësse d'vne merueilleuse ardeur de courage, choisit plustost de leur donner en teste:	In that bitter battle of Agesilaus against the Boeotians, which Xenophon, who was there, says was the hardest he had ever seen, Agesilaus refused the advantage that Fortune offered him of letting the Boeotian battalion pass and then charging them from the rear, however certain the victory he foresaw from it, judging that there was more skill than valor in that. And to show his prowess with a marvelous ardor of courage, he chose instead to strike them head-on.[3]
	mais aussi fut-il bien battu et blessé, et contraint en fin de se demesler, et prendre le party qu'il auoit refusé au commencement, faisant ouurir ses gens, pour donner passage à ce torrent de Bœotiens: puis quand ils furent passez, prenant garde qu'ils marcheoyent en desordre, comme ceux qui cuidoyent bien estre hors de tout danger, il les fit suiure, et charger par les flancs: mais pour cela ne les peut-il tourner en fuitte à val de route; ains se retirerent le petit pas, montrants tousiours les dents, iusques à ce qu'ils se furent rendus à sauueté.	But he was well beaten and wounded for it, and forced in the end to disengage and adopt the course he had refused at the start, opening his ranks to let this torrent of Boeotians through. Then, when they had passed, noticing that they were marching in disorder, like men who thought themselves well out of all danger, he had them followed and charged on the flanks. But even so he could not turn them into headlong flight; instead they withdrew at a slow pace, still showing their teeth, until they had reached safety.

2 Philopoemen defeated and killed Machanidas, tyrant of Sparta, at Mantinea in 207 BC.
3 The battle of Coronea, 394 BC.

I.46 Of Names

Des noms

A hodgepodge on names—unlucky names, families renamed for their lands, and how glory attaches to mere words.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
1.46.1	QVELQVE diuersité d'herbes qu'il y ait, tout s'enueloppe sous le nom de salade. De mesme, sous la consideration des noms, ie m'en voy faire icy vne galimafrée de diuers articles.	Whatever variety of herbs there may be, it all gets wrapped up under the name of salad. In the same way, under the heading of names, I am going to make a hodgepodge of various items here.
1.46.2	Chaque nation a quelques noms qui se prennent, ie ne sçay comment, en mauuaise part: et à nous Iehan, Guillaume, Benoist. Item, il semble y auoir en la genealogie des Princes, certains noms fatalement affectez: comme des Ptolomées à ceux d'Ægypte, des Henrys en Angleterre, Charles en France, Baudoins en Flandres, et en nostre ancienne Aquitaine des Guillaumes, d'où lon dit que le nom de Guienne est venu: par vn froid rencontre, s'il n'en y auoit d'aussi cruds dans Platon mesme.	Every nation has some names that are taken, I don't know how, in a bad sense: with us, Jehan, Guillaume, Benoît. Item: in the genealogy of princes there seem to be certain names fatefully assigned, such as Ptolemy to the kings of Egypt, Henry in England, Charles in France, Baldwin in Flanders, and, in our old Aquitaine, Guillaume, from which they say the name Guienne came—a feeble play on words, were there not some just as crude in Plato himself.[1]
1.46.3	Item, c'est vne chose legere, mais toutefois digne de memoire pour son estrangeté, et escripte par tesmoin oculaire, que Henry Duc de Normandie, fils de Henry second Roy d'Angleterre, faisant vn festin en France, l'assemblée de la Noblesse y fut si grande, que pour passe-temps, s'estant diuisée en bandes par la ressemblance des noms: en la premiere troupe qui fut des Guillaumes, il se trouua cent dix Cheualiers assis à table portans ce nom, sans mettre en comte les simples Gentils-hommes et seruiteurs.	Item: it is a slight thing, but worth remembering for its strangeness, and recorded by an eyewitness, that when Henry, Duke of Normandy, son of Henry II, King of England, gave a feast in France, the gathering of nobility was so great that, having divided into groups by likeness of names for amusement, in the first troop, the Williams, there were found a hundred and ten knights seated at table bearing that name, not counting the plain gentlemen and servants.[2]
1.46.4	Il est autant plaisant de distribuer les tables par les noms des assistans, comme il estoit à l'Empereur Geta, de faire distribuer le seruice de ses mets, par la consideration des premieres lettres du nom des viandes: on seruoit celles qui se commençoient par m: mouton, marcassin, merlus, marsoin, ainsi des autres.	It is as amusing to assign the tables by the names of the guests as it was for the Emperor Geta to have the courses of his dishes assigned according to the first letters of the names of the foods: they would serve those that began with M—mutton, young boar, hake, porpoise—and so on with the others.[3]
1.46.5	Item, il se dit qu'il fait bon auoir bon nom, c'est à dire credit et reputation: mais encore à la verité est-il	Item: they say it is good to have a good name, that is, credit and reputation. But in truth it is also con-

1 These names were bywords for a dupe or simpleton (Benoît gave "benêt," a simpleton). Guillaume is the French form of William.
2 Henry the Young King (1155–1183), whose feast at Bayeux in 1171 was recorded by the chronicler Robert of Torigni.
3 Geta was Roman co-emperor in AD 211. In French the four foods all begin with M: mouton, marcassin, merlus, marsouin.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
	commode, d'auoir vn nom qui aisément se puisse prononcer et mettre en memoire: car les Roys et les grands nous en cognoissent plus aisément, et oublient plus mal volontiers; et de ceux mesmes qui nous seruent, nous commandons plus ordinairement et employons ceux, desquels les noms se presentent le plus facilement à la langue.	venient to have a name that is easy to pronounce and to remember, for kings and the great know us more easily by it and are less willing to forget us; and even among those who serve us, we more usually give orders to and employ those whose names come most readily to the tongue.
	I'ay veu le Roy Henry second, ne pouuoir nommer à droit vn Gentil-homme de ce quartier de Gascongne; et à vne fille de la Royne, il fut luy mesme d'aduis de donner le nom general de la race, par ce que celuy de la maison paternelle luy sembla trop diuers. Et Socrates estime digne du soing paternel, de donner vn beau nom aux enfants.	I have seen King Henry II unable to say properly the name of a gentleman from this part of Gascony; and for one of the queen's maids of honor he himself advised giving her the general name of her family, because that of her father's house seemed to him too outlandish. And Socrates considers it worthy of a father's care to give his children fine names.
1.46.6	Item, on dit que la fondation de nostre Dame la grand' à Poitiers, prit origine de ce qu'vn ieune homme desbauché, logé en cet endroit, ayant recouuré vne garce, et luy ayant d'arriuée demandé son nom, qui estoit Marie, se sentit si viuement espris de religion et de respect de ce nom sacrosainct de la Vierge mere de nostre Sauueur, que non seulement il la chassa soudain, mais en amanda tout le reste de sa vie: et qu'en consideration de ce miracle, il fut basty en la place, où estoit la maison de ce ieune homme, vne chapelle au nom de nostre Dame, et depuis l'eglise que nous y voyons.	Item: they say that the church of Notre-Dame-la-Grande in Poitiers was founded in this way. A dissolute young man lodging on that spot had got hold of a girl and, asking her name as soon as she arrived, learned it was Marie. At that he felt himself so keenly seized with religion and with respect for that most sacred name of the Virgin Mother of our Savior that he not only sent her away at once but mended the whole rest of his life. And in consideration of this miracle there was built, on the spot where this young man's house stood, a chapel in the name of Our Lady, and later the church that we see there.
	Cette correction voyelle et auriculaire, deuotieuse, tira droit à l'ame: cette autre suiuante, de mesme genre, s'insinüa par les sens corporels. Pythagoras estant en compagnie de ieunes hommes, lesquels il sentit complotter, eschauffez de la feste, d'aller violer vne maison pudique, commanda à la menestriere, de changer de ton: et par vne musique poisante, seuere, et spondaïque, enchanta tout doucement leur ardeur, et l'endormit.	This correction, a pious one, working through voice and ear, went straight to the soul; this next one, of the same kind, worked its way in through the bodily senses. Pythagoras was in the company of some young men whom he perceived, heated by the festivities, to be plotting to go and violate a chaste household. He ordered the woman playing music to change her tune, and by a heavy, severe, spondaic music he gently charmed their ardor and lulled it to sleep.
1.46.7	Item, ne dira pas la posterité, que nostre reformation d'auiourd'huy ait esté delicate et exacte, de n'auoir pas seulement combattu les erreurs, et les vices, et rempli le monde de deuotion, d'humilité, d'obeissance, de paix, et de toute espece de vertu; mais d'auoir passé iusques à combattre ces anciens noms de nos baptesmes, Charles, Loys, François, pour peupler le monde de Mathusalem, Ezechiel, Malachie, beaucoup mieux sentans de la foy?	Item: will not posterity say that our present-day reformation has been delicate and exact, in that it not only fought errors and vices and filled the world with devotion, humility, obedience, peace and every kind of virtue, but went so far as to fight these old baptismal names of ours, Charles, Louis, François, so as to people the world with Methuselahs, Ezekiels and Malachis, which smell far more of the faith?[4]

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
	Vn Gentil-homme mien voisin, estimant les commoditez du vieux temps au prix du notre, n'oublioit pas de mettre en compte, la fierté et magnificence des noms de la Noblesse de ce temps là, Dom Grumedan, Quedragan, Agesilan, et qu'à les ouïr seulement sonner, il se sentoit qu'ils auoyent esté bien autres gens, que Pierre, Guillot, et Michel.	A gentleman, a neighbor of mine, weighing the advantages of the old days against ours, did not forget to count the pride and magnificence of the names of the nobility of that time—Dom Grumedan, Quedragan, Agesilan—and said that just hearing them ring out, one could feel they had been quite other people than Pierre, Guillot and Michel.[5]
1.46.8	Item, ie sçay bon gré à Iacques Amiot d'auoir laissé dans le cours d'vn' oraison Françoise, les noms Latins tous entiers, sans les bigarrer et changer, pour leur donner vne cadence Françoise. Cela sembloit vn peu rude au commencement: mais des-ja l'vsage par le credit de son Plutarque, nous en a osté toute l'estrangeté. I'ay souhaité souuent, que ceux qui escriuent les histoires en Latin, nous laissassent nos noms tous tels qu'ils sont: car en faisant de Vaudemont, *Vallemontanus*, et les metamorphosant, pour les garber à la Grecque ou à la Romaine, nous ne sçauons où nous en sommes, et en perdons la cognoissance.	Item: I am grateful to Jacques Amyot for having left the Latin names whole in the course of his French prose, without tricking them out and altering them to give them a French cadence. That seemed a little harsh at first, but usage, through the credit of his Plutarch, has already removed all their strangeness for us. I have often wished that those who write histories in Latin would leave our names just as they are. For by making Vaudemont into *Vallemontanus*, and metamorphosing names to dress them up in Greek or Roman fashion, they leave us not knowing where we are, and we lose all knowledge of them.[6]
1.46.9	Pour clorre nostre compte; c'est vn vilain vsage et de tres-mauuaise consequence en nostre France, d'appeller chacun par le nom de sa terre et Seigneurie, et la chose du monde, qui faict plus mesler et mescognoistre les races. Vn cadet de bonne maison, ayant eu pour son appanage vne terre, sous le nom de laquelle il a esté cognu et honnoré, ne peut honnestement l'abandonner: dix ans apres sa mort, la terre s'en va à vn estranger, qui en fait de mesmes: deuinez où nous sommes, de la cognoissance de ces hommes. Il ne faut pas aller querir d'autres exemples, que de nostre maison Royalle, où autant de partages, autant de surnoms: cependant l'originel de la tige nous est eschappé.	To close our account: it is a nasty practice, and of very bad consequence in our France, to call each man by the name of his land and lordship, and the thing in the world that most muddles families and makes them unrecognizable. A younger son of a good house, having received as his portion an estate under whose name he has been known and honored, cannot decently abandon it. Ten years after his death the estate passes to a stranger, who does the same: guess where we stand in knowing who these men are. We need look for no other examples than our royal house, where there are as many surnames as there are portions; meanwhile the origin of the stock has escaped us.
	Il y a tant de liberté en ces mutations, que de mon temps ie n'ay veu personne esleué par la fortune à quelque grandeur extraordinaire, à qui on n'ait attaché incontinent des tiltres genealogiques, nouueaux et ignorez à son pere, et qu'on n'ait anté en quelque illustre tige. Et de bonne fortune les plus obscures familles, sont plus idoynes à falsification.	There is such freedom in these changes that in my time I have not seen anyone raised by fortune to some extraordinary greatness who did not at once have genealogical titles attached to him, new and unknown to his father, and was not grafted onto some illustrious stock. And as luck would have it, the most obscure families are the best suited to falsification.
1.46.10	Combien auons nous de Gentils-hommes en France, qui sont de Royalle race selon leurs comptes? plus ce crois-ie	How many gentlemen do we have in France who are of royal blood by their own reckoning? More, I

4 The Protestant Reformation, whose followers favored Old Testament names for their children.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
	que d'autres. Fut-il pas dict de bonne grace par vn de mes amis? Ils estoyent plusieurs assemblez pour la querelle d'vn Seigneur, contre vn autre; lequel autre, auoit à la verité quelque prerogatiue de tiltres et d'alliances, esleuées au dessus de la commune Noblesse. Sur le propos de cette prerogatiue, chacun cherchant à s'esgaler à luy, alleguoit, qui vn' origine, qui vn' autre, qui la ressemblance du nom, qui des armes, qui vne vieille pancharte domestique: et le moindre se trouuoit arriere-fils de quelque Roy d'outremer.	believe, than of any other kind. Was it not neatly done by a friend of mine? A number of them had gathered over a quarrel between one lord and another. This other did in truth have some prerogative of titles and alliances raised above the common nobility. On the subject of this prerogative, each one, trying to make himself his equal, put forward one origin or another—one the resemblance of his name, another his arms, another an old family charter—and the least of them turned out to be the descendant of some king from overseas.
	Comme ce fut à disner, cettuy-cy, au lieu de prendre sa place, se recula en profondes reuerences, suppliant l'assistance de l'excuser, de ce que par temerité il auoit iusques lors vescu auec eux en compagnon: mais qu'ayant esté nouuellement informé de leurs vieilles qualitez, il commençoit à les honnorer selon leurs degrez, et qu'il ne luy appartenoit pas de se soir parmy tant de Princes.	When it came to dinner, this friend, instead of taking his place, backed away with deep bows, begging the company to excuse him for having rashly lived among them until then as an equal; but now that he had been newly informed of their ancient ranks, he was beginning to honor them according to their degrees, and it was not fitting for him to sit among so many princes.
	Apres sa farce, il leur dit mille iniures: Contentez vous de par Dieu, de ce dequoy nos peres se sont contentez: et de ce que nous sommes; nous sommes assez si nous le sçauons bien maintenir: ne desaduouons pas la fortune et condition de noz ayeulx, et ostons ces sottes imaginations, qui ne peuuent faillir à quiconque a l'impudence de les alleguer.	After his farce, he heaped abuse on them: "In God's name, be content with what our fathers were content with, and with what we are. We are enough if we know how to keep it up well. Let us not disown the fortune and condition of our ancestors, and let us get rid of these silly fancies, which are always there for anyone with the impudence to put them forward."
1.46.11	Les armoiries n'ont de seurté, non plus que les surnoms. Ie porte d'azur semé de trefles d'or, à vne pate de lyon de mesme, armée de gueules, mise en face. Quel priuilege a cette figure, pour demeurer particulierement en ma maison? vn gendre la transportera en vne autre famille; quelque chetif acheteur en fera ses premieres armes: il n'est chose où il se rencontre plus de mutation et de confusion.	Coats of arms are no more secure than surnames. My arms are azure, strewn with gold trefoils, with a lion's paw also of gold, armed in gules, set across the middle of the shield. What privilege does this figure have to remain particularly in my house? A son-in-law will carry it into another family; some paltry buyer will make it his first arms. There is nothing in which more change and confusion is to be found.
1.46.12	Mais cette consideration me tire par force à vn autre champ. Sondons vn peu de pres, et pour Dieu regardons, à quel fondement nous attachons cette gloire et reputation, pour laquelle se boulleuerse le monde: où asseons nous cette renommée, que nous allons questant auec si grand'peine? C'est en somme Pierre ou Guillaume, qui la porte, prend en garde, et à qui elle touche. O la courageuse faculté que l'esperance: qui en vn subiect	But this consideration drags me by force into another field. Let us probe a little closely and, for God's sake, look at what foundation we attach this glory and reputation to, for which the world is turned upside down. Where do we set this renown that we go questing after with such great pains? It is, in the end, Pierre or Guillaume who bears it, takes it into his keeping, and whom it concerns.

5 Names of knights from the chivalric romance Amadis of Gaul.
6 Jacques Amyot's French translation of Plutarch's Lives (1559) was one of Montaigne's favorite books.

FRENCH	ENGLISH
mortel, et en vn moment, va vsurpant l'infinité, l'immensité, et remplissant l'indigence de son maistre, de la possession de toutes les choses qu'il peut imaginer et desirer, autant qu'elle veut! Nature nous a là donné, vn plaisant iouët. Et ce Pierre ou Guillaume, qu'est-ce qu'vne voix pour tous potages?	Oh, what a valiant faculty hope is, which, in a mortal subject and in a moment, goes usurping infinity and immensity, and fills its master's poverty with the possession of all the things he can imagine and desire, as much as it likes! Nature has given us a pretty toy there. And this Pierre or Guillaume—what is it, all told, but a sound?
ou trois ou quatre traicts de plume, premierement si aisez à varier, que ie demanderois volontiers à qui touche l'honneur de tant de victoires, à Guesquin, à Glesquin, ou à Gueaquin? Il y auroit bien plus d'apparence icy, qu'en Lucien que Σ. mit T. en procez, car *Non leuia aut ludicra petuntur / Præmia:* Il y va de bon; il est question laquelle de ces lettres doit estre payée de tant de sieges, battailles, blessures, prisons et seruices faits à la couronne de France, par ce sien fameux Connestable.	or three or four strokes of the pen, so easy to vary, first of all, that I would gladly ask to whom the honor of so many victories belongs: to Guesquin, to Glesquin, or to Gueaquin? There would be far more reason for a lawsuit here than in Lucian, where Sigma (Σ) sues Tau (T), for *No light or trivial prizes / are sought*: this is serious business. The question is which of these spellings is to be paid for so many sieges, battles, wounds, imprisonments and services rendered to the crown of France by its famous Constable.[7]
1.46.13 Nicolas Denisot n'a eu soing que des lettres de son nom, et en a changé toute la contexture, pour en bastir le Conte d'Alsinois qu'il a estrené de la gloire de sa poësie et peinture. Et l'historien Suetone n'a aymé que le sens du sien, et en ayant priué Lénis, qui estoit le surnom de son pere, a laissé Tranquillus successeur de la reputation de ses escrits. Qui croiroit que le Capitaine Bayard n'eust honneur, que celuy qu'il a emprunté des faicts de Pierre Terrail? et qu'Antoine Escalin se laisse voler à sa veuë tant de nauigations et charges par mer et par terre au Capitaine Poulin, et au Baron de la Garde?	Nicolas Denisot cared only for the letters of his name, and rearranged them completely to build out of them the Comte d'Alsinois, whom he endowed with the glory of his poetry and painting. And the historian Suetonius cared only for the meaning of his: setting aside Lenis, his father's surname, he made Tranquillus heir to the reputation of his writings. Who would believe that Captain Bayard has no honor except what he borrowed from the deeds of Pierre Terrail? And that Antoine Escalin lets so many voyages and commands by sea and land be stolen from him before his eyes by Captain Poulin and the Baron de la Garde?[8]
1.46.14 Secondement ce sont traits de plume communs à mill'hommes. Combien y a-il en toutes les races, de personnes de mesme nom et surnom? Et en diuerses races, siecles et païs, combien? L'histoire a cognu trois Socrates, cinq Platons, huict Aristotes, sept Xenophons, vingt Demetrius, vingt Theodores: et pensez combien elle n'en a pas cognu. Qui empesche mon palefrenier de s'appeller Pompée le grand? Mais apres tout, quels moyens, quels ressors y a il qui attachent à mon palefrenier trespassé, ou à cet autre homme qui eut la teste tranchée en Ægypte, et qui ioignent à eux, cette voix glorifiée, et ces traits de plume, ainsin honnorez,	Secondly, these are pen strokes common to a thousand men. How many people in every family share the same name and surname? And across different families, ages and countries, how many? History has known three Socrateses, five Platos, eight Aristotles, seven Xenophons, twenty Demetriuses, twenty Theodores—and think how many it has not known. What prevents my groom from calling himself Pompey the Great? But after all, what means, what springs are there that attach to my dead groom, or to that other man who had his head cut off in Egypt, and join to them this glori-

7 Lucian's dialogue is The Consonants at Law. The Latin is Virgil, Aeneid XII.
8 Denisot (1515–1559) signed himself "Comte d'Alsinois," an anagram of his name; Lenis and Tranquillus both mean "calm." Bayard was Pierre Terrail, and Antoine Escalin, Baron de la Garde, was known as Captain Poulin.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
	affin qu'ils s'en aduantagent? *Id cinerem et manes credis curare sepultos?*	fied sound and these pen strokes so honored, so that they may profit by them? *Do you think ashes and buried shades care about that?*[9]
1.46.15	Quel ressentiment ont les deux compagnons en principale valeur entre les hommes: Epaminondas de ce glorieux vers, qui court tant de siecles pour luy en nos bouches, *Consiliis nostris laus est attrita Laconum;* et Africanus de cet autre, *A sole exoriente, supra Mæotis paludes / Nemo est, qui factis me æquiparare queat?*	What do they feel, those two companions of highest worth among men: Epaminondas, of that glorious line that has run in our mouths on his behalf for so many centuries, *By my counsels the glory of the Spartans was cut down*; and Africanus, of this other one, *From the rising sun to beyond the Maeotian marshes / there is no one who can match my deeds*?[10]
1.46.16	Les suruiuants se chatouillent de la douceur de ces voix: et par icelles solicitez de ialousie et desir, transmettent inconsiderément par fantasie aux trespassez cettuy leur propre ressentiment: et d'vne pipeuse esperance se donnent à croire d'en estre capables à leur tour. Dieu le sçait. Toutesfois, *ad hæc se.* *Romanus Graiúsque et Barbarus Induperator.* *Erexit; causas discriminis atque laboris.* *Inde habuit, tanto maior famæ sitis est, quàm.* *Virtutis.*	The survivors are tickled by the sweetness of these sounds, and, stirred by them to jealousy and desire, they thoughtlessly transfer their own feeling to the dead in fancy, and with a deceiving hope make themselves believe that they will be capable of it in their turn. God knows. Nevertheless, *for these things* *the Roman, the Greek and the barbarian commander* *has roused himself; the causes of danger and toil* *he has found here: so much greater is the thirst for fame than* *for virtue.*[11]

9 Virgil, Aeneid, IV.
10 Both lines are quoted by Cicero in the Tusculan Disputations, V; the second is from Ennius. The Maeotian marshes are the Sea of Azov.
11 Juvenal, Satires, X.

I.47 Of the Uncertainty of Our Judgment

De l'incertitude de nostre iugement

On questions of war, good arguments exist on both sides; Montaigne shows how uncertain our judgment of strategy is.

FRENCH

ENGLISH

1.47.1 C'EST bien ce que dit ce vers, Επεων δε πολυς νομος ενθα και ενθα. il y a prou de loy de parler par tout, et pour et contre. Pour exemple: *Vince Hannibal, et non seppe vsar' poi / Ben la vittoriosa sua ventura.*

It is just as this line says: *Wide is the range of words, this way and that*: there is ample license to speak on every side, both for and against. For example: *Hannibal conquered, but did not then know how / to make good use of his victorious fortune.*[1]

1.47.2 Qui voudra estre de ce party, et faire valoir auecques nos gens, la faute de n'auoir dernierement poursuiuy nostre pointe à Moncontour; ou qui voudra accuser le Roy d'Espaigne, de n'auoir sçeu se seruir de l'aduantage qu'il eut contre nous à Sainct Quentin; il pourra dire cette faute partir d'vne ame enyurée de sa bonne fortune, et d'vn courage, lequel plein et gorgé de ce commencement de bon heur, perd le goust de l'accroistre, des-ja par trop empesché à digerer ce qu'il en a: il en a sa brassée toute comble, il n'en peut saisir dauantage: indigne que la fortune luy aye mis vn tel bien entre mains: car quel profit en sent-il, si neantmoins il donne à son ennemy moyen de se remettre sus?

Whoever wants to take this side, and make much, with our people, of the mistake of not having pressed home our advantage at Moncontour recently; or whoever wants to accuse the King of Spain of not having known how to use the advantage he had over us at Saint-Quentin, may say that this mistake comes from a soul drunk with its good fortune, and from a heart which, full and gorged with this first taste of success, loses its appetite for increasing it, already too busy digesting what it has. It has its arms full to overflowing and cannot grasp any more—unworthy that Fortune should have put such a good into its hands. For what profit does it get from it if it nonetheless gives its enemy the means to get back on his feet?[2]

Quell' esperance peut-on auoir qu'il ose vn' autre fois attaquer ceux-cy ralliez et remis, et de nouueau armez de despit et de vengeance, qui ne les a osé ou sçeu poursuiure tous rompus et effrayez? *Dum fortuna calet, dum conficit omnia terror?* Mais en fin, que peut-il attendre de mieux, que ce qu'il vient de perdre? Ce n'est pas comme à l'escrime, où le nombre des touches donne gain: tant que l'ennemy est en pieds, c'est à recommencer de plus belle: ce n'est pas victoire, si elle ne met fin à la guerre.

What hope can one have that he will dare attack them another time, once they are rallied and restored and newly armed with spite and vengeance, when he did not dare, or did not know how, to pursue them while they were all broken and terrified? *While fortune is hot, while terror is finishing everything?* But in the end, what better can he expect than what he has just lost? It is not as in fencing, where the number of hits wins the bout: as long as the enemy is on his feet, it is all to begin again, harder than ever. It is no victory if it does not put an end to the war.[3]

En cette escarmouche où Cæsar eut du pire pres la ville d'Oricum, il reprochoit aux soldats de Pompeius, qu'il

In that skirmish near the town of Oricum where Caesar got the worst of it, he taunted Pompey's sol-

1 Homer, Iliad, XX; the Italian lines are from Petrarch's Canzoniere.
2 Moncontour (1569) was a royal victory over the Protestants; at Saint-Quentin (1557) the Spanish routed the French.
3 Lucan, Pharsalia, VII.

FRENCH

eust esté perdu, si leur Capitaine eust sçeu vaincre: et luy chaussa bien autrement les esperons, quand ce fut à son tour.

1.47.3 Mais pourquoy ne dira-on aussi au contraire? que c'est l'effect d'vn esprit precipiteux et insatiable, de ne sçauoir mettre fin à sa conuoitise: que c'est abuser des faueurs de Dieu, de leur vouloir faire perdre la mesure qu'il leur a prescripte: et que de se reietter au danger apres la victoire, c'est la remettre encore vn coup à la mercy de la fortune: que l'vne des plus grandes sagesses en l'art militaire, c'est de ne pousser son ennemy au desespoir. Sylla et Marius en la guerre sociale ayans défaict les Marses, en voyans encore vne trouppe de reste, qui par desespoir se reuenoient ietter à eux, comme bestes furieuses, ne furent pas d'aduis de les attendre.

Si l'ardeur de Monsieur de Foix ne l'eust emporté à poursuiure trop asprement les restes de la victoire de Rauenne, il ne l'eust pas souillée de sa mort. Toutesfois encore seruit la recente memoire de son exemple, à conseruer Monsieur d'Anguien de pareil inconuenient, à Serisoles. Il fait dangereux assaillir vn homme, à qui vous auez osté tout autre moyen d'eschapper que par les armes: car c'est vne violente maistresse d'escole que la necessité: *grauissimi sunt morsus irritatæ necessitatis*.

Vincitur haud gratis, iugulo qui prouocat hostem. Voyla pourquoy Pharax empescha le Roy de Lacedemone, qui venoit de gaigner la iournée contre les Mantineens, de n'aller affronter mille Argiens, qui estoient eschappez entiers, de la desconfiture: ains les laisser couler en liberté, pour ne venir à essayer la vertu picquée et despittée par le malheur. Clodomire Roy d'Aquitaine, apres sa victoire, poursuiuant Gondemar Roy de Bourgongne vaincu et fuyant, le força de tourner teste, mais son opiniastreté luy osta le fruict de sa victoire, car il y mourut.

1.47.4 Pareillement qui auroit à choisir ou de tenir ses soldats richement et somptueusement armez, ou armez seulement pour la necessité: il se presenteroit en faueur du premier party, duquel estoit Sertorius, Philopœmen, Brutus, Cæsar, et autres, que c'est tousiours vn éguillon

ENGLISH

diers that he would have been lost if their captain had known how to win; and he put on his spurs in quite another way when it was his turn.

But why may one not also argue the contrary? That it is the mark of a headlong and insatiable mind not to know how to set a limit to its greed; that it is an abuse of God's favors to want to make them overstep the measure he has prescribed for them; that to throw oneself back into danger after the victory is to put it once more at the mercy of Fortune; that one of the greatest pieces of wisdom in the art of war is not to drive one's enemy to despair. Sulla and Marius, in the Social War, having defeated the Marsi, and seeing a band of survivors coming back out of despair to hurl themselves at them like furious beasts, did not see fit to wait for them.[4]

If Monsieur de Foix's ardor had not carried him away into pursuing the remnants of the victory at Ravenna too fiercely, he would not have sullied it with his death. Yet the fresh memory of his example served to keep Monsieur d'Enghien from a similar mishap at Ceresole. It is dangerous to attack a man whom you have deprived of every other means of escape but arms; for necessity is a violent schoolmistress: *the bites of necessity, once provoked, are the most grievous.*[5]

He is not conquered cheaply who offers his throat to the enemy. That is why Pharax prevented the King of Sparta, who had just won the day against the Mantineans, from going to confront a thousand Argives who had escaped intact from the rout, and had him let them slip away freely, so as not to come up against a valor stung and enraged by misfortune. Clodomir, King of Aquitaine, after his victory, pursuing Gondemar, King of Burgundy, who was beaten and in flight, forced him to turn and face him; but his stubbornness robbed him of the fruit of his victory, for he died there.[6]

Likewise, if one had to choose between keeping one's soldiers richly and sumptuously armed or armed only for necessity, there would be put forward in favor of the first course—which was the

4 The Social War (91–88 BC) was fought between Rome and its Italian allies.
5 Gaston de Foix was killed pursuing the Spanish after his victory at Ravenna (1512); the Count of Enghien won at Ceresole (1544). The Latin is from Porcius Latro's Declamation against Catiline.
6 Lucan, Pharsalia, IV. Clodomir, son of Clovis, was killed at Vézeronce in AD 524.

FRENCH

d'honneur et de gloire au soldat de se voir paré, et vn' occasion de se rendre plus obstiné au combat, ayant à sauuer ses armes, comme ses biens et heritages. Raison, dit Xenophon, pourquoy les Asiatiques menoyent en leurs guerres, femmes, concubines, auec leurs ioyaux et richesses plus cheres.

Mais il s'offriroit aussi de l'autre part, qu'on doit plustost oster au soldat le soing de se conseruer, que de le luy accroistre: qu'il craindra par ce moyen doublement à se hazarder: ioint que c'est augmenter à l'ennemy l'enuie de la victoire, par ces riches despouilles: et a lon remarqué que d'autres fois cela encouragea merueilleusement les Romains à l'encontre des Samnites. Antiochus montrant à Hannibal l'armée qu'il preparoit contr' eux pompeuse et magnifique en toute sorte d'equippage, et luy demandant. Les Romains se contenteront-ils de cette armée? S'ils s'en contenteront? respondit-il, vrayement ouy, pour auares qu'ils soyent.

Lycurgus deffendoit aux siens non seulement la sumptuosité en leur equippage, mais encore de despouiller leurs ennemis vaincus, voulant, disoit-il, que la pauureté et frugalité reluisist auec le reste de la battaille.

1.47.5 Aux sieges et ailleurs, où l'occasion nous approche de l'ennemy, nous donnons volontiers licence aux soldats de le brauer, desdaigner, et iniurier de toutes façons de reproches: et non sans apparence de raison. Car ce n'est pas faire peu, de leur oster toute esperance de grace et de composition, en leur representant qu'il n'y a plus ordre de l'attendre de celuy, qu'ils ont si fort outragé, et qu'il ne reste remede que de la victoire.

Si est-ce qu'il en mesprit à Vitellius: car ayant affaire à Othon, plus foible en valeur de soldats, des-accoustumez de longue main du faict de la guerre, et amollis par les délices de la ville, il les agassa tant en fin, par ses paroles picquantes, leur reprochant leur pusillanimité, et le regret des Dames et festes, qu'ils venoient de laisser à Rome, qu'il leur remit par ce moyen le cœur au ventre, ce que nuls enhortemens n'auoient sçeu faire: et les attira luy-mesme sur ses bras, où lon ne les pouuoit pousser.

ENGLISH

view of Sertorius, Philopoemen, Brutus, Caesar and others—that it is always a spur of honor and glory to a soldier to see himself finely adorned, and a reason to make himself more stubborn in combat, having his arms to save as if they were his goods and inheritance. That is the reason, says Xenophon, why the Asiatics took their wives and concubines to their wars, along with their jewels and most precious riches.

But on the other side it would also be put forward that one should rather take away from a soldier his concern for preserving himself than increase it; that this way he will be doubly afraid to risk himself; and besides, that these rich spoils increase the enemy's desire for victory. It has been observed that on other occasions this wonderfully encouraged the Romans against the Samnites. Antiochus was showing Hannibal the army he was preparing against them, splendid and magnificent in every sort of equipment, and asked him: "Will the Romans be satisfied with this army?" "Will they be satisfied with it?" he replied. "Truly, yes, however greedy they may be."

Lycurgus forbade his people not only sumptuousness in their equipment but even stripping their defeated enemies, wishing, he said, that poverty and frugality should shine along with the rest of the battle.

In sieges and elsewhere, when circumstances bring us close to the enemy, we readily give our soldiers license to defy him, scorn him and insult him with every kind of taunt. And there is some show of reason in it. For it is no small thing to take away from them all hope of mercy and of terms, by showing them that they can no longer expect these from the man they have so grossly insulted, and that the only remedy left is victory.

Yet it turned out badly for Vitellius. He was up against Otho, whose soldiers were of weaker mettle, long out of the habit of war and softened by the pleasures of the city. In the end he goaded them so much with his stinging words, taunting them with their faint-heartedness and their longing for the ladies and feasts they had just left behind in Rome, that by this means he put fresh heart into them, which no exhortations had been able to do. He himself drew them down upon his

FRENCH

ENGLISH

Et de vray, quand ce sont iniures qui touchent au vif, elles peuuent faire aisément, que celuy qui alloit laschement à la besongne pour la querelle de son Roy, y aille d'vne autre affection pour la sienne propre.

own head, when no one had been able to push them forward.[7]

And indeed, when insults cut to the quick, they can easily make a man who was going sluggishly about the business in his king's quarrel go at it with quite another feeling in his own.

1.47.6 A considerer de combien d'importance est la conseruation d'vn chef en vn' armée, et que la visée de l'ennemy regarde principalement cette teste, à laquelle tiennent toutes les autres, et en dependent: il semble qu'on ne puisse mettre en doubte ce conseil, que nous voyons auoir esté pris par plusieurs grands chefs, de se trauestir et desguiser sur le point de la meslée.

Toutesfois l'inconuenient qu'on encourt par ce moyen, n'est pas moindre que celuy qu'on pense fuir: car le Capitaine venant à estre mescognu des siens, le courage qu'ils prennent de son exemple et de sa presence, vient aussi quant et quant à leur faillir; et perdant la veuë de ses marques et enseignes accoustumées, ils le iugent ou mort, ou s'estre desrobé desesperant de l'affaire. Et quant à l'experience, nous luy voyons fauoriser tantost l'vn tantost l'autre party.

L'accident de Pyrrhus en la battaille qu'il eut contre le consul Leuinus en Italie, nous sert à l'vn et l'autre visage: car pour s'estre voulu cacher sous les armes de Demogacles, et luy auoir donné les siennes, il sauua bien sans doute sa vie, mais aussi il en cuida encourir l'autre inconuenient de perdre la iournée. Alexandre, Cæsar, Lucullus, aimoient à se marquer au combat par des accoustremens et armes riches, de couleur reluisante et particuliere: Agis, Agesilaus, et ce grand Gilippus au rebours, alloyent à la guerre obscurement couuerts, et sans attour imperial.

When we consider how important it is to preserve the commander of an army, and that the enemy aims chiefly at that head, on which all the others hang and depend, it seems that no one could question the course we see several great commanders have taken: changing their dress and disguising themselves at the moment of battle.

Yet the drawback incurred this way is no less than the one you are trying to avoid. For when the captain is not recognized by his own men, the courage they draw from his example and his presence fails them along with it; and losing sight of his usual marks and insignia, they judge that he is dead, or that he has slipped away in despair of the outcome. And as for experience, we see it favor now one side, now the other.

What happened to Pyrrhus in the battle he fought against the consul Laevinus in Italy serves us on both counts. By choosing to hide under the armor of Demogacles and giving him his own, he did indeed save his life, no doubt; but he very nearly incurred the other drawback, of losing the day. Alexander, Caesar and Lucullus liked to mark themselves out in battle by rich dress and armor of a gleaming and distinctive color; Agis, Agesilaus and the great Gylippus, on the contrary, went to war plainly clad, without the trappings of command.[8]

1.47.7 A la battaille de Pharsale entre autres reproches qu'on donne à Pompeius, c'est d'auoir arresté son armée pied coy attendant l'ennemy: pour autant que cela (ie desroberay icy les mots mesmes de Plutarque, qui valent mieux que les miens) affoiblit la violence, que le courir donne aux premiers coups, et quant et quant oste l'eslancement des combattans les vns contre les autres, qui a accoustumé de les remplir d'impetuosité, et de fureur, plus qu'autre chose, quand ils viennent à s'entrechocquer de roideur, leur augmentant le courage par le cry et la course: et rend la chaleur des soldats en

At the battle of Pharsalus, among other reproaches leveled at Pompey is that he halted his army and stood still waiting for the enemy. For this (I shall steal Plutarch's very words here, which are better than mine) weakens the violence that running gives to the first blows, and at the same time removes the rush of the combatants against one another, which more than anything usually fills them with impetuosity and fury when they come to clash headlong, the shouting and the running increasing their courage; and it leaves the soldiers'

7 Vitellius and Otho fought for the Roman throne in AD 69; the episode is from Tacitus' Histories.
8 Pyrrhus defeated Laevinus at Heraclea in 280 BC; Plutarch calls the officer Megacles.

FRENCH

maniere de dire refroidie et figée. Voyla ce qu'il dit pour ce rolle.

Mais si Cæsar eust perdu, qui n'eust peu aussi bien dire, qu'au contraire, la plus forte et roide assiette, est celle en laquelle on se tient planté sans bouger, et que qui est en sa marche arresté, resserrant et espargnant pour le besoing, sa force en soy-mesmes, a grand aduantage contre celuy qui est esbranlé, et qui a desia consommé à la course la moitié de son haleine? outre ce que l'armée estant vn corps de tant de diuerses pieces, il est impossible qu'elle s'esmeuue en cette furie, d'vn mouuement si iuste, qu'elle n'en altere ou rompe son ordonnance: et que le plus dispost ne soit aux prises, auant que son compagnon le secoure.

En cette villaine battaille des deux freres Perses, Clearchus, Lacedemonien, qui commandoit les Grecs du party de Cyrus, les mena tout bellement à la charge, sans se haster: mais à cinquante pas pres, il les mit à la course: esperant par la brieueté de l'espace, mesnager et leur ordre, et leur haleine: leur donnant cependant l'auantage de l'impetuosité, pour leurs personnes, et pour leurs armes à trait. D'autres ont reglé ce doubte en leur armée de cette maniere: Si les ennemis vous courent sus, attendez les de pied coy: s'ils vous attendent de pied coy, courez leur sus.

1.47.8 Au passage que l'Empereur Charles cinquiesme fit en Prouence, le Roy François fut au propre d'eslire, ou de luy aller au deuant en Italie, ou de l'attendre en ses terres: et bien qu'il considerast combien c'est d'auantage, de conseruer sa maison pure et nette des troubles de la guerre, afin qu'entiere en ses forces, elle puisse continuellement fournir deniers, et secours au besoing: que la necessité des guerres porte à tous les coups, de faire le gast, ce qui ne se peut faire bonnement en nos biens propres, et si le païsant ne porte pas si doucement ce rauage de ceux de son party, que de l'ennemy, en maniere qu'il s'en peut aysément allumer des seditions, et des troubles parmy nous: que la licence de desrober et piller, qui ne peut estre permise en son païs, est vn grand support aux ennuis de la guerre:

et qui n'a autre esperance de gain que sa solde, il est mal aisé qu'il soit tenu en office, estant à deux pas de sa

ENGLISH

ardor, so to speak, cooled and congealed. That is what he says on this score.[9]

But if Caesar had lost, who could not just as well have said the opposite: that the strongest and firmest position is the one in which you stand planted without moving, and that the man who halts in his march, gathering and saving his strength within himself for when it is needed, has a great advantage over the man who is on the move and has already used up half his breath in running? Besides, since an army is a body made of so many different parts, it is impossible for it to move in this frenzy with such precision that it does not disturb or break its formation, and that the nimblest man is not already at grips before his comrade can come to his aid.

In that ugly battle between the two Persian brothers, Clearchus the Lacedaemonian, who commanded the Greeks on Cyrus' side, led them to the charge quite slowly, without hurrying; but at fifty paces off he set them running, hoping by the shortness of the distance to husband both their order and their breath, while still giving them the advantage of impetus, both for their persons and for their missile weapons. Others have settled this question for their armies in this way: if the enemy charge at you, wait for them standing still; if they wait for you standing still, charge at them.[10]

When the Emperor Charles V invaded Provence, King Francis was in a position to choose either to go and meet him in Italy or to wait for him in his own lands. He considered how great an advantage it is to keep one's house clean and clear of the troubles of war, so that, with its strength intact, it can continually supply money and help when needed; that the necessities of war constantly require laying waste, which cannot well be done to one's own property, and that the peasant does not bear such ravaging by his own side as meekly as by the enemy, so that seditions and troubles may easily flare up among us; that the license to steal and plunder, which cannot be allowed in one's own country, is a great support in the hardships of war;[11]

and that a man who has no other hope of gain than his pay is hard to keep to his duty when he is two

9 At Pharsalus in Thessaly, in 48 BC, Caesar defeated Pompey.

FRENCH

femme et de sa retraicte: que celuy qui met la nappe, tombe tousiours des despens: qu'il y a plus d'allegresse à assaillir qu'à deffendre: et que la secousse de la perte d'vne battaille dans nos entrailles, est si violente, qu'il est malaisé qu'elle ne croulle tout le corps, attendu qu'il n'est passion contagieuse, comme celle de la peur, ny qui se prenne si aisément à credit, et qui s'espande plus brusquement: et que les villes qui auront ouy l'esclat de cette tempeste à leurs portes, qui auront recueilly leurs Capitaines et soldats tremblans encore, et hors d'haleine, il est dangereux sur la chaude, qu'ils ne se iettent à quelque mauuais party: Si est-ce qu'il choisit de r'appeller les forces qu'il auoit delà les monts, et de voir venir l'ennemy.

Car il peut imaginer au contraire, qu'estant chez luy et entre ses amis, il ne pouuoit faillir d'auoir planté de toutes commoditez, les riuieres, les passages à sa deuotion, luy conduiroient et viures et deniers, en toute seureté et sans besoing d'escorte: qu'il auroit ses subiects d'autant plus affectionnez, qu'ils auroient le danger plus pres: qu'ayant tant de villes et de barrieres pour sa seureté, ce seroit à luy de donner loy au combat, selon son opportunité et aduantage:

et s'il luy plaisoit de temporiser, qu'à l'abry et à son aise, il pourroit voir morfondre son ennemy, et se deffaire soy mesme, par les difficultez qui le combattroyent engagé en vne terre contraire, où il n'auroit deuant ny derriere luy, ny à costé, rien qui ne luy fist guerre: nul moyen de rafraichir ou d'eslargir son armée, si les maladies s'y mettoient, ny de loger à couuert ses blessez; nuls deniers, nuls viures, qu'à pointe de lance; nul loisir de se reposer et prendre haleine; nulle science de lieux, ny de pays, qui le sçeust deffendre d'embusches et surprises: et s'il venoit à la perte d'vne bataille, aucun moyen d'en sauuer les reliques.

Et n'auoit pas faute d'exemples pour l'vn et pour l'autre party.

1.47.9 Scipion trouua bien meilleur d'aller assaillir les terres de son ennemy en Afrique, que de deffendre les siennes, et le combatre en Italie où il estoit; d'où bien luy print. Mais au rebours Hannibal en cette mesme guerre, se ruina,

ENGLISH

steps from his wife and his home; that the one who lays the table always bears the cost; that there is more zest in attacking than in defending; and that the shock of losing a battle in our very bowels is so violent that it can hardly fail to shake the whole body, since there is no passion so contagious as fear, none so easily taken on credit, none that spreads more swiftly; and that the towns which have heard the crash of this storm at their gates, and have taken in their captains and soldiers still trembling and out of breath, are in danger, in the heat of the moment, of throwing themselves into some bad course. Nevertheless he chose to recall the forces he had beyond the mountains and to watch the enemy come.

For he could imagine, on the contrary, that being at home and among his friends, he could not fail to have plenty of every convenience; that the rivers and passes, being at his command, would bring him both provisions and money in complete safety and without need of escort; that he would find his subjects all the more devoted the closer the danger came to them; that having so many towns and barriers for his security, it would be up to him to set the terms of battle according to his opportunity and advantage;

and that if he chose to play for time, he could watch from shelter and at his ease while his enemy languished and wore himself down, beset by the difficulties that would assail him as he pressed on in a hostile land, where there would be nothing in front of him, behind him or on either side that was not making war on him: no means of refreshing his army or spreading it out if sickness broke out, nor of lodging his wounded under cover; no money, no provisions, except at the point of the lance; no leisure to rest and catch his breath; no knowledge of the places or the country to protect him from ambushes and surprises; and if he came to lose a battle, no means of saving what was left.

And there was no lack of examples for either course.

Scipio found it far better to go and attack his enemy's lands in Africa than to defend his own and fight him in Italy, where he was; and it turned out

10 The battle of Cunaxa (401 BC), where Cyrus the Younger fought his brother, King Artaxerxes II.
11 Charles V invaded Provence in 1536; Francis I of France.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
	d'auoir abandonné la conqueste d'vn pays estranger, pour aller deffendre le sien. Les Atheniens ayans laissé l'ennemy en leurs terres, pour passer en la Sicile, eurent la fortune contraire: mais Agathocles Roy de Syracuse l'eut fauorable, ayant passé en Afrique, et laissé la guerre chez soy.	well for him. But Hannibal, on the contrary, in that same war, ruined himself by abandoning the conquest of a foreign country to go and defend his own. The Athenians, having left the enemy in their lands to cross to Sicily, had Fortune against them; but Agathocles, king of Syracuse, had her on his side, having crossed into Africa and left the war at home.[12]
1.47.10	Ainsi nous auons bien accoustumé de dire auec raison, que les euenemens et issuës dependent, notamment en la guerre, pour la plus part, de la fortune: laquelle ne se veut pas renger et assuiettir à nostre discours et prudence, comme disent ces vers. *Et malè consultis pretium est prudentia fallax;* *Nec fortuna probat causas sequitúrque merentes,* *Sed vaga per cunctos nullo descrimine fertur.* *Scilicet est aliud quod nos cogátque regátque* *Maius, et in proprias ducat mortalia leges.* Mais à le bien prendre, il semble que nos conseils et deliberations en despendent bien autant; et que la fortune engage en son trouble et incertitude, aussi nos discours.	So we are quite accustomed to say, and with reason, that events and outcomes depend for the most part, especially in war, on Fortune, who will not fall into line with and submit to our reasoning and prudence, as these lines say: *Ill-laid plans are often rewarded, and prudence deceives;* *Fortune does not examine causes or follow the deserving,* *But roams through all without distinction.* *Clearly there is something greater that compels and rules us,* *And leads mortal things under its own laws.* But, rightly taken, it seems that our counsels and deliberations depend on her just as much, and that Fortune draws our reasoning too into her turmoil and uncertainty.[13]
	Nous raisonnons hazardeusement et temerairement, dit Timæus en Platon, par ce que, comme nous, noz discours ont grande participation à la temerité du hazard.	We reason rashly and at random, says Timaeus in Plato, because, like ourselves, our reasonings have a large share in the rashness of chance.

12 Scipio's African campaign ended the Second Punic War at Zama (202 BC); the Athenian expedition to Sicily (415–413 BC) ended in disaster; Agathocles invaded Carthaginian Africa in 310 BC.
13 Manilius, Astronomica.

I.48 Of Warhorses

Des Destriers

Montaigne gathers lore on the warhorses and cavalry customs of the ancients and of various nations.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
1.48.1	ME voicy deuenu grammairien, moy qui n'apprins iamais langue, que par routine; et qui ne sçay encore que c'est d'adiectif, coniunctif, et d'ablatif.	Here I am turned grammarian—I who never learned any language except by rote, and who still do not know what an adjective, a subjunctive or an ablative is.
1.48.2	Il me semble auoir ouy dire que les Romains auoient des cheuaux qu'ils appelloient *funales* ou *dextrarios*, qui se menoient à dextre ou à relais, pour les prendre tous fraiz au besoin: et de là vient que nous appellons destriers les cheuaux de seruice. Et noz romans disent ordinairement, adestrer, pour accompagner. Ils appelloyent aussi *desultorios equos*, des cheuaux qui estoient dressez de façon que courans de toute leur roideur, accouplez coste à coste l'vn de l'autre, sans bride, sans selle, les Gentils-hommes Romains, voire tous armez, au milieu de la course se iettoient et reiettoient de l'vn à l'autre.	I seem to have heard it said that the Romans had horses they called *funales* or *dextrarios*, which were led on the right hand or kept in relay, to be taken fresh when needed; and that is why we call warhorses destriers. And our romances commonly say adestrer for "to accompany." They also called *desultorios equos* horses trained in such a way that, while they galloped at full speed, coupled side by side, without bridle or saddle, Roman gentlemen, even in full armor, would leap back and forth from one to the other in the middle of the race.[1]
	Les Numides gendarmes menoient en main vn second cheual, pour changer au plus chaud de la meslée: *quibus, desultorum in modum, binos trahentibus equos, inter acerrimam sæpe pugnam, in recentem equum, ex fesso, armatis transsultare mos erat. Tanta velocitas ipsis, támque docile equorum genus!*	The Numidian men-at-arms led a second horse by hand, to change mounts in the thick of the fray: *they were accustomed, like trick riders, to lead two horses, and often in the hottest of the fight to leap fully armed from the tired horse onto the fresh one; so great was their agility, and so docile their breed of horses!*[2]
1.48.3	Il se trouue plusieurs cheuaux dressez à secourir leur maistre, courir sus à qui leur presente vne espée nue; se ietter des pieds et des dents sur ceux qui les attaquent et affrontent: mais il leur aduient plus souuent de nuire aux amis, qu'aux ennemis. Ioint que vous ne les desprenez pas à vostre poste quand ils se sont vne fois harpez; et demeurez à la misericorde de leur combat. Il mesprint lourdement à Artibius general de l'armée de Perse combattant contre Onesilus Roy de Salamine, de personne à personne; d'estre monté sur vn cheual façonné en cette escole: car il fut cause de sa mort, le coustillier d'Onesilus l'ayant accueilly d'vne faulx, entre les deux espaules, comme il s'estoit cabré sur son maistre.	There are many horses trained to help their master, to rush at anyone who shows them a naked sword, and to fling themselves with hooves and teeth on those who attack and confront them; but it more often happens that they harm friends than enemies. Besides, you cannot pull them off at will once they have locked on, and you are left at the mercy of their fight. It went badly wrong for Artybius, general of the Persian army, fighting man to man against Onesilus, king of Salamis, that he was mounted on a horse schooled this way: for it caused his death, Onesilus' squire catching him with a scythe between the shoulders as the horse reared up against his master.[3]

1 Destrier, the old French word for a warhorse, comes from Latin dextra, "right hand."
2 Livy, History of Rome.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
	Et ce que les Italiens disent, qu'en la battaille de Fornuoue, le cheual du Roy Charles se deschargea à ruades et pennades des ennemis qui le pressoyent, qu'il estoit perdu sans cela: ce fut vn grand coup de hazard, s'il est vray. Les Mammelus se vantent, d'auoir les plus adroits cheuaux, de gensdarmes du monde. Que par nature, et par coustume, ils sont faits à cognoistre et distinguer l'ennemy, sur qui il faut qu'ils se ruent de dents et de pieds, selon la voix ou signe qu'on leur fait. Et pareillement, à releuer de la bouche les lances et dards emmy la place, et les offrir au maistre, selon qu'il le commande.	As for what the Italians say, that at the battle of Fornovo King Charles's horse rid him by kicking and bucking of the enemies pressing him, and that he would have been lost without it—that was a great stroke of luck, if it is true. The Mamelukes boast that they have the most skillful cavalry horses in the world: that by nature and by training they are made to recognize and distinguish the enemy, on whom they must fling themselves with teeth and hooves at the word or sign given them; and likewise to pick up lances and darts from the field with their mouths and offer them to their master at his command.[4]
1.48.4	On dit de Cæsar, et aussi du grand Pompeius, que parmy leurs autres excellentes qualitez, ils estoient fort bons hommes de cheual: et de Cæsar, qu'en sa ieunesse monté à dos sur vn cheual, et sans bride, il luy faisoit prendre carriere les mains tournées derriere le dos. Comme nature a voulu faire de ce personnage et d'Alexandre deux miracles en l'art militaire, vous diriez qu'elle s'est aussi efforcée à les armer extraordinairement: car chacun sçait, du cheual d'Alexandre Bucefal, qu'il auoit la teste retirant à celle d'vn toreau, qu'il ne se souffroit monter à personne qu'à son maistre, ne peut estre dressé que par luy mesme, fut honoré apres sa mort, et vne ville bastie en son nom.	It is said of Caesar, and also of Pompey the Great, that among their other excellent qualities they were very good horsemen; and of Caesar, that in his youth, riding bareback on a horse without a bridle, he would put it to a gallop with his hands clasped behind his back. As nature chose to make this man and Alexander two miracles in the art of war, you would say she also took pains to arm them extraordinarily. For everyone knows that Alexander's horse Bucephalus had a head like a bull's, that he would let no one but his master mount him, could be trained by no one but him, was honored after his death, and had a city built in his name.
	Cæsar en auoit aussi vn autre qui auoit les pieds de deuant comme vn homme, ayant l'ongle coupée en forme de doigts, lequel ne peut estre monté ny dressé que par Cæsar, qui dedia son image apres sa mort à la deesse Venus.	Caesar too had another, whose forefeet were like a man's, the hoof being split in the form of toes; he could be mounted and trained by no one but Caesar, who after its death dedicated its statue to the goddess Venus.
1.48.5	Ie ne demonte pas volontiers quand ie suis à cheual: car c'est l'assiette, en laquelle ie me trouue le mieux et sain et malade. Platon la recommande pour la santé: aussi dit Pline qu'elle est salutaire à l'estomach et aux iointures. Poursuiuons donc, puis que nous y sommes.	I do not willingly dismount once I am on horseback, for that is the position in which I feel best, both well and ill. Plato recommends it for health; and Pliny too says it is good for the stomach and the joints. Let us keep going, then, since we are at it.
1.48.6	On lit en Xenophon la loy deffendant de voyager à pied, à homme qui eust cheual. Trogus et Iustinus disent que les Parthes auoient accoustumé de faire à cheual, non seulement la guerre, mais aussi tous leurs affaires publiques et priuez, marchander, parlementer, s'entretenir, et se promener: et que la plus notable difference des libres, et des serfs parmy eux, c'est que les	We read in Xenophon of the law forbidding a man who had a horse to travel on foot. Trogus and Justin say that the Parthians were accustomed to do on horseback not only their fighting but all their public and private business—trading, negotiating, conversing and strolling about—and that the

3 The story is from Herodotus; this Salamis was in Cyprus.
4 At Fornovo (1495) Charles VIII of France fought his way back from Italy.

FRENCH

vns vont à cheual, les autres à pied: institution née du Roy Cyrus.

ENGLISH

most notable difference between free men and slaves among them is that the one go on horseback, the others on foot: an institution that began with King Cyrus.[5]

1.48.7 Il y a plusieurs exemples en l'histoire Romaine, et Suetone le remarque plus particulierement de Cæsar, des Capitaines qui commandoient à leurs gens de cheual de mettre pied à terre, quand ils se trouuoient pressez de l'occasion, pour oster aux soldats toute esperance de fuite, et pour l'aduantage qu'ils esperoient en cette sorte de combat: *quo, haud dubiè, superat Romanus*, dit Tite Liue. Si est-il, que la premiere prouision, dequoy ils se seruoient à brider la rebellion des peuples de nouuelle conqueste, c'estoit leur oster armes et cheuaux. Pourtant voyons nous si souuent en Cæsar: *arma proferri, iumenta produci, obsides dari iubet*. Le grand Seigneur ne permet auiourd'huy ny à Chrestien, ny à Iuif, d'auoir cheual à soy, sous son empire.

There are many examples in Roman history—and Suetonius notes it particularly of Caesar—of commanders who ordered their horsemen to dismount when hard pressed, to take away from the soldiers all hope of flight, and for the advantage they hoped for in this kind of fighting, *in which the Roman undoubtedly excels*, says Livy. Yet the first measure they used to curb the rebellion of newly conquered peoples was to take away their arms and horses. That is why we so often see in Caesar: *he orders the arms to be handed over, the beasts brought out, hostages given.* The Sultan today allows neither Christian nor Jew to have a horse of his own within his empire.

1.48.8 Noz ancestres, et notamment du temps de la guerre des Anglois, és combats solennels et iournées assignées, se mettoient la plus part du temps tous à pied, pour ne se fier à autre chose qu'à leur force propre, et vigueur de leur courage, et de leurs membres, de chose si chere que l'honneur et la vie. Vous engagez, quoy qu'en die Chrysanthes en Xenophon, vostre valeur et vostre fortune, à celle de vostre cheual, ses playes et sa mort tirent la vostre en consequence, son effray ou sa fougue vous rendent ou temeraire ou lasche: s'il a faute de bouche ou d'esperon, c'est à vostre honneur à en respondre.

A cette cause ie ne trouue pas estrange, que ces combats là fussent plus fermes, et plus furieux que ceux qui se font à cheual, *cædebant paritér, paritérque ruebant / Victores victique, neque his fuga nota, neque illis.* Leurs battailles se voyent bien mieux contestées: ce ne sont à cette heure que routes: *primus clamor atque impetus rem decernit*.

Our ancestors, especially at the time of the wars with the English, in solemn combats and pitched battles, mostly all fought on foot, so as to trust nothing but their own strength and the vigor of their courage and their limbs with something as precious as honor and life. Whatever Chrysantas says in Xenophon, you pledge your valor and your fortune to your horse's. His wounds and his death bring yours in their train; his fright or his fire make you rash or cowardly; if he does not answer to the bit or the spur, it is your honor that must answer for it.

For this reason I do not find it strange that those battles were steadier and more furious than those fought on horseback: *Victors and vanquished alike slew, alike fell, / And neither side knew flight.* Their battles were far more stoutly contested; nowadays there is nothing but routs: *the first shout and the first charge decide the matter.*[6]

1.48.9 Et chose que nous appellons à la societé d'vn si grand hazard, doit estre en nostre puissance le plus qu'il se peut. Comme ie conseilleroy de choisir les armes les plus courtes, et celles dequoy nous nous pouuons le mieux respondre. Il est bien plus apparent de s'asseurer d'vne espée que nous tenons au poing, que du boulet qui eschappe de nostre pistole, en laquelle il y a plusieurs pieces, la poudre, la pierre, le rouët, desquelles la

And a thing we call on to share so great a risk ought to be in our own power as far as possible. In the same way I would advise choosing the shortest weapons, those we can best answer for. It is far more reasonable to rely on a sword we hold in our fist than on the ball that escapes from our pistol, which has several parts—the powder, the flint, the wheel—the least of which, if it fails, will make

5 Pompeius Trogus wrote a universal history, known through Justin's abridgment.
6 Virgil, Aeneid; the second quotation is from Livy.

FRENCH

moindre qui vienne à faillir, vous fera faillir vostre fortune. On assene peu seurement le coup, que l'air vous conduict, *Et, quò ferre velint, permittere vulnera ventis: Ensis habet vires, et gens quæcunque virorum est, Bella gerit gladiis.*

1.48.10 Mais quant à cett'arme-là, i'en parleray plus amplement, où ie feray comparaison des armes anciennes aux nostres: et sauf l'estonnement des oreilles, à quoy desormais chacun est appriuoisé, ie croy que c'est vn' arme de fort peu d'effect, et espere que nous en quitterons vn iour l'vsage. Celle dequoy les Italiens se seruoient de iet, et à feu, estoit plus effroyable.

Ils nommoient *Phalarica*, vne certaine espece de iaueline, armée par le bout, d'vn fer de trois pieds, affin qu'il peust percer d'outre en outre vn homme armé: et se lançoit tantost de la main, en la campagne, tantost à tout des engins pour deffendre les lieux assiegez: la hante reuestue d'estouppe empoixée et huilée, s'enflammoit de sa course: et s'attachant au corps, ou au bouclier, ostoit tout vsage d'armes et de membres. Toutesfois il me semble que pour venir au ioindre, elle portast aussi empeschement à l'assaillant, et que le champ ionché de ces tronçons bruslants, produisist en la meslée vne commune incommodité. *Magnum stridens contorta Phalarica venit, / Fulminis acta modo.*

1.48.11 Ils auoyent d'autres moyens, à quoy l'vsage les dressoit, et qui nous semblent incroyables par inexperience: par où ils suppleoyent au deffaut de nostre poudre et de noz boulets. Ils dardoyent leurs piles, de telle roideur, que souuent ils en enfiloyent deux boucliers et deux hommes armés, et les cousoyent. Les coups de leurs fondes n'estoient pas moins certains et loingtains: *saxis globosis funda, mare apertum incessentes: coronas modici circuli, magno ex interuallo loci, assueti traijcere: non capita modó hostium vulnerabant, sed quem locum destinassent*. Leurs pieces de batterie representoient, comme l'effect, aussi le tintamarre des nostres: *ad ictus mœnium cum terribili sonitu editos, pauor et trepidatio cœpit*.

Les Gaulois noz cousins en Asie, haïssoyent ces armes traistresses, et volantes: duits à combattre main à main auec plus de courage. *Non tam patentibus plagis mouentur,*

ENGLISH

your fortune fail you. A blow carried by the air is dealt very unsurely: *And to let the winds take the wounds where they will;*
The sword has strength, and every race of men
Wages war with swords.[7]

But as for that weapon, I shall speak of it more fully where I compare ancient weapons with ours. Apart from the shock to the ears, to which everyone is by now accustomed, I think it is a weapon of very little effect, and I hope we shall one day give up using it. The weapon the Italians used for throwing, with fire, was more terrifying.

They called *Phalarica* a certain kind of javelin, tipped with an iron head three feet long so that it could pierce an armed man right through. It was thrown sometimes by hand in the field, sometimes by engines in defense of besieged places. The shaft, wrapped in tow smeared with pitch and oil, caught fire in its flight, and sticking in the body or the shield it took away all use of weapons and limbs. Yet it seems to me that when it came to close quarters it must also have hindered the attacker, and that a field strewn with these burning stumps must have been a nuisance to both sides in the melee. *Whirled, the phalarica comes with a great hiss, / Driven like a thunderbolt.*[8]

They had other means, in which practice trained them, and which seem incredible to us for lack of experience; with these they made up for not having our powder and bullets. They hurled their javelins with such force that they often skewered two shields and two armed men with them and stitched them together. The shots of their slings were no less sure or far-reaching: *practicing with round stones and slings over the open sea, and used to sending them through small rings from a great distance, they wounded not only the heads of their enemies but whatever spot they had aimed at.* Their battering engines imitated not only the effect but also the din of ours: *at the blows on the walls, delivered with a terrible noise, fear and panic seized them.*[9]

The Gauls, our cousins in Asia, hated these treacherous flying weapons, being used to fighting hand to hand with more courage. *They are not so troubled*

7 Lucan, Pharsalia.
8 Virgil, Aeneid.
9 Both quotations are from Livy.

FRENCH

vbi latior quàm altior plaga est, etiam gloriosius se pugnare putant: ijdem quum aculeus sagittæ aut glandis abditæ introrsus tenui vulnere in speciem vrit: tum, in rabiem et pudorem tam paruæ perimentis pestis versi, prosternunt corpora humi. Peinture bien voisine d'vne arquebusade. Les dix mille Grecs, en leur longue et fameuse retraitte, rencontrerent vne nation, qui les endommagea merueilleusement à coups de grands arcs et forts, et des sagettes si longues, qu'à les reprendre à la main on les pouuoit reietter à la mode d'vn dard, et perçoient de part en part vn bouclier et vn homme armé.

Les engeins que Dionysius inuenta à Syracuse, à tirer des gros traits massifs, et des pierres d'horrible grandeur, d'vne si longue volée et impetuosité, representoient de bien pres nos inuentions.

1.48.12 Encore ne faut-il pas oublier la plaisante assiette qu'auoit sur sa mule vn maistre Pierre Pol Docteur en Theologie, que Monstrelet recite auoir accoustumé se promener par la ville de Paris, assis de costé comme les femmes. Il dit aussi ailleurs, que les Gascons auoient des cheuaux terribles, accoustumez de virer en courant, dequoy les François, Picards, Flamands, et Brabançons, faisoyent grand miracle, pour n'auoir accoustumé de les voir: ce sont ses mots.

Cæsar parlant de ceux de Suede: Aux rencontres qui se font à cheual, dit-il, ils se iettent souuent à terre pour combattre à pied, ayant accoustumé leurs cheuaux de ne bouger ce pendant de la place, ausquels ils recourent promptement, s'il en est besoin, et selon leur coustume, il n'est rien si vilain et si lasche que d'vser de selles et bardelles, et mesprisent ceux qui en vsent: de maniere que fort peu en nombre, ils ne craignent pas d'en assaillir plusieurs. Ce que i'ay admiré autresfois, de voir vn cheual dressé à se manier à toutes mains, auec vne baguette, la bride auallée sur ses oreilles, estoit ordinaire aux Massiliens, qui se seruoient de leurs cheuaux sans selle et sans bride.

Et gens, quæ nudo residens Massilia dorso,
Ora leui flectit, frænorum nescia, virga.

ENGLISH

by gaping wounds; when a wound is broader than it is deep, they even think they are fighting more gloriously. But when the point of an arrow or a sling bullet, buried inside, burns them with a wound slight to look at, then, driven to rage and shame that so small a plague should kill them, they throw themselves on the ground. A picture very close to a harquebus wound. The Ten Thousand Greeks, in their long and famous retreat, came upon a nation that did them extraordinary damage with great strong bows and arrows so long that, picking them up by hand, one could throw them back like javelins; and they pierced right through a shield and an armed man.[10]

The engines that Dionysius invented at Syracuse, for shooting great heavy bolts and stones of horrible size with such long range and force, came very close to our inventions.

Nor must we forget the amusing seat that a certain Master Pierre Pol, doctor of theology, had on his mule: Monstrelet relates that he used to ride about the city of Paris sitting sideways like women. He also says elsewhere that the Gascons had terrible horses, trained to wheel at the gallop, at which the French, Picards, Flemish and Brabanters marveled greatly, not being used to seeing them: those are his words.[11]

Caesar, speaking of the Swedes: In cavalry encounters, he says, they often leap to the ground to fight on foot, having trained their horses not to stir from the spot meanwhile, and they run back to them quickly if need be; and according to their custom nothing is so base and cowardly as to use saddles and pads, and they despise those who use them, so that, though very few in number, they are not afraid to attack large numbers. What I once admired—seeing a horse trained to turn every way with a switch, the bridle dropped loose over its ears—was common among the Massilians, who used their horses without saddle or bridle.[12]

And the Massylian people, riding on the bare back,
Who know nothing of reins and turn their mounts'
mouths with a light switch.

10 The Galatians, Gauls settled in Asia Minor; the passage is from Livy. The retreat of the Ten Thousand is told in Xenophon's Anabasis.

11 Enguerrand de Monstrelet, fifteenth-century French chronicler.

12 Caesar is in fact speaking of the Suebi, a Germanic people. The Massilians here are the Massyli of North Africa, not the people of Marseilles.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
	Et Numidæ infræni cingunt. Equi sine frænis, deformis ipse cursus, rigida ceruice et extento capite currentium.	*And the unbridled Numidians surround them. Horses without bridles: their very gallop is ungainly, as they run with stiff neck and head thrust forward.*[13]
1.48.13	Le Roy Alphonce, celuy qui dressa en Espaigne l'ordre des Cheualiers de la Bande, ou de l'Escharpe, leur donna entre autres regles, de ne monter ny mule ny mulet, sur peine d'vn marc d'argent d'amende: comme ie viens d'apprendre dans les lettres de Gueuara, desquelles ceux qui les ont appellées Dorées, faisoient iugement bien autre que celuy que i'en fay. Le Courtisan dit, qu'auant son temps c'estoit reproche à vn Gentilhomme d'en cheuaucher. Les Abyssins au rebours: à mesure qu'ils sont les plus aduancez pres le Pretteian leur Prince, affectent pour la dignité et pompe, de monter des grandes mules.	King Alfonso, the one who founded in Spain the order of the Knights of the Band, or of the Sash, gave them among other rules that they should not ride a mule of either sex, on pain of a fine of one mark of silver: as I have just learned from the letters of Guevara, of which those who called them Golden held a very different opinion from mine. The Courtier says that before his time it was a reproach to a gentleman to ride one. The Abyssinians, on the contrary: the closer they stand to Prester John, their prince, the more they make a point, for dignity and pomp, of riding great mules.[14]
	Xenophon recite que les Assyriens tenoient tousiours leurs cheuaux entrauez au logis, tant ils estoient fascheux et farouches: et qu'il falloit tant de temps à les destacher et harnacher, que, pour que cette longueur ne leur apportast dommage s'ils venoient à estre en desordre surprins par les ennemis, ils ne logeoient iamais en camp, qui ne fust fossoyé et remparé. Son Cyrus, si grand maistre au faict de cheualerie, mettoit les cheuaux de son escot: et ne leur faisoit bailler à manger, qu'ils ne l'eussent gaigné par la sueur de quelque exercice.	Xenophon relates that the Assyrians always kept their horses hobbled in their quarters, so vicious and wild were they; and that it took so long to untie and harness them that, so that this delay should not harm them if they were surprised by the enemy while in disorder, they never encamped in a camp that was not ditched and ramparted. His Cyrus, so great a master of horsemanship, kept his horses to the same rule as himself, and had them given nothing to eat until they had earned it by the sweat of some exercise.
1.48.14	Les Scythes, où la necessité les pressoit en la guerre, tiroient du sang de leurs cheuaux, et s'en abbreuuoient et nourrissoient, *Venit et epoto Sarmata pastus equo.* Ceux de Crotte assiegez par Metellus, se trouuerent en telle disette de tout autre breuuage, qu'ils eurent à se seruir de l'vrine de leurs cheuaux. Pour verifier, combien les armées Turquesques se conduisent et maintiennent à meilleure raison, que les nostres: ils disent, qu'outre ce que les soldats ne boiuent que de l'eau, et ne mangent que riz et de la chair salée mise en poudre, dequoy chacun porte aisément sur soy prouision pour vn moys, ils sçauent aussi viure du sang de leurs cheuaux, comme les Tartares et Moscouites, et le salent.	The Scythians, when necessity pressed them in war, drew blood from their horses and drank it and fed on it: *The Sarmatian comes too, fed on the horse whose blood he has drunk.* The people of Crete, besieged by Metellus, were so short of any other drink that they had to make use of their horses' urine. To prove how much better Turkish armies are run and maintained than ours, people say that besides the fact that the soldiers drink only water and eat only rice and salt meat ground to powder, of which each man easily carries a month's supply on him, they also know how to live on the blood of their horses, like the Tartars and Muscovites, and they salt it.[15]
1.48.15	Ces nouueaux peuples des Indes, quand les Espagnols y arriuerent, estimerent tant des hommes que des	These new peoples of the Indies, when the Spaniards arrived there, took both the men and the

13 Lucan, Pharsalia; Virgil, Aeneid; and Livy.
14 Alfonso XI of Castile; Antonio de Guevara's letters were translated as the "Golden Epistles"; The Courtier is Castiglione's book. Prester John was taken to be the ruler of Ethiopia.
15 Martial, On the Spectacles.

FRENCH

cheuaux, que ce fussent, ou Dieux ou animaux, en noblesse au dessus de leur nature. Aucuns apres auoir esté vaincus, venans demander paix et pardon aux hommes, et leur apporter de l'or et des viandes, ne faillirent d'en aller autant offrir aux cheuaux, auec vne toute pareille harangue à celle des hommes, prenans leur hannissement, pour langage de composition et de trefue.

1.48.16 Aux Indes de deçà, c'estoit anciennement le principal et royal honneur de cheuaucher vn elephant, le second d'aller en coche, trainé à quatre cheuaux, le tiers de monter vn chameau, le dernier et plus vil degré, d'estre porté ou charrié par vn cheual seul. Quelcun de nostre temps, escrit auoir veu en ce climat là, des païs, où on cheuauche les bœufs, auec bastines, estriers et brides, et s'estre bien trouué de leur porture.

1.48.17 Quintus Fabius Maximus Rutilianus, contre les Samnites, voyant que ses gents de cheual à trois ou quatre charges auoient failly d'enfoncer le bataillon des ennemis, print ce conseil: qu'ils debridassent leurs cheuaux, et brochassent à toute force des esperons: si que rien ne les pouuant arrester, au trauers des armes et des hommes renuersez, ils ouurirent le pas à leurs gens de pied, qui parfirent vne tres-sanglante deffaitte. Autant en commanda Quintus Fuluius Flaccus, contre les Celtiberiens: *Id cum maiore vi equorum facietis, si effrænatos in hostes equos immittitis: quod sæpe Romanos equites cum laude fecisse sua, memoriæ proditum est. Detractisque frænis bis vltrò citróque cum magna strage hostium, infractis omnibus hastis, transcurrerunt.*

1.48.18 Le Duc de Moscouie deuoit anciennement cette reuerence aux Tartares, quand ils enuoioyent vers luy des Ambassadeurs, qu'il leur alloit au deuant à pied, et leur presentoit vn gobeau de lait de iument, breuuage qui leur est en delices, et si en beuuant quelque goutte en tomboit sur le crin de leurs cheuaux, il estoit tenu de la lecher auec la langue. En Russie, l'armée que l'Empereur Baiazet y auoit enuoyée, fut accablée d'vn si horrible rauage de neiges, que pour s'en mettre à couuert, et sauuer du froid, plusieurs s'aduiserent de tuer et euentrer leurs cheuaux, pour se getter dedans, et iouyr de cette chaleur vitale.

Baiazet apres cest aspre estour où il fut rompu par Tamburlan, se sauuoit belle erre sur vne jument

ENGLISH

horses to be either gods or animals nobler than their own nature. Some, after being conquered, coming to ask the men for peace and pardon and to bring them gold and food, did not fail to go and offer the same to the horses, with a speech just like the one made to the men, taking their neighing for the language of terms and truce.

In the East Indies, in former times, the chief and royal honor was to ride an elephant; the second, to go in a coach drawn by four horses; the third, to ride a camel; the last and lowest degree, to be carried or drawn by a single horse. Someone in our time writes that he saw in that region countries where people ride oxen with pack-saddles, stirrups and bridles, and that he was well pleased with how they carried him.

Quintus Fabius Maximus Rutilianus, fighting the Samnites, saw that in three or four charges his horsemen had failed to break the enemy's formation, and took this course: he had them unbridle their horses and spur them with all their might. Since nothing could stop them, they cut a way through the weapons and the men they overthrew for their foot soldiers, who completed a very bloody defeat. Quintus Fulvius Flaccus gave the same order against the Celtiberians: *You will do it with greater force if you send your horses against the enemy unbridled; it is recorded that Roman cavalry have often done this to their glory. And taking off the bridles, they charged through twice, there and back, with great slaughter of the enemy, breaking all their lances.*

The Duke of Muscovy formerly owed the Tartars this mark of reverence when they sent ambassadors to him: he went out to meet them on foot and presented them with a goblet of mare's milk, a drink they relish; and if, while they drank, a drop fell on their horses' manes, he was bound to lick it off with his tongue. In Russia, the army that the Emperor Bajazet had sent there was overwhelmed by so terrible a snowstorm that, to take shelter and save themselves from the cold, many of them thought of killing and disemboweling their horses and getting inside them, to enjoy that vital warmth.

Bajazet, after that fierce battle in which he was routed by Tamerlane, would have made good his

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
	Arabesque, s'il n'eust esté contrainct de la laisser boire son saoul, au passage d'vn ruisseau: ce qui la rendit si flacque et refroidie, qu'il fut bien aisément apres acconsuiuy par ceux qui le poursuiuoyent. On dit bien qu'on les lasche, les laissant pisser: mais le boire, i'eusse plustost estimé qu'il l'eust renforcée.	escape on an Arab mare, had he not been forced to let her drink her fill while crossing a stream. This made her so slack and chilled that he was very easily overtaken afterward by his pursuers. People do say that horses are slackened by letting them piss; but as for drinking, I would rather have thought it would strengthen her.[16]
1.48.19	Crœsus passant le long de la ville de Sardis, y trouua des pastis, où il y auoit grande quantité de serpents, desquels les cheuaux de son armée mangeoient de bon appetit: qui fut vn mauuais prodige à ses affaires, dit Herodote.	Croesus, passing near the city of Sardis, found pastures there with a great quantity of snakes, which the horses of his army ate with a hearty appetite: a bad omen for his affairs, says Herodotus.
1.48.20	Nous appellons vn cheual entier qui a crin et oreille, et ne passent les autres à la montre. Les Lacedemoniens ayant desfait les Atheniens, en la Sicile, retournans de la victoire en pompe en la ville de Syracuse, entre autres brauades, firent tondre les cheuaux vaincus, et les menerent ainsin en triomphe. Alexandre combatit vne nation, Dahas, ils alloyent deux à deux armez à cheual à la guerre, mais en la meslée l'vn descendoit à terre, et combatoient ore à pied, ore à cheual, l'vn apres l'autre.	We call a horse "entire" when it has its mane and ears; the others do not pass muster. The Lacedaemonians, having defeated the Athenians in Sicily and returning from the victory in pomp into the city of Syracuse, among other bravados had the horses of the vanquished shorn and led them thus in triumph. Alexander fought a nation, the Dahae: they went to war in pairs, armed, on horseback, but in the melee one would dismount, and they fought now on foot, now on horseback, one after the other.
1.48.21	Ie n'estime point, qu'en suffisance, et en grace à cheual, nulle nation nous emporte. Bon homme de cheual, à l'vsage de nostre parler, semble plus regarder au courage qu'à l'addresse. Le plus sçauant, le plus seur, le mieux aduenant à mener vn cheual à raison, que i'aye cognu, fut à mon gré Monsieur de Carneualet, qui en seruoit nostre Roy Henry second. I'ay veu homme donner carriere à deux pieds sur sa selle, demonter sa selle, et au retour la releuer, reaccommoder, et s'y rasseoir, fuyant tousiours à bride auallée: ayant passé par dessus vn bonnet, y tirer par derriere de bons coups de son arc: amasser ce qu'il vouloit, se iettant d'vn pied à terre, tenant l'autre en l'estrier; et autres pareilles singeries, dequoy il viuoit.	I do not think any nation surpasses us in ability and grace on horseback. "A good horseman," in our usage, seems to refer more to courage than to skill. The most knowing, the surest and the most graceful at schooling a horse that I have known was, to my taste, Monsieur de Carnavalet, who served our King Henry II in that capacity.[17] I have seen a man gallop standing with both feet on his saddle; take off his saddle and, on the way back, lift it up again, fit it back on and sit in it again, all the while racing with the reins loose; ride over a cap and then shoot good arrows back at it; pick up whatever he wanted, flinging himself to the ground with one foot while keeping the other in the stirrup; and other such monkey tricks, by which he made his living.
1.48.22	On a veu de mon temps à Constantinople, deux hommes sur vn cheual, lesquels en sa plus roide course, se reiettoyent à tours, à terre, et puis sur la selle, Et vn, qui seulement des dents, bridoit et harnachoit son cheual. Vn autre, qui entre deux cheuaux, vn pied sur vne selle, l'autre sur l'autre, portant vn second sur ses bras, piquoit	In my time two men were seen at Constantinople on one horse who, at its fastest gallop, would leap by turns to the ground and then back into the saddle. And one who bridled and harnessed his horse with nothing but his teeth. Another who rode at full speed between two horses, one foot on

16 Bayezid I, Ottoman sultan, was defeated and captured by Tamerlane at Ankara in 1402.
17 François de Kernevenoy, called Carnavalet, riding master to Henry II of France.

FRENCH	ENGLISH
à toute bride: ce second tout debout, sur luy, tirant en la course, des coups bien certains de son arc. Plusieurs, qui les iambes contre-mont, donnoient carriere, la teste plantee sur leurs selles, entre les pointes des simeterres attachez au harnois.	one saddle and the other on the other, carrying a second man in his arms; this second man stood upright on him and shot very accurate arrows from his bow as they went. Several who galloped with their legs in the air and their heads planted on their saddles, between the points of scimitars fastened to the harness.
En mon enfance le Prince de Sulmone à Naples, maniant vn rude cheual, de toute sorte de maniemens, tenoit soubz ses genouz et soubs ses orteils des reales: comme si elles y eussent esté clouées: pour montrer la fermeté de son assiette.	When I was a child, the Prince of Sulmona, at Naples, putting a rough horse through every kind of maneuver, held reales under his knees and under his toes as if they had been nailed there, to show the firmness of his seat.[18]

18 Reales were Spanish silver coins.

I.49 Of Ancient Customs

Des coustumes anciennes

Changing fashions blind us to their absurdity; Montaigne surveys Roman customs in dress, bathing, eating, and daily life.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
1.49.1	I'EXCVSEROIS volontiers en nostre peuple de n'auoir autre patron et regle de perfection, que ses propres meurs et vsances: car c'est vn commun vice, non du vulgaire seulement, mais quasi de tous hommes, d'auoir leur visée et leur arrest, sur le train auquel ils sont nais. Ie suis content, quand il verra Fabritius ou Lælius, qu'il leur trouue la contenance et le port barbare, puis qu'ils ne sont ni vestus ny façonnez à nostre mode. Mais ie me plains de sa particuliere indiscretion, de se laisser si fort piper et aueugler à l'authorité de l'vsage present, qu'il soit capable de changer d'opinion et d'aduis tous les mois, s'il plaist à la coustume: et qu'il iuge si diuersement de soy-mesme.	I would willingly excuse our people for having no other pattern and rule of perfection than their own manners and usages; for it is a common vice, not only of the common people but of almost all men, to fix their aim and their limit on the ways they were born into. I am content that when they see Fabricius or Laelius they should find their looks and bearing barbarous, since they are neither dressed nor fashioned in our style. But I do complain of their particular lack of discernment in letting themselves be so thoroughly fooled and blinded by the authority of present usage that they are capable of changing opinion and judgment every month, if custom so pleases, and of judging so variously of themselves.[1]
	Quand il portoit le busc de son pourpoint entre les mammelles, il maintenoit par viues raisons qu'il estoit en son vray lieu: quelques années apres le voyla aualé iusques entre les cuisses, il se moque de son autre vsage, le trouue inepte et insupportable. La façon de se vestir presente, luy fait incontinent condamner l'ancienne, d'vne resolution si grande, et d'vn consentement si vniuersel, que vous diriez que c'est quelque espece de manie, qui luy tourneboule ainsi l'entendement.	When they wore the busk of their doublets between their breasts, they maintained with lively arguments that it was in its proper place; a few years later, there it is, slipped down between the thighs, and they mock their former practice and find it absurd and unbearable. The present way of dressing makes them at once condemn the old one, with such great conviction and such universal agreement that you would say it was some kind of mania that turns their understanding upside down like this.[2]
	Par ce que nostre changement est si subit et si prompt en cela, que l'inuention de tous les tailleurs du monde ne sçauroit fournir assez de nouuelletez, il est force que bien souuent les formes mesprisées reuiennent en credit, et celles là mesmes tombent en mespris tantost apres; et qu'vn mesme iugement prenne en l'espace de quinze ou vingt ans, deux ou trois, non diuerses seulement, mais contraires opinions, d'vne inconstance et legereté incroyable. Il n'y a si fin entre nous, qui ne se laisse	Because our changes in this are so sudden and so quick that the inventiveness of all the tailors in the world could not supply enough novelties, it necessarily follows that the despised fashions very often come back into favor, and those very ones fall into contempt shortly after; and that one and the same judgment adopts, in the space of fifteen or twenty years, two or three opinions that are not just different but contrary, with incredible inconstancy and fickleness. There is no one among us so

1 Gaius Fabricius, a Roman of the early Republic famed for his incorruptibility.
2 The busk was a stiffening strip down the front of a doublet.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
	embabouiner de cette contradiction, et esbloüyr tant les yeux internes, que les externes insensiblement.	shrewd that he does not let himself be bamboozled by this contradiction, and imperceptibly dazzled in his inner eyes as well as his outer ones.
1.49.2	Ie veux icy entasser aucunes façons anciennes, que i'ay en memoire: les vnes de mesme les nostres, les autres differentes: à fin qu'ayant en l'imagination cette continuelle variation des choses humaines, nous en ayons le iugement plus esclaircy et plus ferme.	I want to pile up here some ancient fashions that I remember—some the same as ours, others different—so that, by keeping this continual variation of human things in our imagination, we may have our judgment clearer and firmer.
1.49.3	Ce que nous disons de combatre à l'espée et la cape, il s'vsoit encores entre les Romains, ce dit Cæsar, *sinistras sagis inuoluunt, gladiósque distringunt*. Et remarque dés lors en nostre nation ce vice, qui y est encore d'arrester les passans que nous rencontrons en chemin, et de les forcer de nous dire qui ils sont, et de receuoir à iniure et occasion de querelle, s'ils refusent de nous respondre.	What we call fighting with sword and cloak was already practiced among the Romans, so Caesar says: *they wrap their left arms in their cloaks and draw their swords.* And he notes even then in our nation the vice that is still there, of stopping passers-by we meet on the road, forcing them to tell us who they are, and taking it as an insult and grounds for a quarrel if they refuse to answer us.
1.49.4	Aux bains que les anciens prenoyent tous les iours auant le repas; et les prenoyent aussi ordinairement que nous faisons de l'eau à lauer les mains, ils ne se lauoyent du commencement que les bras et les iambes, mais depuis, et d'vne coustume qui a duré plusieurs siecles et en la plus part des nations du monde, ils se lauoyent tous nudz, d'eau mixtionnée et perfumée: de maniere, qu'ils tenoient pour tesmoignage de grande simplicité de se lauer d'eau simple. Les plus affetez et delicatz se perfumoyent tout le corps bien trois ou quatre fois par iour.	At the baths the ancients took every day before their meal—and they took them as routinely as we take water to wash our hands—at first they washed only their arms and legs. But later, by a custom that lasted several centuries and in most of the nations of the world, they washed all naked in water mixed with perfumes, so that they regarded washing in plain water as a mark of great simplicity. The most refined and dainty perfumed their whole body a good three or four times a day.
	Ils se faisoyent souuent pinceter tout le poil, comme les femmes Françoises ont pris en vsage depuis quelque temps, de faire leur front, *Quod pectus, quod crura tibi, quod brachia vellis,* quoy qu'ils eussent des oignemens propres à cela. *Psilothro nitet, aut acida latet abdita creta.* Ils aymoient à se coucher mollement, et alleguent pour preuue de patience, de coucher sur le matelats. Ils mangeoyent couchez sur des lits, à peu pres en mesme assiette que les Turcs de nostre temps. *Inde toro pater Æneas sic orsus ab alto.* Et dit on du ieune Caton que depuis la bataille de Pharsale, estant entré en dueil du mauuais estat des affaires publiques, il mangea tousiours assis, prenant vn train de vie austere.	They often had all their hair plucked out, as French women have lately taken to doing to their foreheads—*That you pluck your chest, your legs, your arms*—although they had ointments suited to the purpose: *She gleams with depilatory paste, or hides away under sour chalk.* They liked to lie softly, and cite sleeping on a mattress as a proof of endurance. They ate lying on couches, in much the same position as the Turks of our time: *Then from his high couch father Aeneas thus began.* And it is said of the younger Cato that after the battle of Pharsalus, having gone into mourning over the bad state of public affairs, he always ate sitting, adopting an austere way of life.[3]
1.49.5	Ils baisoyent les mains aux grands pour les honnorer et caresser. Et entre les amis, ils s'entrebaisoyent en se saluant, comme font les Venitiens. *Gratatúsque darem cum dulcibus oscula verbis.* Et touchoyent aux genoux, pour	They kissed the hands of the great to honor them and show them affection. And among friends they kissed each other in greeting, as the Venetians do: *And with my congratulations I would give you kisses*

3 The first two quotations are from Martial's Epigrams, the third from Virgil's Aeneid. The younger Cato is Cato of Utica.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
	requerir et saluer vn grand. Pasiclez le Philosophe, frere de Crates, au lieu de porter la main au genouil, la porta aux genitoires. Celuy à qui il s'addressoit, l'ayant rudement repoussé, Comment, dit-il, cette partie n'est elle pas vostre, aussi bien que l'autre? Ils mangeoyent comme nous, le fruict à l'yssue de la table.	*and sweet words.* And they touched the knees to petition or greet a great man. Pasicles the philosopher, brother of Crates, instead of putting his hand to the knee, put it to the genitals. When the man he was addressing roughly pushed him away, "What," he said, "is this part not yours as well as the other?" They ate fruit at the end of the meal, as we do.[4]
1.49.6	Ils se torchoyent le cul (il faut laisser aux femmes cette vaine superstition des parolles) auec vne esponge: voyla pourquoy *spongia* est vn mot obscœne en Latin: et estoit cette esponge attachée au bout d'vn baston: comme tesmoigne l'histoire de celuy qu'on menoit pour estre presenté aux bestes, deuant le peuple, qui demanda congé d'aller à ses affaires, et n'ayant autre moyen de se tuer, il se fourra ce baston et esponge dans le gosier, et s'en estouffa.	They wiped their backsides (we must leave to women this empty superstition about words) with a sponge: that is why *spongia* is an obscene word in Latin. This sponge was fastened to the end of a stick, as is shown by the story of the man who was being led out to be thrown to the beasts before the people. He asked leave to go and relieve himself, and having no other means of killing himself, he thrust this stick and sponge down his throat and choked himself with it.[5]
	Ils s'essuyoient le catze de laine perfumée, quand ils en auoyent faict, *At tibi nil faciam, sed lota mentula lana.* Il y auoit aux carrefours à Rome, des vaisseaux et demy-cuues, pour y apprester à pisser aux passans: *Pusi sæpe lacum propter se ac dolia curta, / Somno deuincti, credunt extollere vestem.*	They wiped their member with perfumed wool when they had done with it: *I'll do nothing to you; wool will wash my member.* At the crossroads in Rome there were vessels and half-tubs set out for passers-by to piss in: *Little boys, bound fast in sleep, often believe they are lifting their clothes / Beside the basin and the cut-down jars.*[6]
1.49.7	Ils faisoyent collation entre les repas. Et y auoit en esté, des vendeurs de nege pour refréchir le vin: et en y auoit qui se seruoyent de nege en hyuer, ne trouuans pas le vin encore lors assez froid. Les grands auoyent leurs eschançons et trenchans; et leurs fols, pour leur donner du plaisir. On leur seruoit en hyuer la viande sur les fouyers qui se portoyent sur la table: et auoyent des cuysines portatiues, comme i'en ay veu, dans lesquelles tout leur seruice se trainoit apres eux. *Has vobis epulas habete lauti, / Nos offendimur ambulante cœna.*	They had snacks between meals. In summer there were sellers of snow for chilling wine; and some people used snow in winter, not finding the wine cold enough even then. The great had their cupbearers and carvers, and their fools to amuse them. In winter their food was served to them on braziers carried to the table; and they had portable kitchens, such as I have seen, in which their whole service was trundled along behind them. *Keep these feasts for yourselves, you fine folk; / We are put off by a dinner that walks about.*
1.49.8	Et en esté ils faisoyent souuent en leurs sales basses, couler de l'eau fresche et claire, dans des canaux au dessous d'eux, où il y auoit force poisson en vie, que les assistans choisissoyent et prenoyent en la main, pour le faire aprester, chacun à sa poste. Le poisson a tousiours eu ce priuilege, comme il a encores, que les grans se meslent de le sçauoir apprester: aussi en est le goust beaucoup plus exquis, que de la chair, aumoins pour moy.	And in summer they often had cool, clear water run through channels beneath them in their ground-floor rooms, with plenty of live fish in it, which those present would choose and catch by hand, to have it cooked each to his own taste. Fish has always had this privilege, as it still has, that the great like to try their hand at cooking it; and

4 Ovid, Letters from the Black Sea.
5 The story is told by Seneca, Letters to Lucilius.
6 Martial, Epigrams; Lucretius, On the Nature of Things.

FRENCH

ENGLISH

indeed its taste is much more exquisite than that of meat, at least to me.

1.49.9 Mais en toute sorte de magnificence, desbauche, et d'inuentions voluptueuses, de mollesse et de sumptuosité, nous faisons à la verité ce que nous pouuons pour les égaler: car nostre volonté est bien aussi gastée que la leur, mais nostre suffisance n'y peut arriuer: nos forces ne sont non plus capables de les ioindre, en ces parties là vitieuses, qu'aux vertueuses: car les vnes et les autres partent d'vne vigueur d'esprit, qui estoit sans comparaison plus grande en eux qu'en nous. Et les ames à mesure qu'elles sont moins fortes, elles ont d'autant moins de moyen de faire ny fort bien, ny fort mal.

But in every sort of magnificence, debauchery and voluptuous invention, of softness and sumptuousness, we truly do what we can to equal them: for our will is quite as corrupt as theirs, but our ability cannot reach so far. Our powers are no more able to match them in these vicious qualities than in the virtuous ones, for both spring from a vigor of mind that was incomparably greater in them than in us. And the less strong souls are, the less means they have of doing either very well or very badly.

1.49.10 Le haut bout d'entre eux, c'estoit le milieu. Le deuant et derriere n'auoient en escriuant et parlant aucune signification de grandeur, comme il se voit euidemment par leurs escris: ils diront Oppius et Cæsar, aussi volontiers que Cæsar et Oppius: et diront moy et toy indifferemment, comme toy et moy. Voyla pourquoy i'ay autrefois remarqué en la vie de Flaminius de Plutarque François, vn endroit, où il semble que l'autheur parlant de la ialousie de gloire, qui estoit entre les Ætoliens et les Romains, pour le gain d'vne bataille qu'ils auoyent obtenu en commun, face quelque poix de ce qu'aux chansons Grecques, on nommoit les Ætoliens auant les Romains, s'il n'y a de l'amphibologie aux mots François.

Among them the place of honor was the middle. Front and back had no significance of rank in writing or speaking, as can plainly be seen in their writings: they will say "Oppius and Caesar" as readily as "Caesar and Oppius," and will say "me and you" as indifferently as "you and me." That is why I once noticed a passage in the life of Flamininus in the French Plutarch where the author, speaking of the jealousy over glory between the Aetolians and the Romans after a battle they had won together, seems to attach some weight to the fact that in Greek songs the Aetolians were named before the Romans—unless there is some ambiguity in the French words.[7]

1.49.11 Les Dames estans aux estuues, y receuoyent quant et quant des hommes, et se seruoyent là mesme de leurs valets à les frotter et oindre. *Inguina succinctus nigra tibi seruus aluta / Stat, quoties calidis nuda fouêris aquis.* Elles se saupoudroyent de quelque poudre, pour reprimer les sueurs.

Ladies at the bathhouses received men there along with them, and there they used their manservants to rub and anoint them. *A slave, his groin girded with a black leather apron, / Stands by you whenever you lie naked in the warm water.* They dusted themselves with some powder to check sweating.

1.49.12 Les anciens Gaulois, dit Sidonius Apollinaris, portoyent le poil long par le deuant, et le derriere de la teste tondu, qui est cette façon qui vient à estre renouuellée par l'vsage effeminé et lasche de ce siecle.

The ancient Gauls, says Sidonius Apollinaris, wore their hair long in front and the back of the head shaved, which is the very fashion now being revived by the soft and spineless usage of this age.[8]

1.49.13 Les Romains payoient ce qui estoit deu aux bateliers, pour leur naulage dez l'entrée du bateau, ce que nous faisons apres estre rendus à port. *Dum as exigitur, dum mula ligatur, / Tota abit hora.*

The Romans paid the boatmen what was owed for their fare upon entering the boat, which we do after reaching port. *While the fare is collected and the mule harnessed, / A whole hour goes by.*[9]

1.49.14

7 The French Plutarch is Jacques Amyot's translation of the Lives (1559).
8 Sidonius Apollinaris, fifth-century Gallo-Roman poet and bishop.
9 Horace, Satires.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
	Les femmes couchoyent au lict du costé de la ruelle: voyla pourquoy on appelloit Cæsar, *spondam Regis Nicomedis*.	Women lay on the side of the bed next to the wall: that is why Caesar was called *King Nicomedes' bedside.*[10]
1.49.15	Ils prenoyent aleine en beuuant. Ils baptisoient le vin, *Quis puer ocius* *Restinguet ardentis falerni* *Pocula prætereunte lympha?* Et ces champisses contenances de nos laquais y estoyent aussi. *O Iane! à tergo quem nulla ciconia pinsit,* *Nec manus auriculas imitata est mobilis albas,* *Nec linguæ quantum sitiet canis Apula tantum.*	They took breath while drinking. They watered their wine: *What boy will quickly quench* *The cups of fiery Falernian* *In the water flowing by?* And the impudent gestures of our lackeys were in use too: *O Janus, whom no stork pecks from behind,* *Whom no nimble hand mimics with white ears,* *Nor tongue stuck out as far as an Apulian dog's when it is thirsty!*[11]
1.49.16	Les Dames Argiennes et Romaines portoyent le deuil blanc, comme les nostres auoient accoustumé, et deuroient continuer de faire, si i'en estois creu.	The ladies of Argos and Rome wore white for mourning, as ours used to do, and should go on doing, if I had my way.
1.49.17	Mais il y a des liures entiers faits sur cet argument.	But there are whole books written on this subject.

10 A jibe recorded by Suetonius about Caesar's rumored affair with Nicomedes IV of Bithynia.
11 Horace, Odes; Persius, Satires.

I.50 Of Democritus and Heraclitus

De Democritus et Heraclitus
Montaigne tests his judgment on all subjects, and prefers Democritus's laughter at human folly to Heraclitus's tears.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
1.50.1	LE iugement est vn vtil à tous subiects, et se mesle par tout. A cette cause aux Essais que i'en fay icy, i'y employe toute sorte d'occasion. Si c'est vn subiect que ie n'entende point, à cela mesme ie l'essaye, sondant le gué de bien loing, et puis le trouuant trop profond pour ma taille, ie me tiens à la riue. Et cette reconnoissance de ne pouuoir passer outre, c'est vn traict de son effect, ouy de ceux, dont il se vante le plus. Tantost à vn subiect vain et de neant, i'essaye voir s'il trouuera dequoy luy donner corps, et dequoy l'appuyer et l'estançonner.	Judgment is a tool for every subject, and it has a hand in everything. That is why, in these essays, the trials I make of it here, I use every kind of occasion. If it is a subject I do not understand at all, I try my judgment out on that very thing, sounding the ford from a good way off; then, finding it too deep for my height, I keep to the bank. And this recognition that I cannot go any further is one of the things it achieves, and indeed one of those it is proudest of. Sometimes, on a vain and trifling subject, I test it to see whether it will find something to give the subject body, something to prop it up and shore it up.
	Tantost ie le promene à vn subiect noble et tracassé, auquel il n'a rien à trouuer de soy, le chemin en estant si frayé, qu'il ne peut marcher que sur la piste d'autruy. Là il fait son ieu à eslire la route qui luy semble la meilleure: et de mille sentiers, il dit que cettuy-cy, ou celuy là, a esté le mieux choisi. Ie prends de la fortune le premier argument: ils me sont egalement bons: et ne desseigne iamais de les traicter entiers. Car ie ne voy le tout de rien. Ne font pas, ceux qui nous promettent de nous le faire veoir.	Sometimes I take it for a walk to a noble, well-worn subject, where it can find nothing of its own, since the road is so beaten that it can only walk in other people's tracks. There it plays its game by choosing the route that seems best to it, and out of a thousand paths it says that this one or that one was the best chosen. I take the first subject that Fortune offers me: they are all equally good to me. And I never plan to treat them whole. For I do not see the whole of anything. Nor do those who promise to show it to us.
	De cent membres et visages, qu'à chasque chose i'en prens vn, tantost à lecher seulement, tantost à effleurer: et par fois à pincer iusqu'à l'os. I'y donne vne poincte, non pas le plus largement, mais le plus profondement que ie sçay. Et aime plus souuent à les saisir par quelque lustre inusité. Ie me hazarderoy de traitter à fons quelque matiere, si ie me connoissoy moins, et me trompois en mon impuissance. Semant icy vn mot, icy vn autre, eschantillons dépris de leur piece, escartez, sans dessein, sans promesse: ie ne suis pas tenu d'en faire bon, ny de m'y tenir moy-mesme, sans varier, quand il me plaist, et me rendre au doubte et incertitude, et à ma maistresse forme, qui est l'ignorance.	Of the hundred limbs and faces that each thing has, I take one: sometimes only to lick it, sometimes to brush its surface, and sometimes to pinch it to the bone. I make a thrust at it, not as widely but as deeply as I know how. And more often I like to catch things from some unaccustomed angle. I would venture to treat some matter thoroughly if I knew myself less well and were deceived about my own incapacity. I scatter a word here, another there, samples cut from their piece, set apart, without design and without promise. I am not bound to make good on them, nor to stick to them myself without changing when I please, and giv-

FRENCH

ENGLISH

ing myself up to doubt and uncertainty, and to my ruling form, which is ignorance.

1.50.2 Tout mouuement nous descouure. Cette mesme ame de Cæsar, qui se fait voir à ordonner et dresser la bataille de Pharsale, elle se fait aussi voir à dresser des parties oysiues et amoureuses. On iuge vn cheual, non seulement à le voir manier sur vne carriere, mais encore à luy voir aller le pas, voire et à le voir en repos à l'estable.

Every movement reveals us. That same soul of Caesar that shows itself in ordering and drawing up the battle of Pharsalus shows itself also in arranging idle and amorous affairs. We judge a horse not only by watching it put through its paces on a course, but also by seeing it walk, and even by seeing it at rest in the stable.

1.50.3 Entre les functions de l'ame, il en est de basses. Qui ne la void encor par là, n'acheue pas de la connoistre. Et à l'aduenture la remarque lon mieux où elle va son pas simple. Les vents des passions la prennent plus en ses hautes assiettes, ioint qu'elle se couche entiere sur chasque matiere et s'y exerce entiere; et n'en traitte iamais plus d'vne à la fois: et la traitte non selon elle, mais selon soy. Les choses à part elles, ont peut estre leurs poids et mesures, et conditions: mais au dedans, en nous, elle les leur taille comme elle l'entend. La mort est effroyable à Cicero, desirable à Caton, indifferente à Socrates.

Among the functions of the soul there are some low ones. Whoever does not see it on that side too does not fully know it. And perhaps we observe it best where it goes at its simple pace. The winds of passion catch it more in its lofty postures. Besides, it throws itself wholly into each matter and exercises itself wholly there, and never treats more than one at a time; and it treats that matter not according to the matter but according to itself. Things in themselves may have their own weights and measures and conditions; but inwardly, in us, the soul cuts them to its own pattern as it sees fit. Death is frightful to Cicero, desirable to Cato, indifferent to Socrates.

La santé, la conscience, l'authorité, la science, la richesse, la beauté, et leurs contraires, se despouillent à l'entrée, et reçoiuent de l'ame nouuelle vesture, et de la teinture qu'il luy plaist: brune, claire, verte, obscure: aigre, douce, profonde, superficielle: et qu'il plaist à chacune d'elles. Car elles n'ont pas verifié en commun leurs stiles, regles et formes: chacune est Royne en son estat. Parquoy ne prenons plus excuse des externes qualitez des choses: c'est à nous, à nous en rendre compte. Nostre bien et nostre mal ne tient qu'à nous. Offrons y nos offrandes et nos vœus, non pas à la fortune: elle ne peut rien sur nos mœurs: au rebours, elles l'entrainent à leur suitte, et la moulent à leur forme.

Health, conscience, authority, knowledge, wealth, beauty and their opposites are stripped at the entrance and receive new clothing from the soul, and whatever coloring it pleases: brown, light, green, dark; sharp, sweet, deep, superficial—whatever pleases each individual soul. For souls have not agreed among themselves on their styles, rules and forms: each is queen in her own realm. So let us no longer make excuses from the external qualities of things: it is up to us to account for them. Our good and our ill depend on ourselves alone. Let us make our offerings and our vows there, not to Fortune: she has no power over our ways; on the contrary, our ways drag her along in their train and mold her to their form.

Pourquoy ne iugeray-ie d'Alexandre à table deuisant et beuuant d'autant? Ou s'il manioit des eschecs, quelle corde de son esprit, ne touche et n'employe ce niais et puerile ieu? Ie le hay et fuy, de ce qu'il n'est pas assez ieu, et qu'il nous esbat trop serieusement; ayant honte d'y fournir l'attention qui suffiroit à quelque bonne chose. Il ne fut pas plus embesoigné à dresser son glorieux passage aux Indes: ny cet autre à desnouër vn passage, duquel depend le salut du genre humain. Voyez combien nostre ame trouble cet amusement ridicule, si touts ses

Why should I not judge Alexander at table, chatting and drinking deep? Or if he was playing chess, what string of his mind is not touched and put to work by this silly, childish game? I hate it and avoid it because it is not game enough, and amuses us too seriously; I am ashamed to give it the attention that would be enough for some good thing. He was no more absorbed in planning his glorious passage into the Indies; nor was that other man in unraveling a passage on which the sal-

FRENCH

nerfs ne bandent. Combien amplement elle donne loy à chacun en cela, de se connoistre, et iuger droittement de soy.

Ie ne me voy et retaste, plus vniuersellement, en nulle autre posture. Quelle passion ne nous y exerce? la cholere, le despit, la hayne, l'impatience: et vne vehemente ambition de vaincre, en chose, en laquelle il seroit plus excusable d'estre ambitieux d'estre vaincu. Car la precellence rare et au dessus du commun, messied à vn homme d'honneur, en chose friuole. Ce que ie dy en cet exemple, se peut dire en touts autres. Chasque parcelle, chasque occupation de l'homme, l'accuse, et le montre egalement qu'vn autre.

1.50.4 Democritus et Heraclitus ont esté deux philosophes, desquels le premier trouuant vaine et ridicule l'humaine condition, ne sortoit en public, qu'auec vn vsage moqueur et riant: Heraclitus, ayant pitié et compassion de cette mesme condition nostre, en portoit le visage continuellement triste, et les yeux chargez de larmes. *Alter*
Ridebat quoties à limine mouerat vnum
Protulerátque pedem, flebat contrarius alter. I'ayme mieux la premiere humeur, non par ce qu'il est plus plaisant de rire que de pleurer: mais par ce qu'elle est plus desdaigneuse, et qu'elle nous condamne plus que l'autre: et il me semble, que nous ne pouuons iamais estre assez mesprisez selon nostre merite.

La plainte et la commiseration sont meslées à quelque estimation de la chose qu'on plaint: les choses dequoy on se moque, on les estime sans prix. Ie ne pense point qu'il y ait tant de malheur en nous, comme il y a de vanité, ny tant de malice comme de sotise: nous ne sommes pas si pleins de mal, comme d'inanité: nous ne sommes pas si miserables, comme nous sommes vils. Ainsi Diogenes, qui baguenaudoit apart soy, roulant son tonneau, et hochant du nez le grand Alexandre, nous estimant des mouches, ou des vessies pleines de vent, estoit bien iuge plus aigre et plus poingnant, et par consequent, plus iuste à mon humeur que Timon, celuy qui fut surnommé le haisseur des hommes.

Car ce qu'on hait, on le prend à cœur. Cettuy-cy nous souhaitoit du mal, estoit passionné du desir de nostre ruine, fuioit nostre conuersation comme dangereuse, de

ENGLISH

vation of the human race depends. See how much our soul complicates this ridiculous pastime, and whether every one of its sinews is not strained! How amply it allows everyone, in this, to know himself and to judge himself rightly.[1]

In no other posture do I see and probe myself more thoroughly. What passion does it not exercise in us? Anger, spite, hatred, impatience, and a vehement ambition to win, in a thing in which it would be more excusable to be ambitious of losing. For rare excellence, above the common level, ill becomes a man of honor in a frivolous thing. What I say in this example can be said in all others. Every particle, every occupation of a man betrays him and shows him as well as any other.

Democritus and Heraclitus were two philosophers. The first, finding the human condition vain and ridiculous, never went out in public without a mocking, laughing face. Heraclitus, feeling pity and compassion for this same condition of ours, wore a continually sad face, and his eyes were laden with tears. *One of them*
laughed each time he moved a foot from his doorstep and set it forward; the other, in contrast, wept. I prefer the first temperament, not because it is pleasanter to laugh than to weep, but because it is more disdainful and condemns us more than the other; and it seems to me that we can never be despised as much as we deserve.[2]

Lamenting and pity are mixed with some esteem for the thing we lament; the things we mock we consider worthless. I do not think there is as much unhappiness in us as there is vanity, nor as much malice as foolishness. We are not so full of evil as of emptiness; we are not so wretched as we are base. Thus Diogenes, who pottered about by himself, rolling his tub and turning up his nose at the great Alexander, and who took us for flies or bladders full of wind, was a sharper and more stinging judge, and therefore, to my mind, a juster one, than Timon, the man who was nicknamed the hater of men.[3]

For what we hate, we take to heart. The latter wished us ill, was passionately eager for our ruin, and shunned our company as dangerous, as the

1 Montaigne puns on "passage": Alexander's route to India, and a passage of Scripture on which salvation hangs.
2 Juvenal, Satires X.
3 Timon of Athens, the legendary misanthrope.

FRENCH

meschans, et de nature deprauée: l'autre nous estimoit si peu, que nous ne pourrions ny le troubler, ny l'alterer par nostre contagion, nous laissoit de compagnie, non pour la crainte, mais pour le desdain de nostre commerce: il ne nous estimoit capables ny de bien ny de mal faire.

1.50.5 De mesme marque fut la response de Statilius, auquel Brutus parla pour le ioindre à la conspiration contre Cæsar: il trouua l'entreprinse iuste, mais il ne trouua pas les hommes dignes, pour lesquels on se mist aucunement en peine: conformément à la discipline de Hegesias, qui disoit, le sage ne deuoir rien faire que pour soy: d'autant que, seul il est digne, pour qui on face. Et à celle de Theodorus, que c'est iniustice, que le sage se hazarde pour le bien de son païs, et qu'il mette en peril la sagesse pour des fols. Nostre propre condition est autant ridicule, que risible.

ENGLISH

company of wicked men with depraved natures. The other thought so little of us that we could neither disturb him nor change him by our contagion; he kept away from our company not out of fear but out of disdain for dealing with us. He did not think us capable of doing either good or evil.

Of the same stamp was the answer of Statilius, whom Brutus approached to bring him into the conspiracy against Caesar: he found the undertaking just, but he did not find men worthy of anyone taking any trouble for them. This is in keeping with the teaching of Hegesias, who said that the wise man should do nothing except for himself, since he alone is worthy to have anything done for him; and with that of Theodorus, that it is unjust for the wise man to risk himself for the good of his country and put wisdom in peril for the sake of fools. Our own condition is as ridiculous as it is laughable.[4]

4 Hegesias and Theodorus were Greek philosophers of the Cyrenaic school; Statilius's answer is reported by Plutarch in his Life of Brutus.

I.51 Of the Vanity of Words

De la vanité des paroles

Rhetoric deceives judgment and flourishes in disordered states; Montaigne also mocks inflated words, from cooks to titles.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
1.51.1	VN rhetoricien du temps passé, disoit que son mestier estoit, de choses petites les faire paroistre et trouuer grandes. C'est vn cordonnier qui sçait faire de grands souliers à vn petit pied. On luy eust faict donner le fouët en Sparte, de faire profession d'vn' art piperesse et mensongere: et croy qu'Archidamus qui en estoit Roy, n'ouit pas sans estonnement la response de Thucydidez, auquel il s'enqueroit, qui estoit plus fort à la luicte, ou Pericles ou luy: Cela, fit-il, seroit mal-aysé à verifier: car quand ie l'ay porté par terre en luictant, il persuade à ceux qui l'ont veu, qu'il n'est pas tombé, et le gaigne.	A rhetorician of times past said that his trade was to make small things look great and be taken for great. He is a shoemaker who knows how to make big shoes for a small foot. In Sparta they would have had him whipped for professing a deceitful and lying art. And I believe that Archidamus, who was king there, was not a little astonished to hear the reply of Thucydides, whom he had asked which was the better wrestler, Pericles or he. "That," he said, "would be hard to prove: for when I have thrown him in wrestling, he persuades those who saw it that he did not fall, and wins."[1]
	Ceux qui masquent et fardent les femmes, font moins de mal: car c'est chose de peu de perte de ne les voir pas en leur naturel: là où ceux-cy font estat de tromper, non pas nos yeux, mais nostre iugement, et d'abastardir et corrompre l'essence des choses.	Those who mask and paint women do less harm: for it is no great loss not to see them in their natural state. These men, on the other hand, make it their business to deceive not our eyes but our judgment, and to debase and corrupt the essence of things.
1.51.2	Les republiques qui se sont maintenuës en vn estat reglé et bien policé, comme la Cretense ou Lacedemonienne, elles n'ont pas faict grand compte d'orateurs. Ariston definit sagement la rhetorique, science à persuader le peuple: Socrates, Platon, art de tromper et de flatter. Et ceux qui le nient en la generale description le verifient par tout, en leurs preceptes. Les Mahometans en defendent l'instruction à leurs enfants, pour son inutilité. Et les Atheniens, s'aperceuants combien son vsage, qui auoit tout credit en leur ville, estoit pernicieux, ordonnerent, que sa principale partie, qui est, esmouuoir les affections, fust ostée, ensemble les exordes et perorations.	The republics that have kept themselves in an orderly and well-governed state, like the Cretan or the Spartan, did not think much of orators. Ariston wisely defined rhetoric as the science of persuading the people; Socrates and Plato, as an art of deceiving and flattering. And those who deny this in their general description confirm it everywhere in their precepts. The Muslims forbid teaching it to their children because it is useless. And the Athenians, perceiving how pernicious was its use, which carried all the weight in their city, ordered that its principal part, which is stirring the emotions, be removed, together with opening addresses and perorations.
	C'est vn vtil inuenté pour manier et agiter vne tourbe, et vne commune desreglée: et est vtil qui ne s'employe qu'aux Estats malades, comme la medecine. En ceux où le vulgaire, où les ignorans, où tous ont tout peu, comme	It is a tool invented to manage and stir up a mob and an unruly populace; and it is a tool that is used only in sick states, like medicine. In those where the common people, the ignorant, where

1 This Thucydides, son of Melesias, was Pericles' political rival, not the historian; the story is in Plutarch.

FRENCH

celuy d'Athenes, de Rhodes, et de Rome, et où les choses ont esté en perpetuelle tempeste, là ont afflué les orateurs.

Et à la verité, il se void peu de personnages en ces republiques là, qui se soient poussez en grand credit sans le secours de l'eloquence: Pompeius, Cæsar, Crassus, Lucullus, Lentulus, Metellus, ont pris de là, leur grand appuy à se monter à cette grandeur d'authorité, où ils sont en fin arriuez: et s'en sont aydez plus que des armes, contre l'opinion des meilleurs temps. Car L. Volumnius parlant en public en faueur de l'election au Consulat, faitte des personnes de Q. Fabius et P. Decius: Ce sont gents nays à la guerre, grands aux effects: au combat du babil, rudes: esprits vrayement consulaires. Les subtils, eloquents et sçauants, sont bons pour la ville, Preteurs à faire iustice, dit-il.

L'eloquence a fleury le plus à Rome lors que les affaires ont esté en plus mauuais estat, et que l'orage des guerres ciuiles les agitoit; comme vn champ libre et indompté porte les herbes plus gaillardes.

Il semble par là que les polices, qui dépendent d'vn Monarque, en ont moins de besoin que les autres: car la bestise et facilité, qui se trouue en la commune, et qui la rend subiecte à estre maniée et contournée par les oreilles, au doux son de cette harmonie, sans venir à poiser et connoistre la verité des choses par la force de raison; cette facilité, dis-ie, ne se trouue pas si aisément en vn seul, et est plus aisé de le garentir par bonne institution et bon conseil, de l'impression de cette poison. On n'a pas veu sortir de Macedoine ny de Perse, aucun orateur de renom.

1.51.3 I'en ay dit ce mot, sur le subiect d'vn Italien, que ie vien d'entretenir, qui a seruy le feu Cardinal Caraffe de maistre d'hostel iusques à sa mort. Ie luy faisoy compter de sa charge. Il m'a fait vn discours de cette science de gueule, auec vne grauité et contenance magistrale, comme s'il m'eust parlé de quelque grand poinct de theologie.

Il m'a dechifré vne difference d'appetits: celuy qu'on a à ieun, qu'on a apres le second et tiers seruice: les moyens tantost de luy plaire simplement, tantost de l'eueiller et picquer: la police de ses sauces; premierement en

ENGLISH

everyone has been able to do everything, as in Athens, Rhodes and Rome, and where affairs have been in perpetual storm, there orators have flocked.

And in truth, you see few men in those republics who pushed their way to great influence without the help of eloquence. Pompey, Caesar, Crassus, Lucullus, Lentulus, Metellus drew from it their main support in climbing to the height of authority that they finally reached; and they relied on it more than on arms, contrary to the opinion of better times. For Lucius Volumnius, speaking in public in favor of the election of Quintus Fabius and Publius Decius to the consulship, said: "These are men born for war, great in deeds; in the combat of chatter, unpolished: truly consular minds. The subtle, the eloquent and the learned are good for the city, as praetors to administer justice."[2]

Eloquence flourished most in Rome when affairs were in the worst state and the storm of civil wars was tossing them about; just as a free and untamed field bears the lustiest growth.

It seems from this that governments that depend on a monarch need it less than others. For the stupidity and pliancy found in the common people, which make them liable to be managed and led by the ears by the sweet sound of this harmony, without coming to weigh and know the truth of things by the force of reason—this pliancy, I say, is not so easily found in a single person; and it is easier to protect him from the impression of this poison by good upbringing and good counsel. No orator of renown was ever seen to come out of Macedonia or Persia.

I have said this much on the subject of an Italian I have just been talking with, who served the late Cardinal Caraffa as steward until his death. I had him tell me about his duties. He gave me a discourse on this science of the gullet with a gravity and a magisterial air, as if he had been speaking to me of some great point of theology.[3]

He spelled out for me a difference in appetites: the one you have when fasting, and the one you have after the second and third courses; the means now simply of pleasing it, now of waking it up and

2 From Livy, History of Rome X.22.
3 Carlo Carafa, nephew of Pope Paul IV, executed in 1561.

FRENCH

general, et puis particularisant les qualitez des ingrediens, et leurs effects: les differences des salades selon leur saison, celle qui doit estre reschaufée, celle qui veut estre seruie froide, la façon de les orner et embellir, pour les rendre encores plaisantes à la veuë. Apres cela il est entré sur l'ordre du seruice, plein de belles et importantes considerations.

Nec minimo sanè discrimine refert
Quo gestu lepores, et quo gallina secetur. Et tout cela enflé de riches et magnifiques parolles: et celles mesmes qu'on employe à traiter du gouuernement d'vn Empire. Il m'est souuenu de mon homme, *Hoc salsum est, hoc adustum est, hoc lautum est parum;*
Illud rectè, iterum sic memento; sedulò
Moneo quæ possum pro mea sapientia.
Postremo tanquam in speculum, in patinas, Demea,
Inspicere iubeo, et moneo quid facto vsus sit. Si est-ce que les Grecs mesmes louërent grandement l'ordre et la disposition que Paulus Æmylius obserua au festin, qu'il leur fit au retour de Macedoine: mais ie ne parle point icy des effects, ie parle des mots.

1.51.4 Ie ne sçay s'il en aduient aux autres comme à moy: mais ie ne me puis garder quand i'oy nos architectes, s'enfler de ces gros mots de pilastres, architraues, corniches d'ouurage Corinthien, et Dorique, et semblables de leur iargon, que mon imagination ne se saisisse incontinent du palais d'Apollidon, et par effect ie trouue que ce sont les chetiues pieces de la porte de ma cuisine.

1.51.5 Oyez dire metonomie, metaphore, allegorie, et autres tels noms de la grammaire, semble-il pas qu'on signifie quelque forme de langage rare et pellegrin? ce sont titres qui touchent le babil de vostre chambriere.

1.51.6 C'est vne piperie voisine à cette-cy, d'appeller les offices de nostre Estat, par les titres superbes des Romains, encore qu'ils n'ayent aucune ressemblance de charge, et encores moins d'authorité et de puissance. Et cette-cy

ENGLISH

pricking it; the government of his sauces, first in general, and then going into the qualities of the ingredients and their effects; the differences between salads according to their season, which one must be warmed, which one wants to be served cold, the way to garnish and embellish them to make them pleasing to the eye as well. After that he went on to the order of service, full of fine and important considerations.

And it surely makes no small difference
with what gesture you carve a hare, and with what a hen. And all this puffed up with rich and magnificent words, the very ones used in discussing the government of an empire. I was reminded of my man: *This is too salty, this is burnt, this is not washed enough;*
that one is right, remember to do it that way again. I give them careful
advice as best I can, according to my wisdom.
Finally, Demea, I bid them look into the dishes as into a mirror,
and I advise them what needs to be done. Even so, the Greeks themselves greatly praised the order and arrangement that Paulus Aemilius observed at the feast he gave them on his return from Macedonia; but I am not speaking here of deeds, I am speaking of words.[4]

I do not know whether others are affected the way I am; but when I hear our architects puffing themselves up with those big words—pilasters, architraves, cornices of Corinthian and Doric work, and the like from their jargon—I cannot stop my imagination from immediately seizing on the palace of Apolidon; and in fact I find that they are the paltry parts of my kitchen door.[5]

When you hear people say metonymy, metaphor, allegory and other such grammatical names, does it not seem that they mean some rare and exotic form of language? They are labels that apply to your chambermaid's chatter.

A cheat close to this one is calling the offices of our state by the proud titles of the Romans, even though they bear no resemblance in function, and still less in authority and power. And this one too,

4 The first quotation is from Juvenal, Satires V; the second from Terence, The Brothers, where the slave Syrus parodies his master's moral lectures. Paulus Aemilius conquered Macedonia in 168 BC.
5 Apolidon's enchanted palace appears in the chivalric romance Amadis of Gaul.

FRENCH

aussi, qui seruira, à mon aduis, vn iour de reproche à nostre siecle, d'employer indignement à qui bon nous semble les surnoms les plus glorieux, dequoy l'ancienneté ait honoré vn ou deux personnages en plusieurs siecles.

Platon a emporté ce surnom de diuin, par vn consentement vniuersel, qu'aucun n'a essayé luy enuier: et les Italiens qui se vantent, et auecques raison, d'auoir communément l'esprit plus esueillé, et le discours plus sain que les autres nations de leur temps, en viennent d'estrener l'Aretin: auquel, sauf vne façon de parler bouffie et bouillonnée de pointes, ingenieuses à la verité, mais recherchées de loing, et fantastiques, et outre l'eloquence en fin, telle qu'elle puisse estre, ie ne voy pas qu'il y ait rien au dessus des communs autheurs de son siecle: tant s'en faut qu'il approche de cette diuinité ancienne. Et le surnom de Grand, nous l'attachons à des Princes, qui n'ont rien au dessus de la grandeur populaire.

ENGLISH

which will one day, I think, be held against our age: bestowing unworthily, on anyone we please, the most glorious surnames with which antiquity honored one or two figures in the course of several centuries.

Plato carried off the surname "divine" by a universal consent that no one has tried to begrudge him. And the Italians, who boast, and with reason, of having generally livelier minds and sounder reasoning than the other nations of their time, have just bestowed it on Aretino. Yet in him, apart from a way of speaking that is inflated and bubbling over with conceits—ingenious, to be sure, but far-fetched and fanciful—and apart from his eloquence, after all, such as it may be, I do not see that there is anything above the common authors of his century; so far is he from approaching that ancient divinity. And the surname "the Great" we attach to princes who have nothing above the greatness of ordinary people.[6]

6 Pietro Aretino (1492–1556), Italian satirist and letter writer, known as "the divine Aretino."

I.52 Of the Frugality of the Ancients

De la parsimonie des anciens
Romans like Regulus, Cato, and Scipio lived on little, even at the height of power and glory.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
1.52.1	ATTILIVS Regulus, general de l'armée Romaine en Afrique, au milieu de sa gloire et de ses victoires contre les Carthaginois, escriuit à la chose publique, qu'vn valet de labourage, qu'il auoit laissé seul au gouuernement de son bien, qui estoit en tout sept arpents de terre, s'en estoit enfuy, ayant desrobé ses vtils de labourage, et demandoit congé pour s'en retourner et y pouruoir, de peur que sa femme, et ses enfans n'en eussent à souffrir. Le Senat pourueut à commettre vn autre à la conduite de ses biens, et luy fit restablir ce qui luy auoit esté desrobé, et ordonna que sa femme et enfans seroient nourris aux despens du public.	Atilius Regulus, general of the Roman army in Africa, in the midst of his glory and his victories against the Carthaginians, wrote to the state that a farmhand whom he had left alone in charge of his property, which amounted in all to seven acres of land, had run off with his farming tools; and he asked for leave to go home and see to it, for fear that his wife and children might suffer. The Senate saw to it by appointing someone else to manage his property, had what had been stolen from him restored, and ordered that his wife and children be fed at public expense.[1]
1.52.2	Le vieux Caton reuenant d'Espaigne Consul, vendit son cheual de seruice pour espargner l'argent qu'il eust cousté à le ramener par mer en Italie: et estant au gouuernement de Sardaigne, faisoit ses visitations à pied, n'ayant auec luy autre suite qu'vn officier de la chose publique, qui luy portoit sa robbe, et vn vase à faire des sacrifices: et le plus souuent il portoit sa male luy mesme. Il se vantoit de n'auoir iamais eu robbe qui eust cousté plus de dix escus; ny auoir enuoyé au marché plus de dix sols pour vn iour: et de ses maisons aux champs, qu'il n'en auoit aucune qui fust crepie et enduite par dehors.	The elder Cato, returning from Spain as consul, sold his warhorse to save the money it would have cost to bring it back by sea to Italy. And while he was governor of Sardinia he made his tours of inspection on foot, with no other retinue than one public officer who carried his gown and a vessel for making sacrifices; and most often he carried his bag himself. He boasted that he had never had a gown that cost more than ten crowns, nor sent more than ten sous to the market for one day; and that of his country houses, none was plastered and rendered on the outside.
1.52.3	Scipion Æmylianus apres deux triomphes et deux Consulats, alla en legation auec sept seruiteurs seulement. On tient qu'Homere n'en eut iamais qu'vn, Platon trois; Zenon le chef de la secte Stoique, pas vn. Il ne fut taxé que cinq sols et demy pour iour, à Tyberius Gracchus, allant en commission pour la chose publique, estant lors le premier homme des Romains.	Scipio Aemilianus, after two triumphs and two consulships, went on an embassy with only seven servants. It is said that Homer never had more than one, Plato three, and Zeno, the head of the Stoic sect, not one. Tiberius Gracchus was allowed only five and a half sous a day when he went on a commission for the state, though he was then the foremost man among the Romans.

1 Marcus Atilius Regulus, Roman consul in the First Punic War (256 BC).

I.53 Of a Saying of Caesar

D'vn mot de Cæsar

Taking up a saying of Caesar, Montaigne finds we never rest content with present things and always crave the absent.

FRENCH

1.53.1 SI nous nous amusions par fois à nous considerer, et le temps que nous mettons à contreroller autruy, et à connoistre les choses qui sont hors de nous, que nous l'employissions à nous sonder nous mesmes, nous sentirions aisément combien toute cette nostre contexture est bastie de pieces foibles et defaillantes. N'est-ce pas vn singulier tesmoignage d'imperfection, ne pouuoir r'assoir nostre contentement en aucune chose, et que par desir mesme et imagination il soit hors de nostre puissance de choisir ce qu'il nous faut? Dequoy porte bon tesmoignage cette grande dispute, qui a tousiours esté entre les Philosophes, pour trouuer le souuerain bien de l'homme, et qui dure encores et durera eternellement, sans resolution et sans accord.

Dum abest quod auemus, id exsuperare videtur
Cætera; post aliud, cùm contigit, illud auemus,
Et sitis æqua tenet.

1.53.2 Quoy que ce soit qui tombe en nostre connoissance et iouïssance, nous sentons qu'il ne nous satisfait pas, et allons beant apres les choses aduenir et inconnuës, d'autant que les presentes ne nous soulent point. Non pas à mon aduis qu'elles n'ayent assez dequoy nous souler, mais c'est que nous les saisissons d'vne prise malade et desreglée. *Nam cùm vidit hic ad vsum quæ flagitat vsus,*
Omnia iam fermè mortalibus esse parata;
Diuitiis homines et honore et laude potentes
Affluere, atque bona natorum excellere fama;
Nec minus esse domi, cuiquam tamen anxia corda,
Atque animum infestis cogi seruire querelis:
Intellexit ibi vitium vas facere ipsum,
Omniáque, illius vitio, corrumpier intus
Quæ collata foris et commoda quæque venirent.

ENGLISH

If we sometimes took the trouble to consider ourselves, and spent in sounding ourselves the time we spend in checking up on others and in getting to know things outside us, we would easily feel how much this whole fabric of ours is built of weak and failing pieces. Is it not a singular proof of imperfection that we cannot settle our contentment on any one thing, and that even in desire and imagination it is beyond our power to choose what we need? Good evidence of this is the great dispute that has always gone on among the philosophers about finding man's sovereign good, and that still goes on and will go on forever, without resolution and without agreement.

While what we long for is absent, it seems to surpass all the rest; then, once we have it, we long for something else,
and the same thirst holds us.[1]

Whatever comes within our knowledge and enjoyment, we feel that it does not satisfy us, and we go gaping after things to come and unknown, because present things do not fill us up. Not, in my opinion, that they do not have enough in them to fill us, but because we seize them with a sick and disordered grip. *For when he saw that what need demands for living*
was nearly all already provided for mortals,
that men, powerful in wealth, honor and praise,
were abounding, and excelled in the good name of their children,
and yet that at home no one had a heart the less anxious,
and that the mind was forced to slave under hostile complaints,
he understood then that the fault lay in the vessel itself,
and that by its fault everything was spoiled within,

1 Lucretius, On the Nature of Things III.

FRENCH	ENGLISH
	whatever good things were gathered from outside and came into it.[2]
1.53.3 Nostre appetit est irresolu et incertain: il ne sçait rien tenir, ny rien iouyr de bonne façon. L'homme estimant que ce soit le vice de ces choses qu'il tient, se remplit et se paist d'autres choses qu'il ne sçait point, et qu'il ne cognoist point, où il applique ses desirs et ses esperances, les prend en honneur et reuerence: comme dit Cæsar, *Communi fit vitio naturæ, vt inuisis, latitantibus atque incognitis rebus magis confidamus, vehementiùsque exterreamur*.	Our appetite is irresolute and uncertain; it can neither hold on to anything nor enjoy anything in the right way. Man, thinking it is the fault of the things he holds, fills and feeds himself with other things that he does not know and does not understand, on which he sets his desires and hopes, and holds them in honor and reverence. As Caesar says: *It happens through a common fault of nature that we have more confidence in things unseen, hidden and unknown, and are more violently terrified by them.*

2 Lucretius again, On the Nature of Things VI, speaking of Epicurus.

I.54 Of Vain Subtleties

Des vaines subtilitez
Admiring difficult trifles shows weak judgment; Montaigne notes how extremes meet, as in ignorance before and after knowledge.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
1.54.1	IL est de ces subtilitez friuoles et vaines, par le moyen desquelles les hommes cerchent quelquefois de la recommandation: comme les poëtes, qui font des ouurages entiers de vers commençans par vne mesme lettre: nous voyons des œufs, des boules, des aisles, des haches façonnées anciennement par les Grecs, auec la mesure de leurs vers, en les alongeant ou accoursissant, en maniere qu'ils viennent à representer telle, ou telle figure. Telle estoit la science de celuy qui s'amusa à compter en combien de sortes se pouuoient renger les lettres de l'alphabet, et y en trouua ce nombre incroyable, qui se void dans Plutarque.	There are some frivolous and empty subtleties by means of which men sometimes seek recognition: like the poets who make whole works of lines beginning with the same letter. We see eggs, balls, wings and axes shaped long ago by the Greeks with the measure of their lines, lengthening or shortening them so that they come to represent this figure or that. Such was the science of the man who amused himself by counting in how many ways the letters of the alphabet could be arranged, and found that incredible number which you can see in Plutarch.[1]
	Ie trouue bonne l'opinion de celuy, à qui on presenta vn homme, apris à ietter de la main vn grain de mil, auec telle industrie, que sans faillir, il le passoit tousiours dans le trou d'vne esguille, et luy demanda lon apres quelque present pour loyer d'vne si rare suffisance: surquoy il ordonna bien plaisamment et iustement à mon aduis, qu'on fist donner à cet ouurier deux ou trois minots de mil, affin qu'vn si bel art ne demeurast sans exercice. C'est vn tesmoignage merueilleux de la foiblesse de nostre iugement, qu'il recommande les choses par la rareté ou nouuelleté, ou encore par la difficulté, si la bonté et vtilité n'y sont ioinctes.	I approve the view of the man to whom someone presented a man trained to throw a grain of millet with such skill that he would always pass it through the eye of a needle without missing; and afterwards he was asked for some present as a reward for so rare an ability. Whereupon he ordered, very amusingly and, in my opinion, justly, that this craftsman be given two or three bushels of millet, so that such a fine art should not go without practice. It is a marvelous testimony to the weakness of our judgment that it values things for their rarity or novelty, or even for their difficulty, if goodness and usefulness are not joined to them.[2]
1.54.2	Nous venons presentement de nous iouër chez moy, à qui pourroit trouuer plus de choses qui se tinsent par les deux bouts extremes, comme, Sire, c'est vn tiltre qui se donne à la plus esleuée personne de nostre Estat, qui est le Roy, et se donne aussi au vulgaire, comme aux marchans, et ne touche point ceux d'entre deux. Les femmes de qualité, on les nomme Dames, les moyennes Damoiselles, et Dames encore celles de la plus basse marche. Les daiz qu'on estend sur les tables, ne sont permis qu'aux maisons des Princes et aux tauernes.	We have just been playing a game at my house: who could find the most things that meet at their two extreme ends. For example, "Sire" is a title given to the most exalted person in our state, the King, and also given to the common sort, such as merchants, but it does not touch those in between. Women of rank are called Dames, those of middling rank Damoiselles, and Dames again those of the lowest grade. Canopies spread over tables are

1 Greek pattern poems, whose lines form the shape of their subject, such as those attributed to Simmias of Rhodes.
2 Quintilian tells this story of Alexander the Great.

FRENCH

Democritus disoit, que les Dieux et les bestes auoient les sentimens plus aiguz que les hommes, qui sont au moyen estage.

Les Romains portoient mesme accoutrement les iours de dueil et les iours de feste.

1.54.3 Il est certain que la peur extreme, et l'extreme ardeur de courage troublent également le ventre, et le laschent. Le saubriquet de Tremblant, duquel le XII. Roy de Nauarre Sancho fut surnommé, aprend que la hardiesse aussi bien que la peur engendrent du tremoussement aux membres. Ceux qui armoient ou luy ou quelque autre de pareille nature, à qui la peau frissonoit, essayerent à le rasseurer; appetissans le danger auquel il s'alloit ietter: Vous me cognoissez mal, leur dit-il: si ma chair sçauoit iusques où mon courage la portera tantost, elle se transiroit tout à plat. La foiblesse qui nous vient de froideur, et desgoutement aux exercices de Venus, elle nous vient aussi d'vn appetit trop vehement, et d'vne chaleur desreglée.

L'extreme froideur et l'extreme chaleur cuisent et rotissent. Aristote dit que les cueux de plomb se fondent, et coulent de froid, et de la rigueur de l'hyuer, comme d'vne chaleur vehemente. Le desir et la satieté remplissent de douleur les sieges au dessus et au dessous de la volupté.

1.54.4 La bestise et la sagesse se rencontrent en mesme poinct de sentiment et de resolution à la souffrance des accidens humains: les sages gourmandent et commandent le mal, et les autres l'ignorent: ceux-cy sont, par maniere de dire, au deçà des accidens, les autres au delà: lesquels apres en auoir bien poisé et consideré les qualitez, les auoir mesurez et iugez tels qu'ils sont, s'eslancent au dessus, par la force d'vn vigoureux courage.

Ils les desdaignent et foulent aux pieds, ayans vne ame forte et solide, contre laquelle les traicts de la fortune venans à donner, il est force qu'ils reialissent et s'esmoussent, trouuans vn corps dans lequel ils ne peuuent faire impression: l'ordinaire et moyenne condition des hommes, loge entre ces deux extremitez: qui est de ceux qui apperçoiuent les maux, les sentent, et ne les peuuent supporter. L'enfance et la decrepitude se rencontrent en imbecillité de cerueau. L'auarice et la profusion en pareil desir d'attirer et d'acquerir.

ENGLISH

permitted only in the houses of princes and in taverns. Democritus said that gods and beasts had keener senses than men, who are on the middle floor.[3]

The Romans wore the same clothing on days of mourning and on feast days.

It is certain that extreme fear and extreme ardor of courage equally upset the bowels and loosen them. The nickname "the Trembler," given to Sancho XII, King of Navarre, teaches us that boldness as well as fear produces trembling in the limbs. Those who were arming him, or some other man of the same nature whose skin was shivering, tried to reassure him by making light of the danger he was about to throw himself into. "You know me ill," he told them. "If my flesh knew how far my courage will soon carry it, it would freeze stiff with fright." The weakness that comes to us from coldness and distaste in the exercises of Venus comes to us also from too vehement an appetite and a disordered heat.

Extreme cold and extreme heat both cook and roast. Aristotle says that ingots of lead melt and run from the cold and rigor of winter as they do from a fierce heat. Desire and satiety fill with pain the seats above and below pleasure.

Stupidity and wisdom meet at the same point of feeling and resolution in enduring human misfortunes: the wise rebuke misfortune and command it, and the others are unaware of it. These others are, so to speak, on this side of misfortunes; the wise are beyond them. After weighing and considering their qualities well, after measuring them and judging them for what they are, the wise leap above them by the force of a vigorous courage.

They disdain them and trample them underfoot, having a strong and solid soul against which the arrows of Fortune, when they strike, must necessarily rebound and be blunted, meeting a body on which they can make no impression. The ordinary and middling condition of men lodges between these two extremes: it is that of people who perceive misfortunes, feel them, and cannot bear them. Childhood and decrepitude meet in feeble-

3 In Montaigne's day "Damoiselle" was the title of the wife of an untitled gentleman.

FRENCH

ENGLISH

ness of brain; avarice and prodigality in a like desire to draw in and acquire.

1.54.5 Il se peut dire auec apparence, qu'il y a ignorance abecedaire, qui va deuant la science: vne autre doctorale, qui vient apres la science: ignorance que la science fait et engendre, tout ainsi comme elle deffait et destruit la premiere. Des esprits simples, moins curieux et moins instruits, il s'en fait de bons Chrestiens, qui par reuerence et obeissance, croyent simplement, et se maintiennent sous les loix. En la moyenne vigueur des esprits, et moyenne capacité, s'engendre l'erreur des opinions: ils suiuent l'apparence du premier sens: et ont quelque tiltre d'interpreter à niaiserie et bestise que nous soyons arrestez en l'ancien train, regardans à nous, qui n'y sommes pas instruits par estude.

It can plausibly be said that there is an ABC ignorance that comes before knowledge, and another, doctoral ignorance that comes after knowledge: an ignorance that knowledge makes and engenders, just as it undoes and destroys the first. Out of simple minds, less curious and less instructed, good Christians are made, who out of reverence and obedience believe simply and keep themselves under the laws. In minds of middling vigor and middling capacity, erroneous opinions are engendered. They follow the appearance of the first sense, and they have some grounds for interpreting as simple-mindedness and stupidity the fact that we hold to the old ways, looking at those of us who are not instructed in these matters by study.

Les grands esprits plus rassis et clairuoyans, font vn autre genre de bien croyans: lesquels par longue et religieuse inuestigation, penetrent vne plus profonde et abstruse lumiere, és escritures, et sentent le mysterieux et diuin secret de nostre police ecclesiastique. Pourtant en voyons nous aucuns estre arriuez à ce dernier estage, par le second, auec merueilleux fruit, et confirmation: comme à l'extreme limite de la chrestienne intelligence: et iouyr de leur victoire auec consolation, action de graces, reformation de mœurs, et grande modestie.

Great minds, more settled and clear-sighted, make another kind of good believers: by long and religious investigation they penetrate a deeper and more abstruse light in the Scriptures, and sense the mysterious and divine secret of our Church's order. And so we see some of them who have reached this last stage by way of the second, with marvelous fruit and confirmation, as at the farthest limit of Christian understanding, and who enjoy their victory with consolation, thanksgiving, reformation of conduct and great modesty.

Et en ce rang n'entens-ie pas loger ces autres, qui pour se purger du soupçon de leur erreur passé, et pour nous asseurer d'eux, se rendent extremes, indiscrets, et iniustes, à la conduicte de nostre cause, et la tachent d'infinis reproches de violence. Les païsants simples, sont honnestes gents: et honnestes gents les Philosophes: ou, selon que nostre temps les nomme, des natures fortes et claires, enrichies d'vne large instruction de sciences vtiles. Les mestis, qui ont dedaigné le premier siege de l'ignorance des lettres, et n'ont peu ioindre l'autre, le cul entre deux selles (desquels ie suis, et tant d'autres) sont dangereux, ineptes, importuns: ceux-cy troublent le monde.

And in this rank I do not mean to place those others who, to purge themselves of the suspicion of their past error and to reassure us about themselves, become extreme, immoderate and unjust in the conduct of our cause, and stain it with endless charges of violence. Simple peasants are decent people, and decent people are the philosophers—or, as our age calls them, strong and clear natures, enriched with a broad instruction in useful sciences. Those in between, who have disdained the first seat, ignorance of letters, and could not reach the other—their backside between two saddles, like me and so many others—are dangerous, inept and tiresome: these are the ones who trouble the world.

Pourtant de ma part, ie me recule tant que ie puis, dans le premier et naturel siege, d'où ie me suis pour neant essayé de partir.

That is why, for my part, I draw back as far as I can into the first and natural seat, which I tried in vain to leave.

1.54.6 La poësie populaire et purement naturelle, a des naïuetés et graces, par où elle se compare à la principale beauté de

Popular and purely natural poetry has a naturalness and graces by which it bears comparison

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
	la poësie parfaitte selon l'art: comme il se void és villanelles de Gascongne et aux chansons, qu'on nous rapporte des nations qui n'ont cognoissance d'aucune science, ny mesme d'escriture. La poësie mediocre, qui s'arreste entre deux, est desdaignée, sans honneur, et sans prix.	with the principal beauty of poetry perfected according to art, as can be seen in the villanelles of Gascony and in the songs reported to us from nations that have no knowledge of any science, nor even of writing. Middling poetry, which stops between the two, is disdained, without honor and without value.
1.54.7	Mais par ce qu'apres que le pas a esté ouuert à l'esprit, i'ay trouué, comme il aduient ordinairement, que nous auions pris pour vn exercice malaisé et d'vn rare subiect, ce qui ne l'est aucunement, et qu'apres que nostre inuention a esté eschauffée, elle descouure vn nombre infiny de pareils exemples, ie n'en adiousteray que cettuy-cy: que si ces Essays estoient dignes, qu'on en iugeast, il en pourroit aduenir à mon aduis, qu'ils ne plairoient guere aux esprits communs et vulgaires, ny guere aux singuliers et excellens: ceux-là n'y entendroient pas assez, ceux-cy y entendroient trop: ils pourroient viuoter en la moyenne region.	But once the way was opened to my mind, I found, as usually happens, that we had taken for a difficult exercise and a rare subject something that is not so at all, and that once our inventiveness is warmed up it discovers an infinite number of similar examples. So I will add only this one: that if these Essays were worth judging, it might turn out, in my opinion, that they would hardly please common and ordinary minds, nor much please singular and excellent ones. The former would not understand enough in them, the latter would understand too much. They might scrape a living in the middle region.

I.55 Of Smells

Des Senteurs

The best bodily smell is none; Montaigne describes his own keen nose and the power of perfumes on the mind.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
1.55.1	IL se dit d'aucuns, comme d'Alexandre le grand, que leur sueur espandoit vn' odeur souefue, par quelque rare et extraordinaire complexion: dequoy Plutarque et autres recherchent la cause. Mais la commune façon des corps est au contraire: et la meilleure condition qu'ils ayent, c'est d'estre exempts de senteur. La douceur mesme des haleines plus pures, n'a rien de plus parfaict, que d'estre sans aucune odeur, qui nous offence: comme sont celles des enfans bien sains. Voyla pourquoy dit Plaute, *Mulier tum benè olet, vbi nihil olet.* La plus exquise senteur d'vne femme, c'est ne sentir rien.	It is said of some people, like Alexander the Great, that their sweat gave off a sweet smell, owing to some rare and extraordinary constitution; Plutarch and others look for the cause of it. But the common way of bodies is the contrary, and the best condition they can be in is to be free of smell. Even the sweetness of the purest breath has nothing more perfect about it than to be without any odor that offends us, like the breath of very healthy children. That is why, says Plautus, *A woman smells good when she smells of nothing*. The most exquisite scent of a woman is to smell of nothing.
	Et les bonnes senteurs estrangeres, on a raison de les tenir pour suspectes, à ceux qui s'en seruent, et d'estimer qu'elles soyent employées pour couurir quelque defaut naturel de ce costé-là. D'où naissent ces rencontres des poëtes anciens, c'est puïr que sentir bon. *Rides nos, Coracine, nil olentes: / Malo quàm benè olere, nil olere.* Et ailleurs, *Posthume, non benè olet, qui benè semper olet.*	And borrowed perfumes, however good, we are right to regard as suspect in those who use them, and to think they are used to cover some natural defect in that quarter. Hence those quips of the ancient poets: to smell good is to stink. *You laugh at us, Coracinus, because we smell of nothing: / I would rather smell of nothing than smell good.* And elsewhere: *Postumus, he who always smells good does not smell good.*[1]
1.55.2	I'ayme pourtant bien fort à estre entretenu de bonnes senteurs, et hay outre mesure les mauuaises, que ie tire de plus loing que toute autre: *Namque sagacius vnus odoror,* *Polypus, an grauis hirsutis cubet hircus in alis,* *Quàm canis acer vbi lateat sus.* Les senteurs plus simples et naturelles, me semblent plus aggreables.	Yet I am very fond of being surrounded by good smells, and I hate bad ones beyond measure, and I catch them from farther off than anyone else: *For I alone sniff out more keenly,* *whether a polyp or a rank goat lurks in hairy armpits,* *than a keen hound sniffs out where the boar is hiding.* The simplest and most natural scents seem to me the most agreeable.[2]
1.55.3	Et touche ce soing principalement les dames. En la plus espesse barbarie, les femmes Scythes, apres s'estre lauées, se saupoudrent et encroustent tout le corps et le visage, de certaine drogue, qui naist en leur terroir,	And this concern is chiefly the ladies' business. In the thickest barbarism, the Scythian women, after washing, powder and encrust their whole body and face with a certain fragrant drug that grows in their land; and when they have removed this paint

1 Martial, Epigrams VI.55 and II.12.
2 Horace, Epodes XII.

FRENCH	ENGLISH
odoriferante. Et pour approcher les hommes, ayans osté ce fard, elles s'en trouuent et polies et parfumées.	to approach the men, they find themselves both smooth and perfumed.
1.55.4 Quelque odeur que ce soit, c'est merueille combien elle s'attache à moy, et combien i'ay la peau propre à s'en abreuuer. Celuy qui se plaint de nature dequoy elle a laissé l'homme sans instrument à porter les senteurs au nez, a tort: car elles se portent elles mesmes. Mais à moy particulierement, les moustaches que i'ay pleines, m'en seruent: si i'en approche mes gans, ou mon mouchoir, l'odeur y tiendra tout vn iour: elles accusent le lieu d'où ie viens: les estroits baisers de la ieunesse, sauoureux, gloutons et gluans, s'y colloient autrefois, et s'y tenoient plusieurs heures apres.	Whatever smell it may be, it is marvelous how it clings to me, and how apt my skin is to soak it up. The man who complains that nature left us without an instrument for carrying smells to the nose is wrong, for smells carry themselves. But in my case particularly, my moustache, which is thick, does the job: if I bring my gloves or my handkerchief near it, the smell will stay there a whole day. It gives away where I have been. The close kisses of youth, savory, greedy and sticky, used to glue themselves to it and stay there for several hours afterwards.
Et si pourtant ie me trouue peu subiect aux maladies populaires, qui se chargent par la conuersation, et qui naissent de la contagion de l'air; et me suis sauué de celles de mon temps, dequoy il y en a eu plusieurs sortes en nos villes, et en noz armées. On lit de Socrates, que n'estant iamais party d'Athenes pendant plusieurs recheutes de peste, qui la tourmenterent tant de fois, luy seul ne s'en trouua iamais plus mal.	And yet I find myself little subject to epidemic diseases, which are caught from contact with people and arise from infection of the air; and I have escaped those of my time, of which there have been several kinds in our towns and in our armies. We read of Socrates that, though he never left Athens during the many recurrences of plague that tormented it so often, he alone was never the worse for it.
1.55.5 Les medecins pourroient, ce crois-ie, tirer des odeurs, plus d'vsage qu'ils ne font: car i'ay souuent apperçeu qu'elles me changent, et agissent en mes esprits, selon qu'elles sont. Qui me fait approuuer ce qu'on dit, que l'inuention des encens et parfuns aux Eglises, si ancienne et espandue en toutes nations et religions, regarde à cela, de nous resiouir, esueiller et purifier le sens, pour nous rendre plus propres à la contemplation.	Physicians could, I believe, make more use of smells than they do; for I have often noticed that they change me and act on my spirits according to what they are. This makes me approve what people say, that the use of incense and perfumes in churches, so ancient and so widespread among all nations and religions, aims at this: to gladden, rouse and purify our senses, to make us fitter for contemplation.
1.55.6 Ie voudrois bien pour en iuger, auoir eu ma part de l'ouurage de ces cuisiniers, qui sçauent assaisonner les odeurs estrangeres, auec la saueur des viandes. Comme on remarqua singulierement au seruice du Roy de Thunes, qui de nostre aage print terre à Naples, pour s'aboucher auec l'Empereur Charles. On farcissoit ses viandes de drogues odoriferantes, en telle somptuosité, qu'vn Paon, et deux Faisans, se trouuerent sur ses parties, reuenir à cent ducats, pour les apprester selon leur maniere. Et quand on les despeçoit, non la salle seulement, mais toutes les chambres de son Palais, et les rues d'autour, estoient remplies d'vne tres-soüefue vapeur, qui ne s'esuanouissoit pas si soudain.	In order to judge of it, I would very much have liked to have had a share in the handiwork of those cooks who know how to season foods with foreign fragrances as well as with their own flavor. This was particularly remarked in the service of the King of Tunis, who in our time landed at Naples to confer with the Emperor Charles. His dishes were stuffed with fragrant spices with such lavishness that a peacock and two pheasants came, according to his accounts, to a hundred ducats to prepare in their fashion. And when they were carved, not only the hall but all the rooms of his palace and the streets around were filled with a very sweet vapor that did not vanish quickly.[3]

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
1.55.7	Le principal soing que i’aye à me loger, c’est de fuir l’air puant et pesant. Ces belles villes, Venise et Paris, alterent la faueur que ie leur porte, par l’aigre senteur, l’vne de son maraits, l’autre de sa boue.	My chief concern in choosing where to live is to avoid stinking, heavy air. Those beautiful cities, Venice and Paris, spoil the affection I have for them by their sharp smell: the one from its marshes, the other from its mud.

3 Mulay Hassan, King of Tunis, met the Emperor Charles V at Naples in 1543.

I.56 Of Prayers

Des prieres

Montaigne recommends the Lord's Prayer and warns against praying while unrepentant and against careless use of sacred texts.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
1.56.1	IE propose des fantasies informes et irresolues, comme font ceux qui publient des questions doubteuses, à debattre aux escoles: non pour establir la verité, mais pour la chercher. Et les soubmets au iugement de ceux, à qui il touche de regler non seulement mes actions et mes escrits, mais encore mes pensées. Esgalement m'en sera acceptable et vtile la condemnation, comme l'approbation, tenant pour absurde et impie, si rien se rencontre ignoramment ou inaduertamment couché en cette rapsodie contraire aux sainctes resolutions et prescriptions de l'Eglise Catholique Apostolique et Romaine, en laquelle ie meurs, et en laquelle ie suis nay.	I put forward notions that are shapeless and unresolved, as do those who publish doubtful questions to be debated in the schools: not to establish the truth but to seek it. And I submit them to the judgment of those whose business it is to regulate not only my actions and my writings but even my thoughts. Condemnation will be as acceptable and as useful to me as approval, since I hold as absurd and impious anything that may be found, set down ignorantly or inadvertently in this rhapsody, contrary to the holy resolutions and prescriptions of the Catholic, Apostolic and Roman Church, in which I die and in which I was born.
	Et pourtant me remettant tousiours à l'authorité de leur censure, qui peut tout sur moy, ie me mesle ainsi temerairement à toute sorte de propos: comme icy.	And so, always submitting to the authority of their censure, which has absolute power over me, I meddle rashly in this way with every sort of subject—as here.
1.56.2	Ie ne sçay si ie me trompe: mais puis que par vne faueur particuliere de la bonté diuine, certaine façon de priere nous a esté prescripte et dictée mot à mot par la bouche de Dieu, il m'a tousiours semblé que nous en deuions auoir l'vsage plus ordinaire, que nous n'auons. Et si i'en estoy creu, à l'entrée et à l'issue de noz tables, à nostre leuer et coucher, et à toutes actions particulieres, ausquelles on a accoustumé de mesler des prieres, ie voudroy que ce fust le patenostre, que les Chrestiens y employassent, sinon seulement, au moins tousiours. L'Eglise peut estendre et diuersifier les prieres selon le besoin de nostre instruction: car ie sçay bien que c'est tousiours mesme substance, et mesme chose.	I do not know whether I am mistaken; but since, by a particular favor of divine goodness, a certain form of prayer was prescribed and dictated to us word for word by the mouth of God, it has always seemed to me that we ought to use it more commonly than we do. And if I had my way, at the beginning and end of our meals, at our rising and our going to bed, and at all the particular actions with which we are accustomed to mix prayers, I would want it to be the Lord's Prayer that Christians used—if not exclusively, at least always. The Church may extend and vary prayers according to the needs of our instruction; for I know well that it is always the same substance and the same thing.
	Mais on deuoit donner à celle là ce priuilege, que le peuple l'eust continuellement en la bouche: car il est certain qu'elle dit tout ce qu'il faut, et qu'elle est trespropre à toutes occasions. C'est l'vnique priere, dequoy ie me sers par tout, et la repete au lieu d'en changer. D'où il aduient, que ie n'en ay aussi bien en memoire, que cette là.	But that one ought to have been given the privilege of being continually in the mouths of the people; for it is certain that it says everything that needs saying and is most fitting for every occasion. It is the only prayer I use everywhere, and I repeat it instead of changing. That is why there is none I have so well by heart as that one.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
1.56.3	I'auoy presentement en la pensée, d'où nous venoit cett' erreur, de recourir à Dieu en tous nos desseins et entreprises, et l'appeller à toute sorte de besoing, et en quelque lieu que nostre foiblesse veut de l'aide, sans considerer si l'occasion est iuste ou iniuste; et d'escrier son nom, et sa puissance, en quelque estat, et action que nous soyons, pour vitieuse qu'elle soit.	I was just now wondering where this error of ours comes from: having recourse to God in all our plans and undertakings, calling on him in every kind of need and wherever our weakness wants help, without considering whether the occasion is just or unjust; and crying out his name and his power in whatever state or action we may be, however vicious it is.
	Il est bien nostre seul et vnique protecteur, et peut toutes choses à nous ayder: mais encore qu'il daigne nous honorer de cette douce alliance paternelle, il est pourtant autant iuste, comme il est bon, et comme il est puissant: mais il vse bien plus souuent de sa iustice, que de son pouuoir, et nous fauorise selon la raison d'icelle, non selon noz demandes.	He is indeed our sole and only protector, and can do anything to help us; but although he deigns to honor us with this sweet fatherly alliance, he is nonetheless as just as he is good and as he is powerful. And he uses his justice far more often than his power, and favors us according to the reason of that justice, not according to our requests.
1.56.4	Platon en ses loix fait trois sortes d'iniurieuse creance des Dieux, Qu'il n'y en ayt point, Qu'ils ne se meslent pas de noz affaires, Qu'ils ne refusent rien à noz vœux, offrandes et sacrifices. La premiere erreur, selon son aduis, ne dura iamais immuable en homme, depuis son enfance, iusques à sa vieillesse. Les deux suiuantes peuuent souffrir de la constance.	Plato, in his Laws, distinguishes three kinds of insulting belief about the gods: that there are none; that they do not concern themselves with our affairs; that they refuse nothing to our vows, offerings and sacrifices. The first error, in his opinion, never lasted unchanged in any man from his childhood to his old age. The two others can be held steadily.
1.56.5	Sa iustice et sa puissance sont inseparables. Pour neant implorons nous sa force en vne mauuaise cause. Il faut auoir l'ame nette, au moins en ce moment, auquel nous le prions, et deschargée de passions vitieuses: autrement nous luy presentons nous mesmes les verges, dequoy nous chastier. Au lieu de rabiller nostre faute, nous la redoublons; presentans à celuy, à qui nous auons à demander pardon, vne affection pleine d'irreuerence et de haine. Voyla pourquoy ie ne louë pas volontiers ceux, que ie voy prier Dieu plus souuent et plus ordinairement, si les actions voisines de la priere, ne me tesmoignent quelque amendement et reformation. *Si nocturnus adulter, / Tempora sanctonico velas adoperta cucullo.*	His justice and his power are inseparable. In vain do we implore his strength in a bad cause. We must have a clean soul, at least at the moment when we pray to him, and one unburdened of vicious passions; otherwise we ourselves hand him the rods to punish us with. Instead of mending our fault, we double it, offering to him from whom we must ask pardon a feeling full of irreverence and hatred. That is why I do not readily praise those whom I see praying to God more often and more regularly than others, if the actions close to their prayer do not show me some amendment and reformation. *If, as a nighttime adulterer, / you hide your head under a Santonic hood.*[1]
1.56.6	Et l'assiette d'vn homme meslant à vne vie execrable la deuotion, semble estre aucunement plus condemnable, que celle d'vn homme conforme à soy, et dissolu par tout. Pourtant refuse nostre Eglise tous les iours, la faueur de son entrée et societé, aux mœurs obstinées à quelque insigne malice.	And the position of a man who mixes devotion with an abominable life seems somewhat more condemnable than that of a man who is consistent with himself and dissolute throughout. That is why our Church every day refuses the favor of admission and fellowship to those whose ways persist obstinately in some notorious wickedness.

1 Juvenal, Satires VIII; the hooded cloak came from the Santones, a people of Gaul.

FRENCH	ENGLISH
1.56.7 Nous prions par vsage et par coustume: ou pour mieux dire, nous lisons ou prononçons noz prieres: ce n'est en fin que mine. Et me desplaist de voir faire trois signes de croix au Benedicite, autant à Graces (et plus m'en desplait-il de ce que c'est vn signe que i'ay en reuerence et continuel vsage, mesmement quand ie baaille) et cependant toutes les autres heures du iour, les voir occupées à la haine, l'auarice, l'iniustice. Aux vices leur heure, son heure à Dieu, comme par compensation et composition. C'est miracle, de voir continuer des actions si diuerses d'vne si pareille teneur, qu'il ne s'y sente point d'interruption et d'alteration aux confins mesmes, et passage de l'vne à l'autre.	We pray out of habit and custom; or, to put it better, we read or recite our prayers. In the end it is nothing but show. And it displeases me to see people make three signs of the cross at the Benedicite and as many at Grace (and it displeases me all the more because it is a sign I hold in reverence and use continually, even when I yawn), and meanwhile to see all the other hours of the day given over to hatred, avarice and injustice. To the vices their hour, to God his hour, as if by way of compensation and compromise. It is a miracle to see such different actions carried on in so even a tenor that no interruption or change can be felt even at the borders, in the passage from one to the other.[2]
Quelle prodigieuse conscience se peut donner repos, nourrissant en mesme giste, d'vne societé si accordante et si paisible, le crime et le iuge?	What monstrous conscience can be at rest while it harbors under the same roof, in such harmonious and peaceful fellowship, the crime and the judge?
1.56.8 Vn homme, de qui la paillardise, sans cesse regente la teste, et qui la iuge tres-odieuse à la veuë diuine, que dit-il à Dieu, quand il luy en parle? Il se rameine, mais soudain il rechoit. Si l'obiect de la diuine iustice, et sa presence frappoient, comme il dit, et chastioient son ame, pour courte qu'en fust la penitence, la crainte mesme y reietteroit si souuent sa pensée, qu'incontinent il se verroit maistre de ces vices, qui sont habitués et acharnés en luy. Mais quoy! ceux qui couchent vne vie entiere, sur le fruit et emolument du peché, qu'ils sçauent mortel? Combien auons nous de mestiers et vacations receuës, dequoy l'essence est vicieuse?	A man whose lechery rules his head without cease, and who judges it most odious in the sight of God—what does he say to God when he speaks to him about it? He pulls himself back, but suddenly falls again. If the thought of divine justice and its presence struck and chastised his soul, as he says, then however short his penance, fear itself would bring his thoughts back to it so often that he would soon find himself master of those vices that have become habitual and ingrained in him. But what of those who stake a whole life on the fruit and profit of a sin they know to be mortal? How many trades and accepted occupations do we have whose essence is vicious?
Et celuy qui se confessant à moy, me recitoit, auoir tout vn aage faict profession et les effects d'une religion damnable selon luy, et contradictoire à celle qu'il auoit en son cœur, pour ne perdre son credit et l'honneur de ses charges: comment patissoit-il ce discours en son courage? De quel langage entretiennent ils sur ce subiect, la iustice diuine? Leur repentance consistant en visible et maniable reparation, ils perdent et enuers Dieu, et enuers nous, le moyen de l'alleguer. Sont-ils si hardis de demander pardon, sans satisfaction et sans repentance? Ie tien que de ces premiers il en va, comme de ceux-cy: mais l'obstination n'y est pas si aisée à conuaincre.	And the man who, confessing to me, told me that for a whole lifetime he had professed and practiced a religion which in his view was damnable, and contrary to the one he had in his heart, so as not to lose his standing and the honor of his offices—how did his heart endure such reasoning? In what language do such people converse with divine justice on this subject? Since their repentance would have to consist in visible and tangible reparation, they lose, both toward God and toward us, the means of pleading it. Are they so bold as to ask pardon without satisfaction and without repentance? I hold that it goes with the first kind as

2 The Benedicite is the blessing said before a meal, Grace the thanksgiving said after it.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
		with these; but obstinacy is not so easy to convict in them.
	Cette contrarieté et volubilité d'opinion si soudaine, si violente, qu'ils nous feignent, sent pour moy son miracle. Ils nous representent l'estat d'vne indigestible agonie.	This contrariety and volatility of opinion, so sudden and so violent, which they pretend to us, seems to me something of a miracle. They present us with the state of an indigestible agony.
1.56.9	Que l'imagination me sembloit fantastique, de ceux qui ces années passées, auoient en vsage de reprocher tout chascun, en qui il reluisoit quelque clarté d'esprit, professant la religion Catholique, que c'estoit à feinte: et tenoient mesme, pour luy faire honneur, quoy qu'il dist par apparence, qu'il ne pouuoit faillir au dedans, d'auoir sa creance reformée à leur pied. Fascheuse maladie, de se croire si fort, qu'on se persuade, qu'il ne se puisse croire au contraire: et plus fascheuse encore, qu'on se persuade d'vn tel esprit, qu'il prefere ie ne sçay quelle disparité de fortune presente, aux esperances et menaces de la vie eternelle!	How fantastic the notion seemed to me of those who, in recent years, used to reproach everyone in whom some brightness of mind shone, and who professed the Catholic religion, with doing it in pretense! They even held, to do him honor, that whatever he said outwardly, inwardly he could not fail to have his belief reformed to their pattern. A grievous disease, to believe in oneself so firmly that one is persuaded no one can believe the contrary! And more grievous still, to be persuaded that such a mind would prefer some disparity or other of present fortune to the hopes and threats of eternal life![3]
	Ils m'en peuuent croire: Si rien eust deu tenter ma ieunesse, l'ambition du hazard et difficulté, qui suiuoient cette recente entreprinse, y eust eu bonne part.	They can take my word for it: if anything could have tempted me in my youth, the ambition of facing the risk and difficulty that went with this recent enterprise would have had a good part in it.

SCRIPTURE IN THE COMMON TONGUE

Montaigne objects to the Psalms sung casually and the Bible translated for everyone.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
1.56.10	Ce n'est pas sans grande raison, ce me semble, que l'Eglise deffend l'vsage promiscue, temeraire et indiscret des sainctes et diuines chansons, que le Sainct Esprit a dicté en Dauid. Il ne faut mesler Dieu en nos actions qu'auecque reuerence et attention pleine d'honneur et de respect. Cette voix est trop diuine, pour n'auoir autre vsage que d'exercer les poulmons, et plaire à nos oreilles. C'est de la conscience qu'elle doit estre produite, et non pas de la langue.	It is not without good reason, it seems to me, that the Church forbids the indiscriminate, rash and thoughtless use of the holy and divine songs that the Holy Spirit dictated to David. We should bring God into our actions only with reverence, and with an attention full of honor and respect. That voice is too divine to have no other use than to exercise our lungs and please our ears. It is from the conscience that it should come, not from the tongue.[4]
1.56.11	Ce n'est pas raison qu'on permette qu'vn garçon de boutique parmy ses vains et friuoles pensemens, s'en entretienne et s'en iouë. Ny n'est certes raison de voir tracasser par vne sale, et par vne cuysine, le Sainct liure des sacrez mysteres de nostre creance. C'estoyent autrefois mysteres, ce sont à present desduits et esbats.	It is not reasonable to allow a shop boy to toy and amuse himself with them amid his idle and frivolous thoughts. Nor, surely, is it reasonable to see the holy book of the sacred mysteries of our faith knocked about in the hall and the kitchen. They used to be mysteries. Now they are pastimes and entertainments.

3 Montaigne plays on "reformed": the Protestants called their faith the Reformed religion.
4 The Psalms, which French Protestants sang in the vernacular versions of Clément Marot and Théodore de Bèze.

FRENCH

ENGLISH

1.56.12 Ce n'est pas en passant, et tumultuairement, qu'il faut manier vn estude si serieux et venerable. Ce doit estre vne action destinée, et rassise, à laquelle on doit tousiours adiouster cette preface de nostre office, *sursum corda*, et y apporter le corps mesme disposé en contenance, qui tesmoigne vne particuliere attention et reuerence. Ce n'est pas l'estude de tout le monde: c'est l'estude des personnes qui y sont vouées, que Dieu y appelle. Les meschans, les ignorants s'y empirent. Ce n'est pas vne histoire à compter: c'est vne histoire à reuerer, craindre et adorer. Plaisantes gents, qui pensent l'auoir rendue maniable au peuple, pour l'auoir mise en langage populaire. Ne tient-il qu'aux mots, qu'ils n'entendent tout ce qu'ils trouuent par escrit? Diray-ie plus?

So serious and venerable a study should not be handled in passing and in a hurry. It should be a deliberate and settled act. We should always add to it that preface of our service, *Lift up your hearts*, and bring to it even our body, composed in a bearing that shows a particular attention and reverence. It is not a study for everyone. It is the study of persons dedicated to it, whom God calls to it. The wicked and the ignorant grow worse by it. It is not a story to be told; it is a story to be revered, feared and worshipped. Amusing people, who think they have made it manageable for the common people by putting it into the common tongue! Is it only the words that keep them from understanding everything they find in writing? Shall I say more?[5]

Pour l'en approcher de ce peu, ils l'en reculent. L'ignorance pure, et remise toute en autruy, estoit bien plus salutaire et plus sçauante, que n'est cette science verbale, et vaine, nourrice de presomption et de temerité.

By bringing it this little bit closer to them, they push it further away. Pure ignorance, which relied entirely on others, was far more salutary and more learned than this verbal and empty knowledge, the nurse of presumption and rashness.

1.56.13 Ie croy aussi que la liberté à chacun de dissiper vne parole si religieuse et importante, à tant de sortes d'idiomes, a beaucoup plus de danger que d'vtilité. Les Iuifs, les Mahometans, et quasi tous autres, ont espousé, et reuerent le langage, auquel originellement leurs mysteres auoient esté conceuz, et en est deffendue l'alteration et changement; non sans apparence. Sçauons nous bien qu'en Basque, et en Bretaigne, il y ayt des Iuges assez, pour establir cette traduction faicte en leur langue? L'Eglise vniuerselle n'a point de iugement plus ardu à faire, et plus solemne. En preschant et parlant, l'interpretation est vague, libre, muable, et d'vne parcelle: ainsi ce n'est pas de mesme.

I also believe that giving everyone the freedom to scatter so religious and important a word into so many kinds of languages is much more dangerous than useful. The Jews, the Muslims and almost all others have espoused and revere the language in which their mysteries were originally conceived, and any alteration or change in it is forbidden—not without reason. Are we quite sure that in the Basque country and in Brittany there are judges enough to authorize this translation made into their language? The universal Church has no judgment to make that is more difficult or more solemn. In preaching and speaking, interpretation is loose, free, changeable, and covers only a fragment; so it is not the same thing.

1.56.14 L'vn de noz historiens Grecs accuse iustement son siecle, de ce que les secrets de la religion Chrestienne, estoient espandus emmy la place, és mains des moindres artisans: que chacun en pouuoit debattre et dire selon son sens. Et que ce nous deuoit estre grande honte, nous qui par la grace de Dieu, iouïssons des purs mysteres de la pieté, de les laisser profaner en la bouche de personnes ignorantes et populaires, veu que les Gentils interdisoient à Socrates, à Platon, et aux plus sages, de s'enquerir et parler des choses commises aux Prestres de Delphes. Dit aussi, que

One of our Greek historians rightly accuses his age because the secrets of the Christian religion were spread all over the marketplace, in the hands of the meanest artisans, and anyone could debate them and say what he thought of them. He says it ought to be a great shame to us, who by the grace of God enjoy the pure mysteries of piety, to let them be profaned in the mouths of ignorant and common people, since the pagans forbade So-

5 *Sursum corda*, the opening words of the preface of the Mass.

FRENCH

les factions des Princes, sur le subiect de la Theologie, sont armées non de zele, mais de cholere.

Que le zele tient de la diuine raison et iustice, se conduisant ordonnément et moderément: mais qu'il se change en haine et enuie: et produit au lieu du froment et du raisin, de l'yuroye et des orties, quand il est conduit d'vne passion humaine. Et iustement aussi, cet autre, conseillant l'Empereur Theodose, disoit, les disputes n'endormir pas tant les schismes de l'Eglise, que les esueiller, et animer les heresies. Que pourtant il faloit fuïr toutes contentions et argumentations Dialectiques, et se rapporter nuement aux prescriptions et formules de la foy, establies par les anciens.

Et l'Empereur Andronicus, ayant rencontré en son palais, des principaux hommes, aux prises de parole, contre Lapodius, sur vn de noz points de grande importance, les tança, iusques à menacer de les ietter en la riuiere, s'ils continuoyent. Les enfants et les femmes, en noz iours, regentent les hommes plus vieux et experimentez, sur les loix Ecclesiastiques: là où la premiere de celles de Platon leur deffend de s'enquerir seulement de la raison des loix ciuiles, qui doiuent tenir lieu d'ordonnances diuines. Et permettant aux vieux, d'en communiquer entre eux, et auec le Magistrat: il adiouste, pourueu que ce ne soit en presence des ieunes, et personnes profanes.

1.56.15 Vn Euesque a laissé par escrit, qu'en l'autre bout du monde, il y a vne Isle, que les anciens nommoient Dioscoride: commode en fertilité de toutes sortes d'arbres et fruits, et salubrité d'air: de laquelle le peuple est Chrestien, ayant des Eglises et des Autels, qui ne sont parez que de croix, sans autres images: grand obseruateur de ieusnes et de festes: exacte païeur de dismes aux Prestres: et si chaste, que nul d'eux ne peut cognoistre qu'vne femme en sa vie. Au demeurant, si contant de sa fortune, qu'au milieu de la mer, il ignore l'vsage des nauires: et si simple, que de la religion qu'il obserue si songneusement, il n'en entend vn seul mot.

ENGLISH

crates, Plato and the wisest men to inquire into and speak of the things entrusted to the priests of Delphi. He also says that the factions of princes on the subject of theology are armed not with zeal but with anger.[6]

Zeal, he says, partakes of divine reason and justice when it conducts itself in an orderly and moderate way; but it turns into hatred and envy, and produces tares and nettles instead of wheat and grapes, when it is led by a human passion. And that other man was right too who, advising the Emperor Theodosius, said that disputes did not so much lull the schisms of the Church to sleep as wake them up and stir heresies to life; that one should therefore shun all contentions and dialectical argumentation, and simply abide by the prescriptions and formulas of the faith established by the ancients.[7]

And the Emperor Andronicus, having come upon some leading men in his palace locked in verbal combat with Lapodius over one of our points of great importance, rebuked them so sharply that he threatened to throw them into the river if they went on. In our day, children and women lecture men older and more experienced than themselves on the laws of the Church; whereas the first of Plato's laws forbids them even to inquire into the reasons for the civil laws, which are to stand in place of divine ordinances. And while allowing the old to discuss them among themselves and with the magistrate, he adds: provided it is not in the presence of the young and of the uninitiated.[8]

A bishop has left it in writing that at the other end of the world there is an island which the ancients called Dioscorides, favored with fertility in all sorts of trees and fruits and with a healthy air. Its people are Christian, with churches and altars adorned only with crosses and no other images. They are great observers of fasts and feast days, exact payers of tithes to the priests, and so chaste that none of them may know more than one woman in his life. For the rest, they are so content with their lot that, in the middle of the sea, they do not know the use of ships; and so simple that of

6 The Byzantine historian Nicetas Choniates (c. AD 1155–1217).
7 Theodosius I, Roman emperor AD 379–395.
8 Andronicus I Comnenus, Byzantine emperor AD 1183–1185; the story also comes from Nicetas.

FRENCH

ENGLISH

the religion they observe so carefully they do not understand a single word.[9]

Chose incroyable, à qui ne sçauroit, les Payens si deuots idolatres, ne cognoistre de leurs Dieux, que simplement le nom et la statue. L'ancien commencement de Menalippe, tragedie d'Euripides, portoit ainsi. *O Iuppiter, car de toy rien sinon / Ie ne cognois seulement que le nom.*

An incredible thing to anyone who did not know it: that the pagans, such devout idolaters, knew nothing of their gods but simply their name and their statue. The original opening of Melanippe, a tragedy by Euripides, ran thus: *O Jupiter, for of you I know / Nothing at all except the name.*

1.56.16 I'ay veu aussi de mon temps, faire plainte d'aucuns escrits, de ce qu'ils sont purement humains et philosophiques, sans meslange de Theologie. Qui diroit au contraire, ce ne seroit pourtant sans quelque raison; Que la doctrine diuine tient mieux son rang à part, comme Royne et dominatrice: Qu'elle doit estre principale par tout, point suffragante et subsidiaire: Et qu'à l'auenture se prendroient les exemples à la Grammaire, Rhetorique, Logique, plus sortablement d'ailleurs que d'vne si sainte matiere; comme aussi les arguments des Theatres, ieux et spectacles publiques. Que les raisons diuines se considerent plus venerablement et reueremment seules, et en leur stile, qu'appariées aux discours humains.

In my time I have also heard complaints about certain writings because they are purely human and philosophical, with no admixture of theology. Yet anyone who argued the contrary would not be without some reason. He might say that divine doctrine better keeps its rank apart, as queen and sovereign; that it must be first everywhere, not subordinate and auxiliary; and that examples for grammar, rhetoric and logic might perhaps more fittingly be taken from elsewhere than from so holy a subject, as might the plots of plays, games and public spectacles. He might say that divine reasons are contemplated more venerably and reverently alone and in their own style than when paired with human reasonings.

Qu'il se voit plus souuent cette faute, que les Theologiens escriuent trop humainement, que cett'autre, que les humanistes escriuent trop peu theologalement. La Philosophie, dit Sainct Chrysostome, est pieça banie de l'escole saincte, comme seruante inutile, et estimée indigne de voir seulement en passant de l'entrée, le sacraire des saincts Thresors de la doctrine celeste. Que le dire humain a ses formes plus basses, et ne se doit seruir de la dignité, majesté, regence, du parler diuin. Ie luy laisse pour moy, dire, *verbis indisciplinatis*, fortune, destinée, accident, heur, et malheur, et les Dieux, et autres frases, selon sa mode.

That the fault more often seen is that theologians write too humanly, rather than the other, that humanists write too little theologically. Philosophy, says Saint Chrysostom, has long since been banished from the holy school as a useless servant, and judged unworthy even to glimpse in passing, from the entrance, the sanctuary of the holy treasures of heavenly doctrine. That human speech has its humbler forms, and should not make use of the dignity, majesty and sovereignty of divine speech. For my part, I let it say, *in undisciplined words*, fortune, destiny, accident, good luck and bad luck, and the gods, and other such phrases, after its own fashion.[10]

Ie propose les fantasies humaines et miennes, simplement comme humaines fantasies, et separement considerées: non comme arrestées et reglées par l'ordonnance celeste, incapable de doubte et d'altercation. Matiere d'opinion, non matiere de foy. Ce que ie discours selon moy, non ce que ie croy selon Dieu, d'vne façon laïque, non clericale: mais tousiours tres-religieuse. Comme les enfants proposent leurs essays, instruisables, non instruisants. Et ne diroit-on pas aussi

I put forward human notions, and my own, simply as human notions, considered separately—not as settled and regulated by heavenly ordinance, beyond doubt and dispute. Matter of opinion, not matter of faith. What I reason out by my own lights, not what I believe by God's; in a lay manner, not a clerical one, but always a very religious one. As children put forward their essays: to be taught,

9 Socotra, in the Arabian Sea; the bishop is the Portuguese historian Jerónimo Osório.
10 *Verbis indisciplinatis* is from Saint Augustine, City of God X.

FRENCH

sans apparence, que l'ordonnance de ne s'entremettre que bien reseruément d'escrire de la Religion, à tous autres qu'à ceux qui en font expresse profession, n'auroit pas faute de quelque image d'vtilité et de iustice; et à moy auec, peut estre de m'en taire.

1.56.17 On m'a dict que ceux mesmes, qui ne sont pas des nostres, deffendent pourtant entre eux l'vsage du nom de Dieu, en leurs propos communs. Ils ne veulent pas qu'on s'en serue par vne maniere d'interiection, ou d'exclamation, ny pour tesmoignage, ny pour comparaison: en quoy ie trouue qu'ils ont raison. Et en quelque maniere que ce soit, que nous appelons Dieu à notre commerce et societé, il faut que ce soit serieusement, et religieusement.

1.56.18 Il y a, ce me semble, en Xenophon vn tel discours, où il montre que nous deuons plus rarement prier Dieu: d'autant qu'il n'est pas aisé, que nous puissions si souuent remettre nostre ame, en cette assiette reglée, reformée, et deuotieuse, où il faut qu'elle soit pour ce faire: autrement nos prieres ne sont pas seulement vaines et inutiles, mais vitieuses. Pardonne nous, disons nous, comme nous pardonnons à ceux qui nous ont offencez. Que disons nous par là, sinon que nous luy offrons nostre ame exempte de vengeance et de rancune? Toutesfois nous inuoquons Dieu et son ayde, au complot de noz fautes, et le conuions à l'iniustice.

Quæ, nisi seductis, nequeas committere diuis. L'auaricieux le prie pour la conseruation vaine et superflue de ses thresors: l'ambitieux pour ses victoires, et conduite de sa fortune: le voleur l'employe à son ayde, pour franchir le hazard et les difficultez, qui s'opposent à l'execution de ses meschantes entreprinses: ou le remercie de l'aisance qu'il a trouué à desgosiller vn passant. Au pied de la maison, qu'ils vont escheller ou petarder, ils font leurs prieres, l'intention et l'esperance pleine de cruauté, de luxure, et d'auarice. *Hoc ipsum, quo tu Iouis aurem impellere tentas,*
Dic agedum Staio: proh Iuppiter! ô bone, clamet,
Iuppiter! at sese non clamet Iuppiter ipse.

1.56.19 La Royne de Nauarre Margueritte, recite d'vn ieune Prince, et encore qu'elle ne le nomme pas, sa grandeur l'a

ENGLISH

not to teach. And might one not also say, not without reason, that a rule forbidding anyone but those who make express profession of it to meddle with writing about religion, except very guardedly, would not lack some semblance of usefulness and justice—and that perhaps I too should keep quiet about it?

I have been told that even those who are not of our persuasion forbid among themselves the use of God's name in ordinary talk. They do not want it used as a kind of interjection or exclamation, nor to swear by, nor in comparisons; and in that I find they are right. In whatever way we call God into our dealings and company, it must be done seriously and religiously.

There is, I believe, a discussion in Xenophon in which he shows that we ought to pray to God more rarely, since it is not easy for us to bring our soul so often into that ordered, reformed and devout condition in which it must be to do so; otherwise our prayers are not only vain and useless, but vicious. "Forgive us," we say, "as we forgive those who have offended us." What do we mean by that, if not that we offer him our soul free of vengeance and rancor? And yet we call on God and his help in the conspiracy of our misdeeds, and invite him to injustice.

Things you could not ask of the gods unless you took them aside. The miser prays to him for the vain and superfluous preservation of his treasures; the ambitious man for his victories and the steering of his fortune. The thief enlists him to help get past the risks and difficulties that stand in the way of his wicked schemes, or thanks him for the ease with which he managed to cut a passerby's throat. At the foot of the house they are about to scale or blow open with a petard, they say their prayers, their intention and hope full of cruelty, lust and greed. *This very prayer with which you try to win Jupiter's ear,*
Come, say it to Staius. "O Jupiter, O good," he would cry,
"Jupiter!" And would Jupiter himself not cry out?[11]

Queen Marguerite of Navarre tells of a young prince—and though she does not name him, his

11 Both quotations are from Persius, Satires II.

FRENCH

rendu cognoissable assez, qu'allant à vne assignation amoureuse, et coucher auec la femme d'vn Aduocat de Paris, son chemin s'addonnant au trauers d'vne Eglise, il ne passoit iamais en ce lieu sainct, allant ou retournant de son entreprinse, qu'il ne fist ses prieres et oraisons. Ie vous laisse à iuger, l'ame pleine de ce beau pensement, à quoy il employoit la faueur diuine. Toutesfois elle allegue cela pour vn tesmoignage de singuliere deuotion. Mais ce n'est pas par cette preuue seulement qu'on pourroit verifier que les femmes ne sont gueres propres à traiter les matieres de la Theologie.

1.56.20 Vne vraye priere, et vne religieuse reconciliation de nous à Dieu, elle ne peut tomber en vne ame impure et soubsmise, lors mesmes, à la domination de Satan. Celuy qui appelle Dieu à son assistance, pendant qu'il est dans le train du vice, il fait comme le coupeur de bourse, qui appelleroit la iustice à son ayde; ou comme ceux qui produisent le nom de Dieu en tesmoignage de mensonge. *Tacito mala vota susurro / Concipimus.* Il est peu d'hommes qui ozassent mettre en euidence les requestes secrettes qu'ils font à Dieu.

Haud cuiuis promptum est, murmúrque humilésque susurros
Tollere de templis, et aperto viuere voto. Voyla pourquoy les Pythagoriens vouloyent qu'elles fussent publiques, et ouyes d'vn chacun; afin qu'on ne le requist de chose indecente et iniuste, comme celuy-là: *Clarè cùm dixit: Apollo!*
Labra mouet, metuens audiri: Pulchra Lauerna,
Da mihi fallere, da iustum sanctúmque videri;
Noctem peccatis, et fraudibus obiice nubem.

1.56.21 Les Dieux punirent grieuement les iniques vœux d'Oedipus en les luy ottroyant. Il auoit prié, que ses enfants vuidassent entre eux par armes la succession de son Estat, il fut si miserable, de se voir pris au mot. Il ne faut pas demander, que toutes choses suiuent nostre volonté, mais qu'elles suiuent la prudence.

1.56.22 Il semble, à la verité, que nous nous seruons de nos prieres, comme d'vn iargon, et comme ceux qui employent les paroles sainctes et diuines à des sorcelleries et effects magiciens: et que nous facions nostre compte que ce soit de la contexture, ou son, ou

ENGLISH

greatness has made him recognizable enough—who, going to a lovers' rendezvous to sleep with the wife of a Paris lawyer, had a way that led him through a church; and he never passed through that holy place, going to or coming back from his enterprise, without saying his prayers and orisons. I leave you to judge, with his soul full of that fine thought, what he was using divine favor for. Yet she cites this as evidence of singular devotion. But this is not the only proof one could give that women are hardly suited to handling matters of theology.[12]

A true prayer, a religious reconciliation of ourselves with God, cannot occur in a soul that is impure and subject, at that very moment, to the dominion of Satan. The man who calls God to his aid while he is in the course of vice is like a cutpurse who would call the law to his aid, or like those who bring forward God's name to witness a lie. *In a silent whisper we frame / Our wicked vows.* There are few men who would dare to bring into the open the secret requests they make to God.[13]

It is not for everyone to banish murmurs and low whispers
From the temples, and to live with vows spoken aloud. That is why the Pythagoreans wanted prayers to be public and heard by all, so that no one would ask God for anything indecent and unjust, like this man: *When he has clearly said "Apollo!"*
He moves his lips, afraid of being heard: "Fair Laverna,
Grant me to deceive, grant me to seem just and holy;
Cast night over my sins and a cloud over my frauds."[14]

The gods punished Oedipus's iniquitous wishes grievously by granting them. He had prayed that his children should settle the succession to his state between themselves by arms, and he was wretched enough to see himself taken at his word. We should not ask that all things follow our will, but that they follow wisdom.

It seems, in truth, that we use our prayers like a jargon, and like those who employ holy and divine words for sorcery and magical effects; and that we reckon their effect depends on the texture, or sound, or sequence of the words, or on our bear-

12 Marguerite of Navarre (1492–1549), in the Heptameron, tale 25; the prince is usually taken to be her brother, Francis I.
13 Lucan, Pharsalia V.
14 Persius, Satires II, then Horace, Epistles I.16; Laverna was the Roman goddess of thieves.

FRENCH

suitte des motz, ou de nostre contenance, que depende leur effect. Car ayans l'ame pleine de concupiscence, non touchée de repentance, ny d'aucune nouuelle reconciliation enuers Dieu, nous luy allons presenter ces parolles que la memoire preste à nostre langue: et esperons en tirer vne expiation de nos fautes.

Il n'est rien si aisé, si doux, et si fauorable que la loy diuine: elle nous appelle à soy, ainsi fautiers et detestables comme nous sommes: elle nous tend les bras, et nous reçoit en son giron, pour vilains, ords, et bourbeux, que nous soyons, et que nous ayons à estre à l'aduenir. Mais encore en recompense, la faut-il regarder de bon œil: encore faut-il receuoir ce pardon auec action de graces: et au moins pour cet instant que nous nous addressons à elle, auoir l'ame desplaisante de ses fautes, et ennemie des passions qui nous ont poussé à l'offencer. Ny les Dieux, ny les gens de bien, dict Platon, n'acceptent le present d'vn meschant.

Immunis aram si tetigit manus,
Non sumptuosa blandior hostia
Molliuit auersos Penates,
Farre pio et saliente mica.

ENGLISH

ing. For with our soul full of concupiscence, untouched by repentance or by any fresh reconciliation with God, we go and present him with the words that memory lends our tongue, and hope to get from them an expiation of our faults.

Nothing is so easy, so gentle and so favorable as the divine law. It calls us to itself, sinful and detestable as we are; it holds out its arms to us and takes us into its bosom, however vile, foul and muddy we may be now and may be in time to come. But in return we must at least look on it kindly; we must at least receive this pardon with thanksgiving; and, at least for the moment when we address ourselves to it, have a soul sorry for its faults and hostile to the passions that drove us to offend it. Neither the gods nor good men, says Plato, accept the gift of a wicked man.

If a guiltless hand has touched the altar,
No costly victim will soothe
The offended Penates better
Than holy meal and crackling salt.[15]

15 Horace, Odes III.23; the Penates were the Roman household gods.

I.57 Of Age

De l'Aage

Few people die of old age, so Montaigne thinks we should start careers early; the mind reaches its prime by about twenty.

FRENCH

1.57.1 IE ne puis receuoir la façon, dequoy nous establissons la durée de nostre vie. Ie voy que les sages l'accoursissent bien fort au prix de la commune opinion. Comment, dit le ieune Caton, à ceux qui le vouloyent empescher de se tuer, suis-ie à cette heure en aage, où lon me puisse reprocher d'abandonner trop tost la vie? Si n'auoit-il que quarante et huict ans. Il estimoit cet aage là bien meur et bien auancé, considerant combien peu d'hommes y arriuent.

Et ceux qui s'entretiennent de ce que ie ne sçay quel cours qu'ils nomment naturel, promet quelques années au delà, ils le pourroient faire, s'ils auoient priuilege qui les exemptast d'vn si grand nombre d'accidens, ausquels chacun de nous est en bute par vne naturelle subiection, qui peuuent interrompre ce cours qu'ils se promettent. Quelle resuerie est-ce de s'attendre de mourir d'vne defaillance de forces, que l'extreme vieillesse apporte, et de se proposer ce but à nostre durée: veu que c'est l'espece de mort la plus rare de toutes, et la moins en vsage?

Nous l'appellons seule naturelle, comme si c'estoit contre nature, de voir vn homme se rompre le col d'vne cheute, s'estoufer d'vn naufrage, se laisser surprendre à la peste ou à vne pleuresie, et comme si nostre condition ordinaire ne nous presentoit à tous ces inconuenients. Ne nous flattons pas de ces beaux mots: on doit à l'auenture appeler plustost naturel, ce qui est general, commun, et vniuersel.

1.57.2 Mourir de vieillesse, c'est vne mort rare, singuliere et extraordinaire, et d'autant moins naturelle que les autres: c'est la derniere et extreme sorte de mourir: plus elle est esloignée de nous, d'autant est elle moins esperable: c'est bien la borne, au delà de laquelle nous n'irons pas, et que la loy de Nature a prescript, pour n'estre point outre-passée: mais c'est vn sien rare priuilege de nous faire durer iusques là. C'est vne exemption qu'elle donne par faueur particuliere, à vn seul, en l'espace de deux ou trois siecles, le deschargeant

ENGLISH

I cannot accept the way we fix the length of our life. I see that the wise shorten it considerably compared with common opinion. "What!" said the younger Cato to those who wanted to stop him from killing himself, "am I now of an age where I can be reproached for leaving life too early?" Yet he was only forty-eight. He considered that age quite ripe and well advanced, seeing how few men reach it.

And those who comfort themselves with the thought that some course or other, which they call natural, promises them a few more years could do so if they had a privilege exempting them from the great number of accidents to which each of us is exposed by a natural subjection, and which can interrupt the course they promise themselves. What a fantasy it is to expect to die of the failing of strength that extreme old age brings, and to set that as the goal of our lifespan, when it is the rarest kind of death of all and the least common!

We call it the only natural one, as if it were against nature to see a man break his neck in a fall, drown in a shipwreck, or be caught by the plague or a pleurisy—and as if our ordinary condition did not expose us to all these mishaps. Let us not flatter ourselves with these fine words. We ought perhaps rather to call natural what is general, common and universal.

To die of old age is a rare, singular and extraordinary death, and so much less natural than the others. It is the last and extreme way of dying; the further it is from us, the less it is to be hoped for. It is indeed the boundary beyond which we shall not go, which the law of Nature has prescribed so that it shall not be overstepped; but it is a rare privilege of hers to make us last until then. It is an exemption she grants by special favor to one man alone in the space of two or three centuries, reliev-

FRENCH

des trauerses et difficultez qu'elle a ietté entre deux, en cette longue carriere. Par ainsi mon opinion est, de regarder que l'aage auquel nous sommes arriuez, c'est vn aage auquel peu de gens arriuent.

Puis que d'vn train ordinaire les hommes ne viennent pas iusques là, c'est signe que nous sommes bien auant. Et puis que nous auons passé les limites accoustumez, qui est la vraye mesure de nostre vie, nous ne deuons esperer d'aller guere outre. Ayant eschappé tant d'occasions de mourir, où nous voyons tresbucher le monde, nous deuons recognoistre qu'vne fortune extraordinaire, comme celle-là qui nous maintient, et hors de l'vsage commun, ne nous doibt guere durer.

1.57.3 C'est vn vice des loix mesmes, d'auoir cette fauce imagination: elles ne veulent pas qu'vn homme soit capable du maniement de ses biens, qu'il n'ait vingt et cinq ans, et à peine conseruera-il iusques lors le maniment de sa vie. Auguste retrancha cinq ans des anciennes ordonnances Romaines, et declara qu'il suffisoit à ceux qui prenoient charge de iudicature, d'auoir trente ans. Seruius Tullius dispensa les Cheualiers qui auoient passé quarante sept ans des coruées de la guerre: Auguste les remit à quarante et cinq. De renuoyer les hommes au seiour auant cinquante cinq ou soixante ans, il me semble n'y auoir pas grande apparence.

Ie serois d'aduis qu'on estendist nostre vacation et occupation autant qu'on pourroit, pour la commodité publique: mais ie trouue la faute en l'autre costé, de ne nous y embesongner pas assez tost. Cettuy-cy auoit esté iuge vniuersel du monde à dixneuf ans, et veut que pour iuger de la place d'vne goutiere on en ait trente.

1.57.4 Quant à moy i'estime que nos ames sont desnoüées à vingt ans, ce qu'elles doiuent estre, et qu'elles promettent tout ce qu'elles pourront. Iamais ame qui n'ait donné en cet aage là, arre bien euidente de sa force, n'en donna depuis la preuue. Les qualitez et vertus naturelles produisent dans ce terme là, ou iamais, ce qu'elles ont de vigoureux et de beau. *Si l'espine nou picque quand nai, / A pene que pique iamai,* disent-ils en Daulphiné.

1.57.5 De toutes les belles actions humaines, qui sont venues à ma cognoissance, de quelque sorte qu'elles soyent, ie penserois en auoir plus grande part, à nombrer celles qui ont esté produites et aux siecles anciens et au nostre,

ENGLISH

ing him of the obstacles and difficulties she has thrown in between along this long course. So my opinion is that we should consider the age we have reached as an age few people reach.

Since in the ordinary course men do not get that far, it is a sign that we are well along. And since we have passed the usual limits, which are the true measure of our life, we should not hope to go much further. Having escaped so many occasions of death, at which we see everyone stumble, we should recognize that an extraordinary fortune like the one that keeps us going, outside the common practice, is not likely to last us much longer.

It is a fault of the laws themselves to have this false notion. They do not want a man to be capable of managing his property until he is twenty-five, and he will hardly keep the management of his life until then. Augustus cut five years off the old Roman ordinances and declared that it was enough for those taking up judicial office to be thirty. Servius Tullius exempted knights who had passed forty-seven from the toils of war; Augustus brought it down to forty-five. To send men into retirement before fifty-five or sixty does not seem to me very reasonable.[1]

I would be in favor of extending our vocation and employment as far as possible, for the public good; but I find the fault lies on the other side, in not putting us to work soon enough. He himself had been judge of the whole world at nineteen, and he wants a man to be thirty before he can rule on where to put a gutter.

As for me, I consider that at twenty our souls are fully unfolded, as they are meant to be, and that they promise all they ever can. Never has a soul that did not give a very evident pledge of its strength at that age given proof of it afterward. Natural qualities and virtues show within that term, or never, whatever vigor and beauty they have. *If the thorn does not prick when it is born, / It will hardly ever prick,* they say in Dauphiné.

Of all the fine human actions that have come to my knowledge, of whatever kind, I think I would find that the greater number, in ancient times and in our own, were done before the age of thirty

1 Servius Tullius, the sixth king of Rome according to tradition.

FRENCH

auant l'aage de trente ans, qu'apres. Ouy, en la vie de mesmes hommes souuent. Ne le puis-ie pas dire en toute seureté, de celles de Hannibal et de Scipion son grand aduersaire? La belle moitié de leur vie, ils la vescurent de la gloire acquise en leur ieunesse: grands hommes depuis au prix de touts autres, mais nullement au prix d'eux-mesmes. Quant à moy ie tien pour certain que depuis cet aage, et mon esprit et mon corps ont plus diminué, qu'augmenté, et plus reculé, qu'auancé.

Il est possible qu'à ceux qui employent bien le temps, la science, et l'experience croissent auec la vie: mais la viuacité, la promptitude, la fermeté, et autres parties bien plus nostres, plus importantes et essentielles, se fanissent et s'allanguissent. *Vbi iam validis quassatum est viribus æui*
Corpus, et obtusis ceciderunt viribus artus,
Claudicat ingenium, delirat linguáque ménsque.

1.57.6 Tantost c'est le corps qui se rend le premier à la vieillesse: par fois aussi c'est l'ame: et en ay assez veu, qui ont eu la ceruelle affoiblie, auant l'estomach et les iambes. Et d'autant que c'est vn mal peu sensible à qui le souffre, et d'vne obscure montre, d'autant est-il plus dangereux. Pour ce coup, ie me plains des loix, non pas dequoy elles nous laissent trop tard à la besogne, mais dequoy elles nous y employent trop tard. Il me semble que considerant la foiblesse de nostre vie, et à combien d'escueils ordinaires et naturels elle est exposée, on n'en deuroit pas faire si grande part à la naissance, à l'oisiueté et à l'apprentissage.

ENGLISH

rather than after. Yes, and often in the lives of the very same men. May I not say so with complete assurance of those of Hannibal and of Scipio, his great adversary? They lived the better half of their lives on the glory won in their youth: great men afterward compared with all others, but not at all compared with themselves. As for me, I hold it certain that since that age both my mind and my body have diminished more than they have grown, and gone backward more than forward.

It is possible that for those who use their time well, knowledge and experience grow with life; but liveliness, quickness, firmness and other qualities much more our own, more important and essential, wither and languish. *When the body has been shaken by the hard blows of time*
And the limbs have given way, their strength blunted,
The mind limps, and tongue and wits wander.[2]

Sometimes it is the body that surrenders first to old age; sometimes too it is the mind. I have seen plenty of people whose brains were enfeebled before their stomach and legs. And since it is an ailment the sufferer hardly feels, and whose signs are obscure, it is all the more dangerous. This time my complaint against the laws is not that they leave us at work too late, but that they set us to work too late. It seems to me that, considering the frailty of our life and how many ordinary and natural reefs it is exposed to, we should not give so large a share of it to infancy, idleness and apprenticeship.

2 Lucretius, On the Nature of Things III.

II.1 Of the Inconstancy of Our Actions

De l'inconstance de nos actions
Human conduct contradicts itself so constantly that Montaigne doubts anyone can be judged by a single action—or understood as a single self.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
2.1.1	CEVX qui s'exercent à contreroller les actions humaines, ne se trouuent en aucune partie si empeschez, qu'à les r'apiesser et mettre à mesme lustre: car elles se contredisent communément de si estrange façon, qu'il semble impossible qu'elles soient parties de mesme boutique. Le ieune Marius se trouue tantost fils de Mars, tantost fils de Venus. Le Pape Boniface huictiesme, entra, dit-on, en sa charge comme vn renard, s'y porta comme vn lion, et mourut comme vn chien.	Those who make it their business to scrutinize human actions are never so baffled as when they try to piece them together and show them in a single light; for they commonly contradict one another so strangely that it seems impossible they came out of the same shop. The younger Marius is now a son of Mars, now a son of Venus. Pope Boniface VIII, they say, entered his office like a fox, conducted himself in it like a lion, and died like a dog.[1]
	Et qui croiroit que ce fust Neron, cette vraye image de cruauté, comme on luy presentast à signer, suyuant le stile, la sentence d'vn criminel condamné, qui eust respondu: Pleust à Dieu que ie n'eusse iamais sceu escrire: tant le cœur luy serroit de condamner vn homme à mort? Tout est si plein de tels exemples, voire chacun en peut tant fournir à soy-mesme, que ie trouue estrange, de voir quelquefois des gens d'entendement, se mettre en peine d'assortir ces pieces: veu que l'irresolution me semble le plus commun et apparent vice de nostre nature; tesmoing ce fameux verset de Publius le farseur, *Malum consilium est, quod mutari non potest.*	And who would believe that it was Nero, that very image of cruelty, who, when the sentence of a condemned criminal was presented to him for signature in the usual form, replied, "Would to God I had never learned to write!"—so wrung was his heart at condemning a man to death? Everything is so full of such examples—indeed each of us can supply himself with so many—that I find it strange to see men of understanding sometimes taking pains to match up these pieces, since irresolution seems to me the most common and evident vice of our nature. Witness that famous line of Publius the farce writer: *It is a bad plan that cannot be changed.*[2]
2.1.2	Il y a quelque apparence de faire iugement d'vn homme, par les plus communs traicts de sa vie; mais veu la naturelle instabilité de nos mœurs et opinions, il m'a semblé souuent que les bons autheurs mesmes ont tort de s'opiniastrer à former de nous vne constante et solide contexture. Ils choisissent vn air vniuersel, et suyuant cette image, vont rangeant et interpretant toutes les actions d'vn personnage, et s'ils ne les peuuent assez tordre, les renuoyent à la dissimulation. Auguste leur est eschappé: car il se trouue en cet homme vne varieté d'actions si apparente, soudaine, et continuelle, tout le cours de sa vie, qu'il s'est faict lâcher entier et indecis, aux plus hardis iuges.	There is some sense in judging a man by the most ordinary features of his life; but given the natural instability of our ways and opinions, it has often seemed to me that even good authors are wrong to insist on fashioning a constant and solid fabric out of us. They pick a general character and, following that image, go about arranging and interpreting all of a person's actions; and if they cannot twist them enough, they put them down to dissimulation. Augustus has escaped them. For in that man there is so evident, sudden and continual a variety of actions throughout the whole course of his life

1 Gaius Marius the Younger (d. 82 BC); Boniface VIII was pope AD 1294–1303.
2 Publilius Syrus, Roman writer of mimes in the first century BC, whose maxims were collected.

FRENCH

ENGLISH

that even the boldest judges have had to let him go, whole and undecided.

2.1.3 Ie croy des hommes plus mal aisément la constance que toute autre chose, et rien plus aisément que l'inconstance. Qui en iugeroit en detail et distinctement, piece à piece, rencontreroit plus souuent à dire vray. En toute l'ancienneté il est malaisé de choisir vne douzaine d'hommes, qui ayent dressé leur vie à vn certain et asseuré train, qui est le principal but de la sagesse. Car pour la comprendre tout en vn mot, dit vn ancien, et pour embrasser en vne toutes les regles de nostre vie, c'est vouloir, et ne vouloir pas tousiours mesme chose: Ie ne daignerois, dit-il, adiouster, pourueu que la volonté soit iuste: car si elle n'est iuste, il est impossible qu'elle soit tousiours vne.

Nothing is harder for me to believe of men than constancy, and nothing easier than inconstancy. Whoever judged them in detail and distinctly, piece by piece, would more often hit on the truth. In all antiquity it is hard to pick out a dozen men who set their lives to a definite and steady course, which is the principal aim of wisdom. For to sum it up in a word, says an ancient, and to embrace all the rules of our life in one, it is to will and not to will always the same thing. "I would not deign," he says, "to add 'provided the will is just'; for if it is not just, it cannot always be one."[3]

De vray, i'ay autrefois appris, que le vice, n'est que desreglement et faute de mesure; et par consequent, il est impossible d'y attacher la constance. C'est vn mot de Demosthenes, dit-on, que le commencement de toute vertu, c'est consultation et deliberation, et la fin et perfection, constance. Si par discours nous entreprenions certaine voye, nous la prendrions la plus belle, mais nul n'y a pensé, *Quod petiit, spernit; repetit quod nuper omisit; / Æstuat, et vitæ disconuenit ordine toto.*

Indeed, I once learned that vice is nothing but disorder and lack of measure, and consequently it is impossible to attach constancy to it. It is a saying of Demosthenes, they say, that the beginning of all virtue is consultation and deliberation, and its end and perfection constancy. If we set out on a definite path by reasoning, we would choose the finest; but no one has thought of it. *What he sought he spurns; he seeks again what he just left; / He seethes, and his whole life is at odds with itself.*[4]

2.1.4 Nostre façon ordinaire c'est d'aller apres les inclinations de nostre appetit, à gauche, à dextre, contremont, contrebas, selon que le vent des occasions nous emporte. Nous ne pensons ce que nous voulons, qu'à l'instant que nous le voulons: et changeons comme cet animal, qui prend la couleur du lieu, où on le couche. Ce que nous auons à cett'heure proposé, nous le changeons tantost, et tantost encore retournons sur nos pas: ce n'est que branle et inconstance: *Ducimur vt neruis alienis mobile lignum.* Nous n'allons pas, on nous emporte: comme les choses qui flottent, ores doucement, ores auecques violence, selon que l'eau est ireuse ou bonasse.

Our ordinary way is to follow the inclinations of our appetite, left and right, uphill and down, as the wind of circumstance carries us. We think about what we want only at the moment we want it, and we change like that animal which takes the color of the place where it is laid. What we resolved just now we soon change, and soon again we retrace our steps: it is nothing but wavering and inconstancy. *We are led, like a wooden puppet, by strings that others pull.* We do not go; we are carried along, like things that float, now gently, now violently, as the water is angry or calm.[5]

Nonne videmus
Quid sibi quisque velit nescire, et quærere semper;
Commutare locum, quasi onus deponere possit? Chaque iour nouuelle fantasie, et se meuuent nos humeurs auecques les mouuements du temps. *Tales sunt hominum mentes, quali pater ipse*
Iuppiter auctifero lustrauit lumine terras.

Do we not see
That each man does not know what he wants, and is always seeking,
Changing place, as if he could lay down his burden? Every day a new notion, and our temperaments shift with the shifts of the weather. *Men's minds are like the fruitful light*
With which father Jupiter himself has lit the earth.[6]

3 Seneca, Letters 20.
4 Horace, Epistles I.1.
5 Horace, Satires II.7.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
2.1.5	Nous flottons entre diuers aduis: nous ne voulons rien librement, rien absoluëment, rien constamment. A qui auroit prescript et estably certaines loix et certaine police en sa teste, nous verrions tout par tout en sa vie reluire vne equalité de mœurs, vn ordre, et vne relation infallible des vnes choses aux autres. (Empedocles remarquoit cette difformité aux Agrigentins, qu'ils s'abandonnoyent aux delices, comme s'ils auoyent l'endemain à mourir: et bastissoyent, comme si iamais ils ne deuoyent mourir.) Le discours en seroit bien aisé à faire. Comme il se voit du ieune Caton: qui en a touché vne marche, a tout touché: c'est vne harmonie de sons tres-accordans, qui ne se peut démentir. A nous au rebours, autant d'actions, autant faut-il de iugemens particuliers.	We float between different opinions: we will nothing freely, nothing absolutely, nothing constantly. In anyone who had prescribed and established definite laws and a definite order of government in his head, we would see an evenness of conduct shine out everywhere in his life, an order and an unfailing relation of one thing to another. (Empedocles noticed this inconsistency in the people of Agrigentum: they abandoned themselves to pleasures as if they were to die the next day, and built as if they were never to die.) It would be easy to give an account of such a man. You can see it in the younger Cato: touch one key of him and you have touched them all; he is a harmony of perfectly concordant sounds that cannot belie itself. With us, on the contrary, as many actions, so many separate judgments are needed.
	Le plus seur, à mon opinion, seroit de les rapporter aux circonstances voisines, sans entrer en plus longue recherche, et sans en conclurre autre consequence.	The surest thing, in my opinion, would be to relate them to the immediate circumstances, without going into any longer inquiry and without drawing any further conclusion from them.
2.1.6	Pendant les débauches de nostre pauure Estat, on me rapporta, qu'vne fille de bien pres de là où i'estoy, s'estoit precipitée du haut d'vne fenestre, pour éuiter la force d'vn belitre de soldat son hoste: elle ne s'estoit pas tuée à la cheute, et pour redoubler son entreprise, s'estoit voulu donner d'vn cousteau par la gorge, mais on l'en auoit empeschée: toutefois apres s'y estre bien fort blessée, elle mesme confessoit que le soldat ne l'auoit encore pressée que de requestes, sollicitations, et presens, mais qu'elle auoit eu peur, qu'en fin il en vinst à la contrainte: et là dessus les parolles, la contenance, et ce sang tesmoing de sa vertu, à la vraye façon d'vne autre Lucrece.	During the disorders of our poor country, I was told that a girl from very near where I was had thrown herself from a high window to escape being forced by a rascal of a soldier quartered in her house. The fall had not killed her, and to renew her attempt she had tried to cut her throat with a knife, but she had been prevented. Even so, after wounding herself quite badly, she admitted herself that the soldier had so far pressed her only with requests, entreaties and gifts, but that she had been afraid he would end by using force. And on top of that, the words, the bearing, and that blood bearing witness to her virtue, in the true manner of a second Lucretia.[7]
	Or i'ay sçeu à la verité, qu'auant et depuis ell'auoit esté garse de non si difficile composition. Comme dit le compte, tout beau et honneste que vous estes, quand vous aurez failly vostre pointe, n'en concluez pas incontinent vne chasteté inuiolable en vostre maistresse: ce n'est pas à dire que le muletier n'y trouue son heure.	Now I have learned for a fact that before and since she had been a girl not so hard to come to terms with. As the tale says: handsome and honorable as you may be, when you have failed in your pursuit, do not at once conclude that your mistress is of inviolable chastity; it does not follow that the muleteer will not find his moment.
2.1.7	Antigonus ayant pris en affection vn de ses soldats, pour sa vertu et vaillance, commanda à ses medecins de le	Antigonus, having taken a liking to one of his soldiers for his virtue and valor, ordered his physi-

6 Lucretius, On the Nature of Things III; the second quotation is Cicero's Latin version of Homer, Odyssey XVIII.
7 Lucretia, the Roman matron who killed herself after being raped by Sextus Tarquinius.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
	penser d'une maladie longue et interieure, qui l'auoit tourmenté long temps: et s'apperceuant apres sa guerison, qu'il alloit beaucoup plus froidement aux affaires, luy demanda qui l'auoit ainsi changé et encoüardy: Vous mesmes, Sire, luy respondit-il, m'ayant deschargé des maux, pour lesquels ie ne tenois compte de ma vie.	cians to treat him for a long-standing internal illness that had tormented him for a long time. Noticing after his cure that he went into action much more coolly, he asked him what had changed him so and made him a coward. "You yourself, sire," he replied, "by relieving me of the ills that made me hold my life of no account."[8]
2.1.8	Le soldat de Lucullus ayant esté déualisé par les ennemis, fit sur eux pour se reuencher vne belle entreprise: quand il se fut remplumé de sa perte, Lucullus l'ayant pris en bonne opinion, l'emploioit à quelque exploict hazardeux, par toutes les plus belles remonstrances, dequoy il se pouuoit aduiser: *Verbis quæ timido quoque possent addere mentem;* Employez y, respondit-il, quelque miserable soldat déualisé: *Quantumuis rusticus: Ibit, / Ibit eò, quò vis, qui zonam perdidit, inquit;* et refuse resoluëment d'y aller.	A soldier of Lucullus, having been robbed by the enemy, carried out a fine exploit against them to get his revenge. When he had recouped his loss, Lucullus, who had formed a good opinion of him, wanted to use him in some risky venture, with all the finest exhortations he could think of, *With words that might have put heart even into a coward.* "Use some wretched soldier who has been robbed," he replied—*However rustic he was: "He will go, / He will go where you wish, the man who has lost his purse," he said*—and he flatly refused to go.[9]
2.1.9	Quand nous lisons, que Mahomet ayant outrageusement rudoyé Chasan chef de ses Ianissaires, de ce qu'il voyoit sa troupe enfoncée par les Hongres, et luy se porter laschement au combat, Chasan alla pour toute response se ruer furieusement seul en l'estat qu'il estoit, les armes au poing, dans le premier corps des ennemis qui se presenta, où il fut soudain englouti: ce n'est à l'aduenture pas tant iustification, que raduisement: ny tant prouësse naturelle, qu'vn nouueau despit.	We read that Mehmed harshly abused Hasan, the commander of his Janissaries, because he saw his troop broken by the Hungarians and Hasan himself fighting like a coward; and that Hasan, by way of answer, went and hurled himself furiously, alone, just as he was, weapon in hand, into the first body of enemies that came before him, where he was at once swallowed up. This was perhaps not so much self-justification as a change of heart, nor so much natural prowess as fresh spite.[10]
	Celuy que vous vistes hier si auantureux, ne trouuez pas estrange de le voir aussi poltron le lendemain: ou la cholere, ou la necessité, ou la compagnie, ou le vin, ou le son d'vne trompette, luy auoit mis le cœur au ventre, ce n'est pas vn cœur ainsi formé par discours: ces circonstances le luy ont fermy: ce n'est pas merueille, si le voyla deuenu autre par autres circonstances contraires. Cette variation et contradiction qui se void en nous, si souple, a faict qu'aucuns nous songent deux ames, d'autres deux puissances, qui nous accompaignent et agitent chacune à sa mode, vers le bien l'vne, l'autre vers le mal: vne si brusque diuersité ne se pouuant bien assortir à vn subiet simple.	That man you saw so venturesome yesterday, do not find it strange to see him just as cowardly the next day. Anger, or necessity, or company, or wine, or the sound of a trumpet had put fire in his belly; it is not a heart formed in that way by reasoning. These circumstances stiffened it for him; it is no wonder if he has become someone else through other, contrary circumstances. This variation and contradiction that we see in ourselves, so supple, has led some to imagine that we have two souls, and others two powers that accompany us and drive us each in its own way, the one toward good, the other toward evil, since so abrupt a diversity cannot well be reconciled with a single subject.
2.1.10	Non seulement le vent des accidens me remue selon son inclination: mais en outre, ie me remue et trouble moy	Not only does the wind of events stir me according to its bent, but besides, I stir and trouble myself by

8 The story is in Plutarch.
9 The quotations are from Horace, Epistles II.2, which tells the story.
10 Mehmed II, Ottoman sultan AD 1451–1481.

FRENCH

mesme par l'instabilité de ma posture; et qui y regarde primement, ne se trouue guere deux fois en mesme estat. Ie donne à mon ame tantost vn visage, tantost vn autre, selon le costé où ie la couche. Si ie parle diuersement de moy, c'est que ie me regarde diuersement.

Toutes les contrarietez s'y trouuent, selon quelque tour, et en quelque façon: Honteux, insolent, chaste, luxurieux, bauard, taciturne, laborieux, delicat, ingenieux, hebeté, chagrin, debonnaire, menteur, veritable, sçauant, ignorant, et liberal et auare et prodigue: tout cela ie le vois en moy aucunement, selon que ie me vire: et quiconque s'estudie bien attentifuement, trouue en soy, voire et en son iugement mesme, cette volubilité et discordance. Ie n'ay rien à dire de moy, entierement, simplement, et solidement, sans confusion et sans meslange, ny en vn mot. *Distinguo*, est le plus vniuersel membre de ma Logique.

2.1.11 Encore que ie sois tousiours d'aduis de dire du bien le bien, et d'interpreter plustost en bonne part les choses qui le peuuent estre, si est-ce que l'estrangeté de nostre condition, porte que nous soyons souuent par le vice mesme poussez à bien faire, si le bien faire ne se iugeoit par la seule intention. Parquoy vn fait courageux ne doit pas conclurre vn homme vaillant: celuy qui le seroit bien à poinct, il le seroit tousiours, et à toutes occasions.

Si c'estoit vne habitude de vertu, et non vne saillie, elle rendroit vn homme pareillement resolu à tous accidens: tel seul, qu'en compagnie: tel en camp clos, qu'en vne bataille: car quoy qu'on die, il n'y a pas autre vaillance sur le paué et autre au camp. Aussi courageusement porteroit il vne maladie en son lict, qu'vne blessure au camp: et ne craindroit non plus la mort en sa maison qu'en vn assaut. Nous ne verrions pas vn mesme homme, donner dans la bresche d'vne braue asseurance, et se tourmenter apres, comme vne femme, de la perte d'vn procez ou d'vn fils.

Quand estant lasche à l'infamie, il est ferme à la pauureté: quand estant mol contre les rasoirs des barbiers, il se trouue roide contre les espées des aduersaires: l'action est loüable, non pas l'homme. Plusieurs Grecs, dit Cicero, ne peuuent veoir les ennemis, et se trouuent constants aux maladies. Les Cimbres et Celtiberiens tout au

ENGLISH

the instability of my stance; and anyone who looks at himself closely will hardly find himself twice in the same state. I give my soul now one face, now another, depending on which side I lay it on. If I speak of myself in different ways, it is because I look at myself in different ways.

All the contradictions are found there, in some turn and in some fashion. Bashful, insolent; chaste, lustful; talkative, taciturn; hardworking, soft; ingenious, dull-witted; morose, good-natured; lying, truthful; learned, ignorant; and liberal, and miserly, and prodigal: all this I see in myself to some extent, according to how I turn. And anyone who studies himself really attentively finds in himself, yes, even in his very judgment, this volatility and discord. I have nothing to say about myself entirely, simply and solidly, without confusion and without mixture, or in one word. *I distinguish* is the most universal member of my logic.[11]

Though I am always for speaking well of what is good, and for taking in a good sense whatever can be so taken, still the strangeness of our condition is such that we are often driven to do good by vice itself—were it not that doing good is judged by intention alone. So one courageous deed should not lead us to conclude that a man is valiant. A man who was truly valiant would be so always and on every occasion.

If it were a habit of virtue and not a sudden sally, it would make a man equally resolute in every circumstance: the same alone as in company, the same in single combat as in a battle. For whatever people say, there is not one kind of valor in the street and another in the field. He would bear an illness in his bed as courageously as a wound in the field, and would fear death no more at home than in an assault. We would not see the same man charge into the breach with brave assurance and afterward torment himself, like a woman, over the loss of a lawsuit or a son.

When a man who is cowardly in the face of disgrace is steadfast in poverty; when a man who is soft before the barber's razor is unflinching before the swords of his adversaries, the action is praiseworthy, not the man. Many Greeks, says Cicero, cannot look the enemy in the face, and yet are

11 *Distinguo,* the scholastic disputant's formula for drawing a distinction.

FRENCH

rebours. *Nihil enim potest esse æquabile, quod non à certa ratione proficiscatur.*

2.1.12 Il n'est point de vaillance plus extreme en son espece, que celle d'Alexandre: mais elle n'est qu'en espece, ny assez pleine par tout, et vniuerselle. Toute incomparable qu'elle est, si a elle encores ses taches. Qui faict que nous le voyons se troubler si esperduement aux plus legers soupçons qu'il prent des machinations des siens contre sa vie: et se porter en cette recherche, d'vne si vehemente et indiscrete iniustice, et d'vne crainte qui subuertit sa raison naturelle. La superstition aussi dequoy il estoit si fort attaint, porte quelque image de pusillanimité. Et l'exces de la penitence, qu'il fit, du meurtre de Clytus, est aussi tesmoignage de l'inegalité de son courage.

Nostre faict ce ne sont que pieces rapportées, et voulons acquerir vn honneur à fauces enseignes. La vertu ne veut estre suyuie que pour elle mesme; et si on emprunte par fois son masque pour autre occasion, elle nous l'arrache aussi tost du visage. C'est vne viue et forte teinture, quand l'ame en est vue fois abbreuuée, et qui ne s'en va qu'elle n'emporte la piece.

Voyla pourquoy pour iuger d'vn homme, il faut suiure longuement et curieusement sa trace: si la constance ne s'y maintient de son seul fondement, *cui viuendi via considerata atque prouisa est*, si la varieté des occurrences luy faict changer de pas, (ie dy de voye: car le pas s'en peut ou haster, ou appesantir) laissez le courre: celuy là s'en va auau le vent, comme dict la deuise de nostre Talebot.

2.1.13 Ce n'est pas merueille, dict vn ancien, que le hazard puisse tant sur nous, puis que nous viuons par hazard. A qui n'a dressé en gros sa vie à vne certaine fin, il est impossible de disposer les actions particulieres. Il est impossible de renger les pieces, à qui n'a vne forme du total en sa teste. A quoy faire la prouision des couleurs, à qui ne sçay ce qu'il a à peindre? Aucun ne fait certain dessein de sa vie, et n'en deliberons qu'à parcelles. L'archer doit premierement sçauoir où il vise, et puis y accommoder la main, l'arc, la corde, la flesche, et les mouuemens. Nos conseils fouruoyent, par ce qu'ils n'ont pas d'adresse et de but.

ENGLISH

steadfast in illness; the Cimbrians and Celtiberians quite the reverse. *For nothing can be consistent that does not proceed from a fixed principle.*

There is no valor more extreme of its kind than Alexander's; but it is so only of its kind, and is not full enough everywhere, or universal. Incomparable as it is, it still has its blemishes. That is why we see him so frantically distraught at the slightest suspicions he conceives of plots by his own people against his life, and conducting his investigation with such vehement and indiscriminate injustice, and with a fear that overturns his natural reason. The superstition with which he was so deeply tainted also bears some mark of faintheartedness. And the excess of his penitence for the murder of Clitus is further evidence of the unevenness of his courage.[12]

Our doings are nothing but patchwork, and we want to win honor under false colors. Virtue wants to be pursued only for its own sake; and if we sometimes borrow its mask for some other purpose, it soon snatches it from our face. It is a vivid, strong dye, once the soul is steeped in it, and it does not come out without taking the cloth with it.

That is why, to judge a man, we must follow his tracks long and carefully. If constancy does not hold there on its own foundation—*a man whose way of life has been considered and planned in advance*—if the variety of events makes him change his pace (I mean his path, for the pace may be quickened or slowed), let him run: that man goes down the wind, as the motto of our Talbot says.[13]

It is no wonder, says an ancient, that chance has so much power over us, since we live by chance. A man who has not directed his life as a whole toward a definite end cannot possibly arrange his particular actions. A man who does not have a shape of the whole in his head cannot possibly put the pieces in order. What use is a supply of colors to someone who does not know what he is to paint? No one makes a definite plan for his life; we deliberate about it only piecemeal. The archer must first know what he is aiming at, and then adjust his hand, his bow, the string, the arrow and

12 Clitus (Cleitus), Alexander's companion, whom he killed in a drunken quarrel.
13 The Latin is from Cicero, Paradoxes of the Stoics V. John Talbot, Earl of Shrewsbury (d. 1453), was the English commander in Guyenne.

FRENCH

Nul vent fait pour celuy qui n'a point de port destiné. Ie ne suis pas d'aduis de ce iugement qu'on fit pour Sophocles, de l'auoir argumenté suffisant au maniement des choses domestiques, contre l'accusation de son fils, pour auoir veu l'vne de ses tragedies. Ny ne trouue la coniecture des Pariens enuoyez pour reformer les Milesiens, suffisante à la consequence qu'ils en tirerent. Visitants l'isle, ils remarquoyent les terres mieux cultiuees, et maisons champestres mieux gouuernées. Et ayants enregistré le nom des maistres d'icelles, comme ils eurent faict l'assemblée des citoyens en la ville, ils nommerent ces maistres là, pour nouueaux gouuerneurs et magistrats: iugeants que soigneux de leurs affaires priuées, ils le seroyent des publiques.

2.1.14 Nous sommes tous de lopins, et d'vne contexture si informe et diuerse, que chaque piece, chaque moment, faict son ieu. Et se trouue autant de difference de nous à nous mesmes, que de nous à autruy.

Magnam rem puta, vnum hominem agere. Puis que l'ambition peut apprendre aux hommes, et la vaillance, et la temperance, et la liberalité, voire et la iustice: puis que l'auarice peut planter au courage d'vn garçon de boutique, nourri à l'ombre et à l'oysiueté, l'asseurance de se ietter si loing du foyer domestique, à la mercy des vagues et de Neptune courroucé dans vn fraile bateau, et qu'elle apprend encore la discretion et la prudence: et que Venus mesme fournit de resolution et de hardiesse la ieunesse encore soubs la discipline et la verge; et gendarme le tendre cœur des pucelles au giron de leurs meres: *Hac duce, custodes furtim transgressa iacentes, / Ad iuuenem tenebris sola puella venit;* ce n'est pas tour de rassis entendement, de nous iuger simplement par nos actions de dehors: il faut sonder iusqu'au dedans, et voir par quels ressors se donne le bransle.

Mais d'autant que c'est vne hazardeuse et haute entreprinse, ie voudrois que moins de gens s'en meslassent.

ENGLISH

his movements to it. Our counsels go astray because they have no direction and no aim.[14]

No wind serves the man who has no port in view. I do not agree with the judgment made in Sophocles' favor, declaring him competent to manage his household affairs, against his son's accusation, on the strength of having seen one of his tragedies. Nor do I find the inference of the Parians, sent to reform the Milesians, sufficient for the conclusion they drew from it. Touring the island, they noted the best-cultivated lands and the best-run country houses. Having recorded the names of their owners, they assembled the citizens in the town and named those owners as the new governors and magistrates, judging that men careful of their private affairs would be careful of public ones.[15]

We are all made of scraps, and of so shapeless and varied a texture that every piece, every moment, plays its own game. And there is as much difference between us and ourselves as between us and others.

Consider it a great thing to play the part of one single man. Ambition can teach men valor, and temperance, and liberality, and even justice. Greed can plant in the heart of a shop boy, brought up in the shade and in idleness, the confidence to cast himself so far from his home, at the mercy of the waves and of angry Neptune, in a frail boat; and it also teaches discretion and prudence. Venus herself supplies resolution and boldness to young people still under discipline and the rod, and arms the tender hearts of maidens in their mothers' laps: *With her as guide, the girl, stealing past her sleeping guards, / Comes alone in the dark to the young man.* Since all this is so, it is not the act of a settled understanding to judge us simply by our outward actions. We must probe right into the inside and see by what springs the motion is given.[16]

But since this is a hazardous and lofty undertaking, I would wish fewer people meddled with it.

14 Seneca, Letters 71.

15 Accused by his son of senility, Sophocles is said to have read the court his Oedipus at Colonus; the Parians' story is in Herodotus V.

16 Seneca, Letters 120; the verse is from Tibullus, Elegies II.1.

II.2 Of Drunkenness

De l'yurongnerie
Montaigne denies that all vices are equal, finds drunkenness gross but less malicious than most, and weighs the case for drink.

FRENCH

2.2.1 LE monde n'est que varieté et dissemblance. Les vices sont tous pareils en ce qu'ils sont tous vices: et de cette façon l'entendent à l'aduenture les Stoiciens: mais encore qu'ils soyent également vices, ils ne sont pas égaux vices. Et que celuy qui a franchi de cent pas les limites, *Quos vltra, citráque nequit consistere rectum,* ne soit pas de pire condition, que celuy qui n'en est qu'à dix pas, il n'est pas croyable: et que le sacrilege ne soit pire que le larrecin d'vn chou de nostre iardin: *Nec vincet ratio, tantumdem vt peccet, idémque,*
Qui teneros caules alieni fregerit horti,
Et qui nocturnus diuûm sacra legerit.

2.2.2 Il y a autant en cela de diuersité qu'en aucune autre chose. La confusion de l'ordre et mesure des pechez, est dangereuse. Les meurtriers, les traistres, les tyrans, y ont trop d'acquest: ce n'est pas raison que leur conscience se soulage, sur ce que tel autre ou est oisif, ou est lascif, ou moins assidu à la deuotion. Chacun poise sur le peché de son compagnon, et esleue le sien. Les instructeurs mesmes les rangent souuent mal à mon gré. Comme Socrates disoit, que le principal office de la sagesse estoit, distinguer les biens et les maux.

Nous autres, à qui le meilleur est tousiours en vice, deuons dire de mesme de la science de distinguer les vices: sans laquelle, bien exacte, le vertueux et le meschant demeurent meslez et incognus.

2.2.3 Or l'yurongnerie entre les autres, me semble vn vice grossier et brutal. L'esprit a plus de part ailleurs: et il y a des vices, qui ont ie ne sçay quoy de genereux, s'il le faut ainsi dire. Il y en a où la science se mesle, la diligence, la vaillance, la prudence, l'addresse et la finesse: cestuy-cy

ENGLISH

The world is nothing but variety and dissimilarity. Vices are all alike in that they are all vices, and perhaps that is how the Stoics understand it; but though they are equally vices, they are not equal vices. That the man who has overstepped the limits by a hundred paces, *Beyond and short of which right cannot stand,* is in no worse condition than the one who is only ten paces past them is not believable; nor that sacrilege is no worse than stealing a cabbage from our garden: *Nor will reason prove that the sin is the same and as great*
For one who breaks off tender cabbages in another man's garden
And for one who steals by night the sacred objects of the gods.[1]

There is as much diversity in this as in anything else. Confusing the order and measure of sins is dangerous. Murderers, traitors and tyrants gain too much by it: it is not right that their conscience should be relieved because some other man is idle, or lascivious, or less assiduous in devotion. Each man bears down on his fellow's sin and makes light of his own. Even our teachers often rank them badly, to my mind. Socrates said that the chief office of wisdom was to distinguish good things from bad.

We others, in whom even the best is always tainted with vice, ought to say the same of the science of distinguishing vices; without it, and an exact one, the virtuous and the wicked remain mixed up and unrecognized.

Now drunkenness, among others, seems to me a gross and brutish vice. The mind has more share in the others; and there are vices that have something noble about them, if one may put it so. There

1 Horace, Satires I.1 and I.3.

FRENCH

est tout corporel et terrestre. Aussi la plus grossiere nation de celles qui sont auiourd'huy, c'est celle là seule qui le tient en credit. Les autres vices alterent l'entendement, cestuy-cy le renuerse, et estonne le corps. *Cùm vini vis penetrauit,*
Consequitur grauitas membrorum, præpediuntur
Crura vacillanti, tardescit lingua, madet mens,
Nant oculi; clamor, singultus iurgia gliscunt.

2.2.4 Le pire estat de l'homme, c'est où il pert la connoissance et gouuernement de soy. Et en dit on entre autres choses, que comme le moust bouillant dans vn vaisseau, pousse à mont tout ce qu'il y a dans le fonds, aussi le vin faict desbonder les plus intimes secrets, à ceux qui en ont pris outre mesure. *Tu sapientium*
Curas, et arcanum iocoso
Consilium retegis Lyæo. Iosephe recite qu'il tira le ver du nez à vn certain ambassadeur que les ennemis luy auoient enuoyé, l'ayant fait boire d'autant.

Toutesfois Auguste s'estant fié à Lucius Piso, qui conquit la Thrace, des plus priuez affaires qu'il eust, ne s'en trouua iamais mesconté: ny Tyberius de Cossus, à qui il se deschargeoit de tous ses conseils: quoy que nous les sçachions auoir esté si fort subiects au vin, qu'il en a fallu rapporter souuent du Senat, et l'vn et l'autre yure, *Hesterno inflatum venas, de more, Lyæo.* Et commit on aussi fidelement qu'à Cassius beuueur d'eauë, à Cimber le dessein de tuer Cesar: quoy qu'il s'enyurast souuent: d'où il respondit plaisamment, Que ie portasse vn tyran, moy, qui ne puis porter le vin! Nous voyons nos Allemans noyez dans le vin, se souuenir de leur quartier, du mot, et de leur rang.

Nec facilis victoria de madidis, et / Blæsis, atque mero titubantibus.

2.2.5 Ie n'eusse pas creu d'yuresse si profonde, estoufée, et enseuelie, si ie n'eusse leu cecy dans les histoires: Qu'Attalus ayant conuié à souper pour luy faire vne notable indignité, ce Pausanias, qui sur ce mesme subiect,

ENGLISH

are some in which knowledge plays a part, and diligence, valor, prudence, skill and cunning; this one is wholly bodily and earthly. And so the grossest nation of all those that exist today is the only one that holds it in esteem. Other vices impair the understanding; this one overturns it, and stuns the body. *When the force of wine has penetrated,*
Heaviness of the limbs follows; the legs stagger
And are hampered, the tongue grows slow, the mind is sodden,
The eyes swim; shouting, hiccups and quarrels grow.[2]

The worst state of man is when he loses knowledge and control of himself. Among other things, it is said that, just as boiling must in a vat pushes up everything at the bottom, so wine makes the most intimate secrets spill out of those who have taken it beyond measure. *You lay bare the cares of the wise*
And their secret counsel
Through playful Lyaeus. Josephus relates that he wormed the secrets out of a certain ambassador whom the enemy had sent him, by making him drink deep.[3]

Yet Augustus, having confided his most private affairs to Lucius Piso, the conqueror of Thrace, was never let down; nor was Tiberius by Cossus, onto whom he unloaded all his plans—though we know that both were so given to wine that they often had to be carried back from the Senate, the pair of them drunk: *His veins swollen, as usual, with yesterday's wine.* And the plan to kill Caesar was entrusted to Cimber as faithfully as to Cassius, a water drinker, though Cimber often got drunk; hence his witty reply: "Me, bear a tyrant—I who cannot bear my wine!" We see our Germans, drowned in wine, still remember their quarters, the password and their rank.[4]

Nor is victory easy over men who are soaked, / Stammering and staggering with wine.[5]

I would not have believed in a drunkenness so deep, so stifled and buried, had I not read this in the histories. Attalus, wishing to do a signal indig-

2 Lucretius, On the Nature of Things III.
3 Horace, Odes III.21, addressed to a wine jar; Lyaeus is a name of Bacchus.
4 The verse is from Virgil, Eclogues VI, describing Silenus. Lucius Tillius Cimber was one of Caesar's assassins in 44 BC.
5 Juvenal, Satires XV.

FRENCH

tua depuis Philippus Roy de Macedoine (Roy portant par ses belles qualitez tesmoignage de la nourriture, qu'il auoit prinse en la maison et compagnie d'Epaminondas) il le fit tant boire, qu'il peust abandonner sa beauté, insensiblement, comme le corps d'vne putain buissonniere, aux muletiers et nombre d'abiects seruiteurs de sa maison.

Et ce que m'aprint vne dame que i'honnore et prise fort, que pres de Bordeaux, vers Castres, où est sa maison, vne femme de village, veufue, de chaste reputation, sentant des premiers ombrages de grossesse, disoit à ses voisines, qu'elle penseroit estre enceinte si ell'auoit vn mary. Mais du iour à la iournee, croissant l'occasion de ce soupçon, et en fin iusques à l'euidence, ell'en vint là, de faire declarer au prosne de son eglise, que qui seroit consent de ce faict, en l'aduoüant, elle promettoit de le luy pardonner, et s'il le trouuoit bon, de l'espouser.

Vn sien ieune valet de labourage, enhardy de cette proclamation, declara l'auoir trouuée vn iour de feste, ayant bien largement prins son vin, endormie en son foyer si profondement et si indecemment, qu'il s'en peut seruir sans l'esueiller. Ils viuent encore mariez ensemble.

2.2.6 Il est certain que l'antiquité n'a pas fort descrié ce vice: les escris mesmes de plusieurs Philosophes en parlent bien mollement: et iusques aux Stoïciens il y en a qui conseillent de se dispenser quelquefois à boire d'autant, et de s'enyurer pour relascher l'ame. *Hoc quoque virtutum quondam certamine magnum*
Socratem palmam promeruisse ferunt. Ce censeur et correcteur des autres Caton, a esté reproché de bien boire. *Narratur et prisci Catonis*
Sæpe mero caluisse virtus. Cyrus Roy tant renommé, allegue entre ses autres loüanges, pour se preferer à son frere Artaxerxes, qu'il sçauoit beaucoup mieux boire que luy. Et és nations les mieux reglées, et policées; cet essay de boire d'autant, estoit fort en vsage.

ENGLISH

nity to that Pausanias who later, over this very matter, killed Philip, King of Macedon (a king whose fine qualities bore witness to the upbringing he had received in the house and company of Epaminondas), invited him to supper. He made him drink so much that he was able to hand over his beauty, without his feeling a thing, like the body of a hedgerow prostitute, to the muleteers and a crowd of the lowly servants of his household.[6]

And there is what I was told by a lady whom I honor and esteem highly. Near Bordeaux, toward Castres, where her house is, a village woman, a widow of chaste reputation, feeling the first suspicions of pregnancy, told her neighbors that she would think she was with child if she had a husband. But as the grounds for this suspicion grew from day to day, and finally to the point of being evident, she went so far as to have it announced from the pulpit of her church that whoever had been party to this deed, if he owned up to it, she promised to forgive him, and, if he was willing, to marry him.[7]

One of her young farmhands, emboldened by this proclamation, declared that one feast day, when she had taken her wine very liberally, he had found her asleep by her hearth, so deeply and in so indecent a posture that he was able to make use of her without waking her. They are still living together as man and wife.

It is certain that antiquity did not much decry this vice. The writings even of several philosophers speak of it very mildly; and even among the Stoics there are some who advise allowing oneself now and then to drink deep and get drunk, to relax the soul. *In this contest of virtues too, they say, the great Socrates once won the palm.* That censor and corrector of others, Cato, was reproached for drinking hard. *It is told that even old Cato's virtue*
Was often warmed with wine. Cyrus, that much-renowned king, among his other claims to praise, cites as a reason for ranking himself above his brother Artaxerxes that he could hold his drink far better than he. And in the best-ordered and best-governed nations this trial of drinking deep was very much in use.[8]

6 Philip II of Macedon was assassinated by Pausanias in 336 BC; the story of Attalus' outrage is told by Diodorus Siculus.
7 Castres-Gironde, a village south of Bordeaux, not the town of Castres in Languedoc.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
	I'ay ouy dire à Siluius excellent medecin de Paris, que pour garder que les forces de nostre estomac ne s'apparessent, il est bon vne fois le mois, les esueiller par cet excez, et les picquer pour les garder de s'engourdir. Et escrit-on que les Perses apres le vin consultoient de leurs principaux affaires.	I have heard Sylvius, an excellent Paris physician, say that to keep the powers of our stomach from growing lazy, it is good once a month to rouse them by this excess, and to prod them to keep them from going numb. And it is written that the Persians deliberated on their chief affairs after wine.[9]
2.2.7	Mon goust et ma complexion est plus ennemie de ce vice, que mon discours. Car outre ce que ie captiue aysément mes creances soubs l'authorité des opinions anciennes, ie le trouue bien vn vice lasche et stupide, mais moins malicieux et dommageable que les autres, qui choquent quasi tous de plus droit fil la societé publique. Et si nous ne nous pouuons donner du plaisir, qu'il ne nous couste quelque chose, comme ils tiennent, ie trouue que ce vice couste moins à nostre conscience que les autres: outre ce qu'il n'est point de difficile apprest, ny malaisé à trouuer: consideration non mesprisable.	My taste and constitution are more hostile to this vice than my reasoning is. For besides the fact that I readily make my beliefs captive to the authority of ancient opinions, I do indeed find it a slack and stupid vice, but less malicious and harmful than the others, which nearly all strike more directly at public society. And if we cannot give ourselves pleasure without its costing us something, as they hold, I find that this vice costs our conscience less than the others; besides which it takes no trouble to prepare and is not hard to find—a consideration not to be despised.
	Vn homme auancé en dignité et en aage, entre trois principales commoditez, qu'il me disoit luy rester, en la vie, comptoit ceste-cy, et où les veut on trouuer plus iustement qu'entre les naturelles? Mais il la prenoit mal. La delicatesse y est à fuyr, et le soigneux triage du vin. Si vous fondez vostre volupté à le boire friand, vous vous obligez à la douleur de le boire autre. Il faut auoir le goust plus lasche et plus libre. Pour estre bon beuueur, il ne faut le palais si tendre. Les Allemans boiuent quasi esgalement de tout vin auec plaisir. Leur fin c'est l'aualler, plus que le gouster. Ils en ont bien meilleur marché. Leur volupté est bien plus plantureuse et plus en main.	A man advanced in rank and in age, among three principal comforts that he told me were left to him in life, counted this one; and where would one look for them more rightly than among the natural ones? But he went about it the wrong way. Fastidiousness is to be avoided here, and the careful choosing of wine. If you base your pleasure on drinking it choice, you condemn yourself to the pain of drinking it otherwise. You need a slacker and freer taste. To be a good drinker, you must not have so tender a palate. The Germans drink almost any wine with equal pleasure. Their aim is to swallow it rather than to taste it. They get a far better bargain. Their pleasure is much more plentiful and more ready to hand.
2.2.8	Secondement, boire à la Françoise à deux repas, et moderéement, c'est trop restreindre les faueurs de ce Dieu. Il y faut plus de temps et de constance. Les anciens franchissoyent des nuicts entieres à cet exercice, et y attachoyent souuent les iours. Et si faut dresser son ordinaire plus large et plus ferme. I'ay veu vn grand Seigneur de mon temps, personnage de hautes entreprinses, et fameux succez, qui sans effort, et au train de ses repas communs, ne beuuoit guere moins de cinq lots de vin: et ne se montroit au partir de là, que trop sage et aduisé aux despens de noz affaires. Le plaisir,	Secondly, to drink in the French fashion, at two meals and in moderation, is to restrict the favors of this god too much. More time and constancy are needed. The ancients spent whole nights at this exercise, and often tacked the days on to them. And so one must set one's ordinary allowance larger and steadier. I have seen a great lord of my time, a man of lofty enterprises and famous successes, who without effort, and in the course of his everyday meals, drank hardly less than five lots of

8 The verses are from Maximianus, Elegies (once attributed to Cornelius Gallus), and Horace, Odes III.21. Cyrus is Cyrus the Younger, who rebelled against his brother Artaxerxes II (Plutarch, Artaxerxes).
9 Jacques Dubois, known as Sylvius (1478–1555), physician and anatomist who taught in Paris.

FRENCH	ENGLISH
duquel nous voulons tenir compte au cours de nostre vie, doit en employer plus d'espace.	wine; and on rising from table showed himself only too wise and shrewd, at the expense of our interests. The pleasure we want to reckon on in the course of our life should take up more room in it.[10]
Il faudroit, comme des garçons de boutique, et gents de trauail, ne refuser nulle occasion de boire, et auoir ce desir tousiours en teste. Il semble que touts les iours nous racourcissons l'vsage de cestuy-cy: et qu'en noz maisons, comme i'ay veu en mon enfance, les desiuners, les ressiners, et les collations fussent plus frequentes et ordinaires, qu'à present. Seroit ce qu'en quelque chose nous allassions vers l'amendement? Vrayement non. Mais ce peut estre que nous nous sommes beaucoup plus iettez à la paillardise, que noz peres. Ce sont deux occupations, qui s'entrempeschent en leur vigueur. Elle a affoibli nostre estomach d'vne part: et d'autre part la sobrieté sert à nous rendre plus coints, plus damerets pour l'exercice de l'amour.	We ought, like shop boys and laborers, to refuse no occasion to drink, and always to have this desire in our heads. It seems that every day we cut down on the practice of it, and that in our houses, as I saw in my childhood, breakfasts, afternoon snacks and light suppers were more frequent and usual than now. Could it be that in some respect we are moving toward improvement? Truly not. But it may be that we have thrown ourselves much more into lechery than our fathers did. These are two occupations that hinder each other in their vigor. Lechery has weakened our stomach on the one hand; and on the other, sobriety serves to make us more dapper and more the ladies' man for the exercise of love.

MY FATHER

His father's tales of a chaste age, his bearing, his agility and his late marriage.

FRENCH	ENGLISH
2.2.9 C'est merueille des comptes que i'ay ouy faire à mon pere de la chasteté de son siecle. C'estoit à luy d'en dire, estant tres aduenant et par art et par nature à l'vsage des dames. Il parloit peu et bien, et si mesloit son langage de quelque ornement des liures vulgaires, sur tout Espaignols: et entre les Espaignols, luy estoit ordinaire celuy qu'ils nomment Marc Aurele. Le port, il l'auoit d'vne grauité douce, humble, et tres modeste. Singulier soing de l'honnesteté et decence de sa personne, et de ses habits, soit à pied, soit à cheual. Monstrueuse foy en ses paroles: et vne conscience et religion en general, penchant plustost vers la superstition que vers l'autre bout.	It is a marvel, the accounts I have heard my father give of the chastity of his age. He was the one to speak of it, being very well suited, both by skill and by nature, to the company of ladies. He spoke little and well, and mixed into his speech some ornament from books in the vernacular, especially Spanish ones; and among the Spanish, the one they call Marcus Aurelius was a constant companion of his. His bearing had a gentle gravity, humble and very modest. Singular care for the propriety and decency of his person and his clothes, whether on foot or on horseback. Prodigious faithfulness to his word; and a conscience and religion in general leaning rather toward superstition than toward the other extreme.[11]
Pour vn homme de petite taille, plein de vigueur, et d'vne stature droitte et bien proportionnée, d'vn visage aggreable, tirant sur le brun: adroit et exquis en touts nobles exercices. I'ay veu encore des cannes farcies de plomb, desquelles on dit qu'il s'exerçoit les bras pour se preparer à ruer la barre, ou la pierre, ou à l'escrime: et des souliers aux semelles plombées, pour s'alleger au	As for his person: a man of small stature, full of vigor, with an upright, well-proportioned build, a pleasant face tending to the dark; adroit and accomplished in all noble exercises. I have still seen canes filled with lead, with which, they say, he exercised his arms to prepare for throwing the bar or the stone, or for fencing; and shoes with leaded

10 The lot was a liquid measure of the Bordeaux region, roughly two liters.
11 The Marcus Aurelius is Antonio de Guevara's popular moralizing romance, the Libro áureo de Marco Aurelio (1528).

FRENCH

courir et à sauter. Du prim-saut il a laissé en memoire de petits miracles. Ie l'ay veu pardelà soixante ans se moquer de noz alaigresses: se ietter auec sa robbe fourrée sur vn cheual; faire le tour de la table sur son pouce, ne monter guere en sa chambre, sans s'eslancer trois ou quatre degrez à la fois.

Sur mon propos il disoit, qu'en toute vne prouince à peine y auoit il vne femme de qualité, qui fust mal nommée. Recitoit des estranges priuautez, nommément siennes, auec des honnestes femmes, sans soupçon quelconque. Et de soy, iuroit sainctement estre venu vierge à son mariage, et si c'estoit apres auoir eu longue part aux guerres delà les monts: desquelles il nous a laissé vn papier iournal de sa main suyuant poinct par poinct ce qui s'y passa, et pour le publiq et pour son priué. Aussi se maria il bien auant en aage l'an M. D. XXVIII, qui estoit son trentetroisiesme, sur le chemin de son retour d'Italie. Reuenons à noz bouteilles.

2.2.10 Les incommoditez de la vieillesse, qui ont besoing de quelque appuy et refreschissement, pourroyent m'engendrer auecq raison desir de cette faculté: car c'est quasi le dernier plaisir que le cours des ans nous desrobe. La chaleur naturelle, disent les bons compaignons, se prent premierement aux pieds: celle là touche l'enfance. De-là elle monte à la moyenne region, où elle se plante long temps, et y produit, selon moy, les seuls vrais plaisirs de la vie corporelle. Les autres voluptez dorment au prix. Sur la fin, à la mode d'vne vapeur qui va montant et s'exhalant, ell'arriue au gosier, où elle fait sa derniere pose.

Ie ne puis pourtant entendre comment on vienne à allonger le plaisir de boire outre la soif, et se forger en l'imagination vn appetit artificiel, et contre nature. Mon estomach n'iroit pas iusques là: il est assez empesché à venir à bout de ce qu'il prend pour son besoing. Ma constitution est, ne faire cas du boire que pour la suitte du manger: et boy à cette cause le dernier coup tousiours le plus grand. Et par ce qu'en la vieillesse, nous apportons le palais encrassé de reume, ou alteré par quelque autre mauuaise constitution, le vin nous semble meilleur, à mesme que nous auons ouuert et laué noz pores.

Aumoins il ne m'aduient guere, que pour la premiere fois i'en prenne bien le goust, Anacharsis s'estonnoit que les

ENGLISH

soles, to make himself lighter for running and jumping. Of his leaping he has left the memory of little miracles. I have seen him past sixty make a mockery of our nimbleness: throw himself onto a horse in his furred gown, go around the table on his thumb, and hardly ever go up to his room without bounding three or four steps at a time.

On my subject, he said that in a whole province there was hardly one woman of quality who had a bad name. He would tell of strange intimacies, notably his own, with respectable women, without any suspicion whatever. And of himself he solemnly swore that he had come a virgin to his marriage—and this after having long taken part in the wars beyond the mountains, of which he left us a journal in his own hand, following point by point what happened there, both in public matters and in his private ones. And so he married well on in age, in the year 1528, which was his thirty-third, on his way home from Italy. Let us return to our bottles.

The discomforts of old age, which need some support and refreshment, might with reason breed in me a desire for this faculty; for it is almost the last pleasure that the course of the years steals from us. Natural heat, say the boon companions, takes hold first in the feet: that belongs to childhood. From there it climbs to the middle region, where it settles for a long time and produces there, in my opinion, the only true pleasures of bodily life. The other pleasures are asleep by comparison. Toward the end, like a vapor that keeps rising and evaporating, it reaches the throat, where it makes its last halt.

Yet I cannot understand how people come to prolong the pleasure of drinking beyond thirst, and to forge in their imagination an artificial appetite, against nature. My stomach would not go that far: it has trouble enough getting through what it takes for its needs. My constitution is to care for drink only as a sequel to eating; and for this reason I always make the last draught the biggest. And because in old age we bring a palate clogged with phlegm, or altered by some other bad condition, wine seems better to us in proportion as we have opened and washed our pores.

At least it hardly ever happens that I get the taste of it properly the first time. Anacharsis was aston-

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
	Grecs beussent sur la fin du repas en plus grands verres qu'au commencement. C'estoit, comme ie pense, pour la mesme raison que les Alemans le font, qui commencent lors le combat à boire d'autant.	ished that the Greeks drank from bigger cups at the end of a meal than at the beginning. It was, I think, for the same reason that the Germans do it, who only then begin their contest of drinking deep.
2.2.11	Platon defend aux enfants de boire vin auant dixhuict ans, et auant quarante de s'enyurer. Mais à ceux qui ont passé les quarante, il pardonne de s'y plaire, et de mesler vn peu largement en leurs conuiues l'influence de Dionysus: ce bon Dieu, qui redonne aux hommes la gayeté, et la ieunesse aux vieillards, qui adoucit et amollit les passions de l'ame, comme le fer s'amollit par le feu, et en ses loix, trouue telles assemblées à boire (pourueu qu'il y aye vn chef de bande, à les contenir et regler) vtiles: l'yuresse estant vne bonne espreuue et certaine de la nature d'vn chascun: et quand et quand propre à donner aux personnes d'aage le courage de s'esbaudir en danses, et en la musique: choses vtiles, et qu'ils n'osent entreprendre en sens rassis.	Plato forbids children to drink wine before eighteen, and to get drunk before forty. But those who have passed forty he excuses for taking pleasure in it and for mixing rather liberally into their banquets the influence of Dionysus—that good god who gives back gaiety to men and youth to the old, who softens and mollifies the passions of the soul as iron is softened by fire. And in his Laws he finds such drinking gatherings useful (provided there is a leader of the company to restrain and regulate them): drunkenness being a good and sure test of each man's nature, and at the same time apt to give elderly people the courage to make merry in dancing and music—useful things, which they dare not undertake when sober.[12]
	Que le vin est capable de fournir à l'ame de la temperance, au corps de la santé. Toutesfois ces restrictions, en partie empruntées des Carthaginois, luy plaisent. Qu'on s'en espargne en expedition de guerre. Que tout magistrat et tout iuge s'en abstienne sur le point d'executer sa charge, et de consulter des affaires publiques. Qu'on n'y employe le iour, temps deu à d'autres occupations: ny celle nuict, qu'on destine à faire des enfants. Ils disent, que le Philosophe Stilpon aggraué de vieillesse, hasta sa fin à escient, par le breuuage de vin pur. Pareille cause, mais non du propre dessein, suffoqua aussi les forces abbatuës par l'aage du Philosophe Arcesilaüs.	That wine is capable of providing temperance for the soul and health for the body. However, these restrictions, partly borrowed from the Carthaginians, please him: that it should be avoided on military expeditions; that every magistrate and every judge should abstain from it when about to carry out his office and to deliberate on public affairs; that the day, a time owed to other occupations, should not be given to it, nor the night set aside for making children. They say that the philosopher Stilpo, weighed down by old age, deliberately hastened his end by drinking unmixed wine. The same cause, though not by his own design, also stifled the strength of the philosopher Arcesilaus, already worn down by age.[13]

WISDOM AND FRENZY

Even the wise are shaken by wine and illness; great deeds come from a soul beside itself.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
2.2.12	Mais c'est vne vieille et plaisante question, si l'ame du sage seroit pour se rendre à la force du vin, *Si munitæ adhibet vim sapientiæ.* A combien de vanité nous pousse cette bonne opinion, que nous auons de nous? la plus reglée ame du monde, et la plus parfaicte, n'a que trop affaire à se tenir en pieds, et à se garder de s'emporter	But it is an old and amusing question whether the soul of the wise man would yield to the strength of wine: *If it brings force to bear on fortified wisdom.* How far into vanity does this good opinion we have of ourselves push us? The best-ordered and

12 Plato, Laws, Books I–II.
13 Both stories come from Diogenes Laertius.

FRENCH

par terre de sa propre foiblesse. De mille il n'en est pas vne qui soit droite et rassise vn instant de sa vie: et se pourroit mettre en doubte, si selon sa naturelle condition elle y peut iamais estre. Mais d'y ioindre la constance, c'est sa derniere perfection: ie dis quand rien ne la choqueroit: ce que mille accidens peuuent faire.

Lucrece, ce grand Poëte, a beau philosopher et se bander, le voyla rendu insensé par vn breuuage amoureux. Pensent ils qu'vne apoplexie n'estourdisse aussi bien Socrates, qu'vn portefaix? Les vns ont oublié leur nom mesme par la force d'vne maladie, et vne legere blessure a renuersé le iugement à d'autres. Tant sage qu'il voudra, mais en fin c'est vn homme: qu'est il plus caduque, plus miserable, et plus de neant? La sagesse ne force pas nos conditions naturelles.

Sudores itaque et pallorem existere toto
Corpore, et infringi linguam, vocémque aboriri,
Caligare oculos, sonere aures, succidere artus,
Denique concidere, ex animi terrore, videmus. Il faut qu'il sille les yeux au coup qui le menasse: il faut qu'il fremisse planté au bord d'vn precipice, comme vn enfant: Nature ayant voulu se reseruer ces legeres marques de son authorité, inexpugnables à nostre raison, et à la vertu Stoique: pour luy apprendre sa mortalité et nostre fadeze. Il pallit à la peur, il rougit à la honte, il gemit à la colique, sinon d'vne voix desesperée et esclatante, au moins d'vne voix cassée et enroüée.

Humani à se nihil alienum putet. Les Poëtes qui feignent tout à leur poste, n'osent pas descharger seulement des larmes, leurs heros: *Sic fatur lacrymans, classique immittit habenas.* Luy suffise de brider et moderer ses inclinations: car de les emporter, il n'est pas en luy. Cestuy mesme nostre Plutarque, si parfaict et excellent iuge des actions humaines, à voir Brutus et Torquatus tuer leurs enfans, est entré en doubte, si la vertu pouuoit donner iusques là: et si ces personnages n'auoyent pas esté plustost agitez par quelque autre passion. Toutes actions hors les bornes ordinaires sont subiectes à sinistre interpretation: d'autant que nostre goust n'aduient non plus à ce qui est au dessus de luy, qu'à ce qui est au dessous.

ENGLISH

most perfect soul in the world has only too much to do to stay on its feet and keep from being thrown to the ground by its own weakness. Out of a thousand there is not one that is upright and settled for a single instant of its life; and it could be doubted whether, in its natural condition, it can ever be so. But to join constancy to that is its ultimate perfection—I mean if nothing were to jolt it, which a thousand accidents can do.

Lucretius, that great poet, may philosophize and brace himself all he likes: there he is, driven mad by a love potion. Do they think an apoplexy would not stun Socrates as well as a porter? Some have forgotten even their own name through the force of an illness, and a slight wound has overturned the judgment of others. Let him be as wise as he likes, in the end he is a man: what is there more frail, more wretched, more of a nothing? Wisdom does not overpower our natural conditions.

And so we see sweat and pallor break out over the whole
Body, the tongue falter and the voice fail,
The eyes grow dim, the ears ring, the limbs give way,
And in short men collapse, from terror of the mind. He must blink at the blow that threatens him; he must shudder, set at the edge of a precipice, like a child. Nature has wished to reserve for herself these slight marks of her authority, impregnable to our reason and to Stoic virtue, to teach him his mortality and our foolishness. He turns pale with fear, he blushes with shame, he groans with colic—if not in a desperate and piercing voice, at least in a broken and hoarse one.[14]

Let him think nothing human foreign to him. The poets, who invent everything as they please, dare not relieve their heroes even of tears: *So he speaks, weeping, and gives the fleet free rein.* Let it suffice him to bridle and moderate his inclinations; for to do away with them is not in his power. Even our Plutarch, so perfect and excellent a judge of human actions, seeing Brutus and Torquatus kill their children, came to doubt whether virtue could reach that far, and whether these men had not rather been driven by some other passion. All actions beyond the ordinary bounds are open to sinister interpretation, since our taste no more reaches what is above it than what is below it.[15]

14 Lucretius, On the Nature of Things III.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
2.2.13	Laissons cette autre secte, faisant expresse profession de fierté. Mais quand en la secte mesme estimée la plus molle, nous oyons ces ventances de Metrodorus: *Occupaui te, Fortuna, atque cepi; omnésque aditus tuos interclusi, vt ad me aspirare non posses*. Quand Anaxarchus, par l'ordonnance de Nicocreon tyran de Cypre, couché dans vn vaisseau de pierre, et assommé à coups de mail de fer, ne cesse de dire, Frappez, rompez, ce n'est pas Anaxarchus: c'est son estuy que vous pilez. Quand nous oyons nos martyrs, crier au Tyran au milieu de la flamme, C'est assez rosti de ce costé là, hache le, mange le, il est cuit, recommence de l'autre.	Let us leave aside that other sect, which makes an express profession of haughtiness. But when, in the very sect considered the softest, we hear these boasts of Metrodorus: *I have forestalled you, Fortune, and caught you; I have blocked all your approaches, so that you cannot reach me.* When Anaxarchus, laid in a stone trough by order of Nicocreon, tyrant of Cyprus, and battered with blows of iron mallets, keeps on saying: "Strike, smash: this is not Anaxarchus; it is his casing you are pounding." When we hear our martyrs cry to the tyrant in the midst of the flames: "That side is roasted enough; chop it, eat it, it is cooked; start on the other."[16]
	Quand nous oyons en Iosephe cet enfant tout deschiré de tenailles mordantes, et persé des aleines d'Antiochus, le deffier encore, criant d'vne voix ferme et asseurée: Tyran, tu pers temps, me voicy tousiours à mon aise: où est cette douleur, où sont ces tourmens, dequoy tu me menassois? n'y sçais tu que cecy? ma constance te donne plus de peine, que ie n'en sens de ta cruauté: ô lasche belistre tu te rens, et ie me renforce: fay moy pleindre, fay moy flechir, fay moy rendre si tu peux: donne courage à tes satellites, et à tes bourreaux: les voyla defaillis de cœur, ils n'en peuuent plus: arme les, acharne les.	When we hear in Josephus of that child, all torn by biting pincers and pierced by the awls of Antiochus, still defying him and crying in a firm and assured voice: "Tyrant, you are wasting your time; here I am, still at my ease. Where is that pain, where are those torments you threatened me with? Is this all you know? My constancy gives you more trouble than I feel from your cruelty. O cowardly wretch, you are giving in, and I am growing stronger. Make me complain, make me bend, make me surrender if you can. Put heart into your henchmen and your executioners: look, they have lost heart, they can do no more. Arm them, set them on."[17]
	Certes il faut confesser qu'en ces ames là, il y a quelque alteration, et quelque fureur, tant sainte soit elle.	Certainly we must confess that in those souls there is some derangement, and some frenzy, however holy it may be.
2.2.14	Quand nous arriuons à ces saillies Stoïques, i'ayme mieux estre furieux que voluptueux: mot d'Antisthenez. Μανειειν μαλλον η ήσθειειν. Quand Sextius nous dit, qu'il ayme mieux estre enferré de la douleur que de la volupté: quand Epicurus entreprend de se faire mignarder à la goutte, et refusant le repos et la santé, que de gayeté de cœur il deffie les maux: et mesprisant les douleurs moins aspres, dedaignant les luiter, et les combattre, qu'il en appelle et desire des fortes, poignantes, et dignes de luy: *Spumantémque dari, pecora inter inertia, votis / Optat aprum, aut fuluum descendere monte leonem:* qui ne iuge que ce sont boutées d'vn courage eslancé hors de son giste?	When we come to these Stoic flights—"I would rather be mad than given to pleasure," a saying of Antisthenes: *Better to be mad than to feel pleasure*; when Sextius tells us that he would rather be run through by pain than by pleasure; when Epicurus undertakes to have himself coddled by gout, and, refusing rest and health, light-heartedly defies ills, and, scorning lesser pains and disdaining to wrestle and fight with them, calls for and longs for strong, piercing ones worthy of him: *And among the timid flocks he prays that a foaming boar / Be granted him, or that a tawny lion come down from the*

15 Adapted from Terence, The Self-Tormentor; the verse is Virgil, Aeneid VI. Lucius Junius Brutus and Titus Manlius Torquatus had their own sons put to death.
16 "That other sect" is the Stoics, the "softest" the Epicureans; Metrodorus of Lampsacus, Epicurus' disciple, is quoted in Cicero, Tusculan Disputations V.
17 From the account of the Maccabean martyrs under Antiochus IV in the book then attributed to Josephus (4 Maccabees).

FRENCH

ENGLISH

mountain—who does not judge that these are the thrusts of a courage that has leapt out of its lair?[18]

2.2.15 Nostre ame ne sçauroit de son siege atteindre si haut: il faut qu'elle le quitte, et s'esleue, et prenant le frein aux dents, qu'elle emporte, et rauisse son homme, si loing, qu'apres il s'estonne luy-mesme de son faict. Comme aux exploicts de la guerre, la chaleur du combat pousse les soldats genereux souuent à franchir des pas si hazardeux, qu'estans reuenuz à eux, ils en transissent d'estonnement les premiers. Comme aussi les Poëtes sont épris souuent d'admiration de leurs propres ouurages, et ne reconnoissent plus la trace, par où ils ont passé vne si belle carriere. C'est ce qu'on appelle aussi en eux ardeur et manie.

Our soul could not reach so high from its own seat: it must leave it and rise, and, taking the bit between its teeth, carry off and sweep away its man so far that afterward he is himself astonished at what he has done. So, in feats of war, the heat of battle often drives brave soldiers to cross such hazardous passes that, once they come back to themselves, they are the first to freeze with astonishment at it. So too poets are often seized with admiration for their own works, and no longer recognize the track along which they ran so fine a course. This is what is also called, in them, ardor and mania.

Et comme Platon dict, que pour neant hurte à la porte de la poësie, vn homme rassis: aussi dit Aristote qu'aucune ame excellente, n'est exempte de meslange de folie. Et a raison d'appeller folie tout eslancement, tant loüable soit-il, qui surpasse nostre propre iugement et discours. D'autant que la sagesse est vn maniment reglé de nostre ame, et qu'elle conduit auec mesure et proportion, et s'en respond. Platon argumente ainsi, que la faculté de prophetizer est au dessus de nous: qu'il faut estre hors de nous, quand nous la traittons: il faut que nostre prudence soit offusquée ou par le sommeil, ou par quelque maladie, ou enleuée de sa place par vn rauissement celeste.

And as Plato says that a sober-minded man knocks in vain at the door of poetry, so Aristotle says that no excellent soul is free from an admixture of folly. And he is right to call folly any leap, however praiseworthy, that surpasses our own judgment and reasoning, inasmuch as wisdom is a regulated management of our soul, which it conducts with measure and proportion, and for which it answers. Plato argues thus: that the faculty of prophesying is above us; that we must be outside ourselves when we exercise it; our prudence must be clouded either by sleep or by some illness, or carried off from its place by a heavenly rapture.[19]

18 Virgil, Aeneid IV. Quintus Sextius was a Roman philosopher of the 1st century BC, much admired by Seneca.
19 Plato, Phaedrus; the saying ascribed to Aristotle comes through Seneca, On Tranquillity of Mind.

II.3 A Custom of the Island of Cea

Coustume de l'Isle de Cea

Through a string of ancient examples, Montaigne weighs the arguments for and against suicide and asks what circumstances might excuse it.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
2.3.1	SI philosopher c'est douter, comme ils disent, à plus forte raison niaiser et fantastiquer, comme ie fais, doit estre doubter: car c'est aux apprentifs à enquerir et à debatre, et au cathedrant de resoudre. Mon cathedrant, c'est l'authorité de la volonté diuine qui nous regle sans contredit, et qui a son rang au dessus de ces humaines et vaines contestations.	IF to philosophize is to doubt, as they say, then all the more must trifling and indulging fancies, as I do, be doubting; for it is for apprentices to inquire and debate, and for the master in the chair to resolve. My master in the chair is the authority of the divine will, which governs us beyond dispute and holds its rank above these vain human contentions.
2.3.2	Philippus estant entré à main armée au Peloponese, quelcun disoit à Damidas, que les Lacedemoniens auroient beaucoup à souffrir, s'ils ne se remettoient en sa grace: Et poltron, respondit-il, que peuuent souffrir ceux qui ne craignent point la mort? On demandoit aussi à Agis, comment vn homme pourroit viure libre, Mesprisant, dit-il, le mourir.	When Philip had entered the Peloponnese in arms, someone was saying to Damidas that the Lacedaemonians would have much to suffer if they did not get back into his good graces. "Why, coward," he replied, "what can they suffer who do not fear death?" Someone also asked Agis how a man could live free. "By despising death," he said.
	Ces propositions et mille pareilles qui se rencontrent à ce propos, sonnent euidemment quelque chose au delà d'attendre patiemment la mort, quand elle nous vient: car il y a en la vie plusieurs accidens pires à souffrir que la mort mesme: tesmoing cet enfant Lacedemonien, pris par Antigonus, et vendu pour serf, lequel pressé par son maistre de s'employer à quelque seruice abiect, Tu verras, dit-il, qui tu as acheté, ce me seroit honte de seruir, ayant la liberté si à main: et ce disant, se precipita du haut de la maison. Antipater menassant asprement les Lacedemoniens, pour les renger à certaine sienne demande: Si tu nous menasses de pis que la mort, respondirent-ils, nous mourrons plus volontiers.	These propositions, and a thousand like them that one comes across on this subject, clearly ring of something beyond waiting patiently for death when it comes to us; for there are in life many accidents worse to endure than death itself. Witness that Lacedaemonian boy, captured by Antigonus and sold as a slave, who, being pressed by his master to take on some menial service, said: "You will see whom you have bought; it would be a shame for me to serve, with freedom so close at hand"; and so saying, he threw himself from the top of the house. When Antipater was harshly threatening the Lacedaemonians to bring them round to a certain demand of his, they replied: "If you threaten us with worse than death, we shall die all the more willingly."
	Et à Philippus leur ayant escrit, qu'il empescheroit toutes leurs entreprinses, Quoy? nous empescheras tu aussi de mourir?	And to Philip, who had written to them that he would thwart all their undertakings: "What? Will you also prevent us from dying?"
2.3.3	C'est ce qu'on dit, que le sage vit tant qu'il doit, non pas tant qu'il peut; et que le present que Nature nous ait faict le plus fauorable, et qui nous oste tout moyen de nous	This is what is meant by the saying that the wise man lives as long as he ought, not as long as he can; and that the most favorable gift Nature has

FRENCH

pleindre de nostre condition, c'est de nous auoir laissé la clef des champs. Elle n'a ordonné qu'vne entrée à la vie, et cent mille yssuës. Nous pouuons auoir faute de terre pour y viure, mais de terre pour y mourir, nous n'en pouuons auoir faute, comme respondit Boiocatus aux Romains. Pourquoy te plains tu de ce monde? il ne te tient pas: si tu vis en peine, ta lascheté en est cause: A mourir il ne reste que le vouloir. Vbique mors est: optimè hoc cauit Deus.

/ Eripere vitam nemo non homini potest, / At nemo mortem: mille ad hanc aditus patent.

2.3.4 Et ce n'est pas la recepte à vne seule maladie, la mort est la recepte à tous maux. C'est vn port tresasseuré, qui n'est iamais à craindre, et souuent à rechercher: tout reuient à vn, que l'homme se donne sa fin, ou qu'il la souffre, qu'il coure au deuant de son iour, ou qu'il l'attende. D'où qu'il vienne c'est tousiours le sien. En quelque lieu que le filet se rompe, il y est tout, c'est le bout de la fusée. La plus volontaire mort, c'est la plus belle. La vie despend de la volonté d'autruy, la mort de la nostre. En aucune chose nous ne deuons tant nous accommoder à nos humeurs, qu'en celle-là.

La reputation ne touche pas vne telle entreprise, c'est folie d'en auoir respect. Le viure, c'est seruir, si la liberté de mourir en est à dire. Le commun train de la guerison se conduit aux despens de la vie: on nous incise, on nous cauterise, on nous detranche les membres, on nous soustrait l'aliment, et le sang: vn pas plus outre, nous voyla gueris tout à faict. Pourquoy n'est la veine du gosier autant à nostre commandement que la mediane? Aux plus fortes maladies les plus forts remedes. Seruius le Grammairien ayant la goutte, n'y trouua meilleur conseil, que de s'appliquer du poison à tuer ses iambes: qu'elles fussent podagres à leur poste, pourueu qu'elles fussent insensibles.

Dieu nous donne assez de congé, quand il nous met en tel estat, que le viure nous est pire que le mourir. C'est foiblesse de ceder aux maux, mais c'est folie de les nourrir. Les Stoiciens disent, que c'est viure conuenablement à Nature, pour le sage, de se departir de la vie, encore qu'il soit en plein heur, s'il le faict opportunément: et au fol de maintenir sa vie, encore qu'il

ENGLISH

given us, and the one that takes away all grounds for complaining of our condition, is to have left us the key to the fields. She has ordained only one entrance into life, and a hundred thousand exits. We may lack land to live on, but land to die in we cannot lack, as Boiocalus answered the Romans. Why do you complain of this world? It does not hold you: if you live in pain, your cowardice is the cause. To die, nothing is needed but the will. Death is everywhere: God has provided well for that.[1]

/ Anyone can take a man's life from him, / But no one his death: a thousand ways lie open to it.

And it is not the remedy for one illness only: death is the remedy for all ills. It is a very safe harbor, never to be feared and often to be sought. It all comes to the same, whether a man gives himself his end or suffers it, whether he runs ahead of his day or waits for it. Wherever it comes from, it is always his own. Wherever the thread breaks, that is all of it: it is the end of the spool. The most voluntary death is the finest. Life depends on the will of others; death on our own. In nothing should we accommodate ourselves to our own temperament so much as in that.

Reputation has no bearing on such an undertaking; it is folly to pay it any regard. Living is slavery if the freedom to die is lacking. The common course of healing is carried on at the expense of life: they cut into us, they cauterize us, they lop off our limbs, they withdraw our food and our blood; one step further, and there we are, cured altogether. Why is the vein in our throat not as much at our command as the median vein? For the strongest diseases, the strongest remedies. Servius the grammarian, having gout, found no better counsel than to apply poison to kill his legs: let them be gouty as they pleased, so long as they felt nothing.[2]

God gives us leave enough when he puts us in such a state that living is worse for us than dying. It is weakness to give way to ills, but folly to nourish them. The Stoics say that it is living in accordance with Nature for the wise man to depart from life, even when he is in full happiness, if he does it at

1 Seneca, The Phoenician Women. Boiocalus was a chief of the Ampsivarii, a Germanic people (Tacitus, Annals XIII).
2 The median vein of the arm, the usual site for bloodletting.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
	soit miserable, pourueu qu'il soit en la plus grande part des choses, qu'ils disent estre selon Nature.	the right moment; and for the fool to hold on to his life, even if he is wretched, provided he is in possession of the greater part of the things they say are according to Nature.
	Comme ie n'offense les loix, qui sont faictes contre les larrons, quand i'emporte le mien, et que ie coupe ma bourse: ny des boutefeuz, quand ie brusle mon bois: aussi ne suis ie tenu aux loix faictes contre les meurtriers, pour m'auoir osté ma vie. Hegesias disoit, que comme la condition de la vie, aussi la condition de la mort deuoit dependre de nostre eslection. Et Diogenes rencontrant le Philosophe Speusippus affligé de longue hydropisie, se faisant porter en littiere: qui luy escria, Le bon salut, Diogenes: A toy, point de salut, respondit-il, qui souffres le viure estant en tel estat. De vray quelque temps apres Speusippus se fit mourir, ennuié d'vne si penible condition de vie.	Just as I do not break the laws made against thieves when I carry off my own property and cut my own purse, nor those against arsonists when I burn my own wood, so I am not answerable to the laws made against murderers for having taken my own life. Hegesias said that as the condition of life, so the condition of death should depend on our choice. And Diogenes, meeting the philosopher Speusippus, who was afflicted with a long dropsy and was having himself carried in a litter, was hailed by him: "Good health, Diogenes!" "None to you," he replied, "who put up with living in such a state." And indeed, some time later Speusippus had himself put to death, worn down by so painful a condition of life.

THE CASE AGAINST SUICIDE

Many hold that we may not leave our post without God's leave, and that enduring is braver.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
2.3.5	Mais cecy ne s'en va pas sans contraste. Car plusieurs tiennent, que nous ne pouuons abandonner cette garnison du monde, sans le commandement expres de celuy, qui nous y a mis; et que c'est à Dieu, qui nous a icy enuoyez, non pour nous seulement, ains pour sa gloire et seruice d'autruy, de nous donner congé, quand il luy plaira, non à nous de le prendre: que nous ne sommes pas nays pour nous, ains aussi pour nostre païs: les loix nous redemandent compte de nous, pour leur interest, et ont action d'homicide contre nous. Autrement comme deserteurs de nostre charge, nous sommes punis en l'autre monde, *Proxima deinde tenent mœsti loca, qui sibi lethum* *Insontes peperere manu, lucémque perosi* *Proiecere animas.*	But this does not go unchallenged. For many hold that we cannot abandon this garrison of the world without the express command of him who placed us in it; and that it is for God, who sent us here not for ourselves alone but for his glory and the service of others, to give us leave when it pleases him, not for us to take it; that we are not born for ourselves, but also for our country. The laws call us to account for ourselves, in their own interest, and have an action for homicide against us. Otherwise, as deserters from our post, we are punished in the other world: *Next, those sad ones hold the nearest places who, guiltless,* *Brought death on themselves by their own hand, and, hating the light,* *Flung away their lives.*[3]
2.3.6	Il y a bien plus de constance à vser la chaine qui nous tient, qu'à la rompre: et plus d'espreuue de fermeté en Regulus qu'en Caton. C'est l'indiscretion et l'impatience, qui nous haste le pas. Nuls accidens ne font tourner le dos à la viue vertu: elle cherche les maux et la douleur, comme son aliment. Les menasses des tyrans, les	There is far more constancy in wearing out the chain that holds us than in breaking it, and more proof of firmness in Regulus than in Cato. It is indiscretion and impatience that hasten our steps. No accidents make living virtue turn its back: it seeks out ills and pain as its nourishment. The

3 Virgil, Aeneid VI.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
	gehennes, et les bourreaux, l'animent et la viuifient. *Duris vt ilex tonsa bipennibus Nigræ feraci frondis in Algido Per damna, per cædes, ab ipso Ducit opes animúmque ferro.* Et comme dict l'autre: *Non est vt putas virtus, pater, Timere vitam, sed malis ingentibus Obstare, nec se vertere ac retro dare.*	threats of tyrants, tortures and executioners rouse it and bring it to life. *Like the holm oak lopped by hard axes On Algidus, rich in dark foliage, Through losses, through slaughter, from the very steel It draws strength and spirit.* And as the other says: *Virtue, father, is not, as you think, To fear life, but to stand up against great ills, And not to turn one's back and retreat.*[4]
	/ Rebus in aduersis facile est contemnere mortem, / Fortius ille facit, qui miser esse potest.	*/ In adversity it is easy to despise death; / He acts more bravely who can bear to be wretched.*[5]
2.3.7	C'est le rolle de la couardise, non de la vertu, de s'aller tapir dans vn creux, souz vne tombe massiue, pour euiter les coups de la Fortune. Elle ne rompt son chemin et son train, pour orage qu'il face: *Si fractus illabatur orbis, Impauidam ferient ruinæ.* Le plus communement, la fuitte d'autres inconueniens, nous pousse à cettuy-cy. Voire quelquefois la fuitte de la mort, faict que nous y courons: *Hic, rogo, non furor est, ne moriare, mori?* Comme ceux qui de peur du precipice s'y lancent eux-mesmes. Multos in summa pericula misit Venturi timor ipse mali: fortissimus ille est, Qui promptus metuenda pati, si cominus instent, Et differre potest.	It is the part of cowardice, not of virtue, to go and crouch in a hole, under a massive tomb, to avoid the blows of Fortune. Virtue does not break off its road and its course, whatever storm may blow: *Should the world break and fall upon him, The ruins will strike him unafraid.* Most commonly, it is flight from other troubles that drives us to this one. Indeed, sometimes flight from death makes us run to it: *Is it not madness, I ask, to die so as not to die?* Like those who for fear of the precipice throw themselves over it. The very fear of evil to come has sent many Into the gravest dangers: the bravest man is he Who is ready to suffer what is to be feared, if it presses close, And yet can put it off.[6]
	/ Vsque adeo, mortis formidine, vitæ Percipit humanos odium, lucisque videndæ, Vt sibi consciscant mærenti pectore lethum, Obliti fontem curarum hunc esse timorem.	/ So far, through fear of death, does hatred of life And of seeing the light seize human beings, That with grieving heart they decree their own death, Forgetting that this fear is the source of their cares.[7]
2.3.8	Platon en ses loix ordonne sepulture ignominieuse à celuy qui a priué son plus proche et plus amy, sçauoir est soy mesme, et de la vie, et du cours des destinées, non contraint par iugement publique, ny par quelque triste et ineuitable accident de la Fortune, ny par vne honte insupportable, mais par lascheté et foiblesse d'vne ame craintiue. Et l'opinion qui desdaigne nostre vie, elle est ridicule. Car en fin c'est nostre estre, c'est nostre tout. Les choses qui ont vn estre plus noble et plus riche, peuuent accuser le nostre: mais c'est contre Nature, que	Plato in his Laws ordains an ignominious burial for one who has deprived his nearest and dearest friend—namely himself—both of life and of the course of his destiny, not compelled by public judgment, nor by some sad and inevitable accident of Fortune, nor by unbearable shame, but by the cowardice and weakness of a fearful soul. And the opinion that disdains our life is ridiculous. For after all, it is our being, it is our all. Things that have a nobler and richer being may find fault with

4 Horace, Odes IV.4, and Seneca, The Phoenician Women. Regulus went back to Carthage to be tortured to death rather than break his word.
5 Martial, Epigrams XI.
6 Horace, Odes III.3; Martial, Epigrams II; Lucan, Pharsalia VII.
7 Lucretius, On the Nature of Things III.

FRENCH

nous nous mesprisons et mettons nous mesmes à nonchaloir; c'est vne maladie particuliere, et qui ne se voit en aucune autre creature, de se hayr et desdaigner.

C'est de pareille vanité, que nous desirons estre autre chose, que ce que nous sommes. Le fruict d'vn tel desir ne nous touche pas, d'autant qu'il se contredit et s'empesche en soy: celuy qui desire d'estre faict d'vn homme ange, il ne faict rien pour luy. Il n'en vaudroit de rien mieux, car n'estant plus, qui se resiouyra et ressentira de cet amendement pour luy? *Debet enim, miserè cui fortè ægréque futurum est,*
Ipse quoque esse in eo tum tempore, cum male possit Accidere. La securité, l'indolence, l'impassibilité, la priuation des maux de cette vie, que nous achetons au prix de la mort, ne nous apporte aucune commodité.

Pour neant euite la guerre, celuy qui ne peut iouyr de la paix, et pour neant fuit la peine qui n'a de quoy sauourer le repos.

2.3.9 Entre ceux du premier aduis, il y a eu grand doubte sur ce, quelles occasions sont assez iustes, pour faire entrer vn homme en ce party de se tuer: ils appellent cela, ευλογον εξαγωγην. Car quoy qu'ils dient, qu'il faut souuent mourir pour causes legeres, puis que celles qui nous tiennent en vie, ne sont gueres fortes, si y faut-il quelque mesure. Il y a des humeurs fantastiques et sans discours, qui ont poussé, non des hommes particuliers seulement, mais des peuples à se deffaire.

I'en ay allegué par cy deuant des exemples: et nous lisons en outre, des vierges Milesienes, que par vne conspiration furieuse, elles se pendoient les vnes apres les autres, iusques à ce que le magistrat y pourueust, ordonnant que celles qui se trouueroyent ainsi penduës, fussent trainées du mesme licol toutes nuës par la ville.

2.3.10 Quand Threicion presche Cleomenes de se tuer, pour le mauuais estat de ses affaires, et ayant fuy la mort plus honorable en la bataille qu'il venoit de perdre, d'accepter cette autre, qui luy est seconde en honneur, et ne donner point loisir au victorieux de luy faire souffrir ou vne mort, ou vne vie honteuse: Cleomenes d'vn courage Lacedemonien et Stoique, refuse ce conseil comme lasche et effeminé: C'est vne recepte, dit-il, qui ne me peut iamais manquer, et de laquelle il ne se faut seruir tant

ENGLISH

ours; but it is against Nature that we despise ourselves and hold ourselves of no account. It is a peculiar malady, and one not seen in any other creature, to hate and disdain oneself.

It is from a like vanity that we desire to be something other than what we are. The fruit of such a desire does not reach us, inasmuch as it contradicts and obstructs itself: he who desires to be turned from a man into an angel does nothing for himself. He would be none the better for it; for, being no more, who will rejoice in this improvement and feel it on his behalf? *For he to whom misery and suffering are to come*
Must himself also exist at that time, when ill Can befall him. Security, freedom from pain, impassivity, the absence of the ills of this life, which we buy at the price of death, bring us no benefit.

In vain does he avoid war who cannot enjoy peace; and in vain does he flee toil who has nothing with which to savor rest.

Among those of the first opinion there has been great doubt as to what occasions are just enough to make a man take this course of killing himself. They call it *a well-reasoned departure*. For although they say that we must often die for slight causes, since those that keep us alive are hardly strong, still some measure is needed. There are fanciful and unreasoning moods that have driven not only individual men but whole peoples to do away with themselves.[8]

I have cited examples of this earlier; and we read besides of the maidens of Miletus that, by a frenzied conspiracy, they hanged themselves one after another, until the magistrate took measures, ordering that any found hanged in this way should be dragged naked through the town by the same rope.

Therycion urged Cleomenes to kill himself because of the bad state of his affairs: having escaped the more honorable death in the battle he had just lost, he should accept this other one, which is second to it in honor, and not give the victor the leisure to make him suffer either a shameful death or a shameful life. Cleomenes, with Lacedaemonian and Stoic courage, rejected this advice as cowardly and spineless. "It is a remedy," he

8 The Greek *eulogos exagōgē* is the Stoic term for a rational suicide.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
	qu'il y a vn doigt d'esperance de reste: que le viure est quelquefois constance et vaillance: qu'il veut que sa mort mesme serue à son païs, et en veut faire vn acte d'honneur et de vertu.	said, "that can never fail me, and one that must not be used as long as there is a finger's breadth of hope left"; living, he said, is sometimes constancy and valor; he wanted even his death to serve his country, and meant to make it an act of honor and virtue.[9]
	Threicion se creut dés lors, et se tua. Cleomenes en fit aussi autant depuis, mais ce fut apres auoir essaié le dernier point de la Fortune.	Therycion took his own advice then and there, and killed himself. Cleomenes did the same later, but only after having tried Fortune to the very last.
2.3.11	Tous les inconueniens ne valent pas qu'on vueille mourir pour les euiter. Et puis y ayant tant de soudains changemens aux choses humaines, il est malaisé à iuger, à quel poinct nous sommes iustement au bout de nostre esperance: *Sperat et in sæua victus gladiator arena, / Sit licet infesto pollice turba minax.*	Not all troubles are worth wanting to die to escape them. And then, since there are so many sudden changes in human affairs, it is hard to judge at what point we have truly come to the end of our hope: *The beaten gladiator in the cruel arena still hopes, / Though the crowd threatens him with hostile thumb.*[10]
2.3.12	Toutes choses, disoit vn mot ancien, sont esperables à vn homme pendant qu'il vit. Ouy mais, respond Seneca, pourquoy auray-ie plustost en la teste cela, que la Fortune peut toutes choses pour celuy qui est viuant; que cecy, que Fortune ne peut rien sur celuy qui sçait mourir? On voit Iosephe engagé en vn si apparent danger et si prochain, tout vn peuple s'estant esleué contre luy, que par discours il n'y pouuoit auoir aucune resource: toutefois estant, comme il dit, conseillé sur ce point, par vn de ses amis de se deffaire, bien luy seruit de s'opiniastrer encore en l'esperance: car la Fortune contourna outre toute raison humaine cet accident, si qu'il s'en veid deliuré sans aucun inconuenient.	"All things," said an ancient saying, "are to be hoped for by a man while he lives." "Yes, but," replies Seneca, "why should I keep in mind this, that Fortune can do all things for the living, rather than that, that Fortune can do nothing against one who knows how to die?" We see Josephus caught in a danger so evident and so imminent, a whole people having risen against him, that by reasoning there could be no way out. Nevertheless, when, as he says, one of his friends advised him on this point to do away with himself, it served him well to persist in hope; for Fortune turned this accident around beyond all human reason, so that he found himself delivered from it without any harm.
	Et Cassius et Brutus au contraire, acheuerent de perdre les reliques de la Romaine liberté, de laquelle ils estoient protecteurs, par la precipitation et temerité, dequoy ils se tuerent auant le temps et l'occasion. A la iournée de Serisolles Monsieur d'Anguien essaïa deux fois de se donner de l'espée dans la gorge, desesperé de la fortune du combat, qui se porta mal en l'endroit où il estoit: et cuida par precipitation se priuer de la iouyssance d'vne si belle victoire. I'ay veu cent lieures se sauuer sous les dents des leuriers: *Aliquis carnifici suo superstes fuit. Multa dies variúsque labor mutabilis æui* *Rettulit in melius; multos alterna reuisens* *Lusit, et in solido rursus fortuna locauit.*	And Cassius and Brutus, on the contrary, completed the ruin of the last remnants of Roman liberty, of which they were the protectors, by the haste and rashness with which they killed themselves before the time and occasion. At the battle of Ceresole, Monsieur d'Enghien twice tried to stab himself in the throat with his sword, despairing of the outcome of the fight, which was going badly where he was; and by his haste he nearly deprived himself of the enjoyment of so fine a victory. I have seen a hundred hares escape from right under the greyhounds' teeth: *Many a man has outlived his executioner. Time and the shifting toil of changing ages*

9 Cleomenes III of Sparta, defeated at Sellasia in 222 BC, fled to Egypt and killed himself there in 219 BC (Plutarch, Cleomenes).
10 From a short poem on hope attributed to Pentadius, in the Latin Anthology.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
		Have often brought things to a better state; Fortune, visiting many by turns, *Has mocked them, and set them again on solid ground.*[11]

EXAMPLES OF VOLUNTARY DEATH

Peoples and individuals who chose death to escape pain, capture, dishonor or defeat.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
2.3.13	Pline dit qu'il n'y a que trois sortes de maladie, pour lesquelles euiter on aye droit de se tuer. La plus aspre de toutes, c'est la pierre à la vessie, quand l'vrine en est retenuë. Seneque, celles seulement, qui esbranlent pour long temps les offices de l'ame. Pour euiter vne pire mort, il y en a qui sont d'aduis de la prendre à leur poste. Damocritus chef des Ætoliens mené prisonnier à Rome, trouua moyen de nuict d'eschapper. Mais suiuy par ses gardes, auant que se laisser reprendre, il se donna de l'espee au trauers le corps. Antinoüs et Theodotus, leur ville d'Epire reduitte à l'extremité par les Romains, furent d'aduis au peuple de se tuer tous.	Pliny says there are only three kinds of illness to escape which one has the right to kill oneself; the harshest of all is the stone in the bladder, when the urine is blocked by it. Seneca says only those that unsettle the functions of the soul for a long time. To avoid a worse death, some are of the opinion that one should take it at one's own choosing. Damocritus, chief of the Aetolians, brought as a prisoner to Rome, found a way to escape by night. But, pursued by his guards, rather than let himself be recaptured, he ran his sword through his body. Antinous and Theodotus, when their city in Epirus had been reduced to extremity by the Romans, advised the people to kill themselves, all of them.
	Mais le conseil de se rendre plustost, ayant gaigné, ils allerent chercher la mort, se ruants sur les ennemis, en intention de frapper, non de se couurir. L'isle de Goze forcée par les Turcs, il y a quelques années, vn Sicilien qui auoit deux belles filles prestes à marier, les tua de sa main, et leur mere apres, qui accourut à leur mort. Cela faict, sortant en ruë auec vne arbaleste et vne arquebouze, de deux coups il en tua les deux premiers Turcs, qui s'approcherent de sa porte: et puis mettant l'espée au poing, s'alla mesler furieusement, où il fut soudain enuelopé et mis en pieces: se sauuant ainsi du seruage, apres en auoir deliuré les siens.	But when the advice to surrender instead won the day, they went to seek death, hurling themselves on the enemy with the intention of striking, not of protecting themselves. When the island of Gozo was taken by the Turks a few years ago, a Sicilian who had two beautiful daughters of marriageable age killed them with his own hand, and afterward their mother, who came running at their death. That done, he went out into the street with a crossbow and an arquebus and with two shots killed the first two Turks who came near his door; and then, sword in hand, he flung himself furiously into the fray, where he was at once surrounded and cut to pieces—thus saving himself from slavery after having delivered his family from it.[12]
	Les femmes Iuifues apres auoir faict circoncire leurs enfans, s'alloient precipiter quant et eux, fuyant la cruauté d'Antiochus. On m'a compté qu'vn prisonnier de qualité, estant en nos conciergeries, ses parens aduertis qu'il seroit certainement condamné, pour euiter la honte de telle mort, aposterent vn prestre pour luy dire, que le souuerain remede de sa deliurance, estoit qu'il se recommandast à tel sainct, auec tel et tel vœu, et qu'il	The Jewish women, after having their children circumcised, went and threw themselves headlong to their deaths together with them, fleeing the cruelty of Antiochus. I have been told that when a prisoner of rank was in our jails, his relatives, warned that he would certainly be condemned, to avoid the shame of such a death set up a priest to tell him that the sovereign remedy for his deliver-

11 The quotations are from Seneca, Letters, and Virgil, Aeneid XI.

12 Gozo, next to Malta, was raided by the Ottomans in 1551 and most of its people carried off into slavery.

FRENCH

fust huict iours sans prendre aucun aliment, quelque deffaillance et foiblesse qu'il sentist en soy. Il l'en creut, et par ce moyen se deffit sans y penser de sa vie et du danger.

Scribonia conseillant Libo son nepueu de se tuer, plustost que d'attendre la main de la Iustice, luy disoit que c'estoit proprement faire l'affaire d'autruy que de conseruer sa vie, pour la remettre entre les mains de ceux qui la viendroient chercher trois ou quatre iours apres; et que c'estoit seruir ses ennemis, de garder son sang pour leur en faire curée.

2.3.14 Il se lict dans la Bible, que Nicanor persecuteur de la Loy de Dieu, ayant enuoyé ses satellites pour saisir le bon vieillard Rasias, surnommé pour l'honneur de sa vertu, le Pere aux Iuifs, comme ce bon homme n'y veist plus d'ordre, sa porte bruslée, ses ennemis prests à le saisir, choisissant de mourir genereusement, plustost que de venir entre les mains des meschans, et de se laisser mastiner contre l'honneur de son rang, qu'il se frappa de son espée: mais le coup pour la haste, n'ayant pas esté bien assené, il courut se precipiter du haut d'vn mur, au trauers de la trouppe, laquelle s'escartant et luy faisant place, il cheut droictement sur la teste.

Ce neantmoins se sentant encore quelque reste de vie, il ralluma son courage, et s'esleuant en pieds, tout ensanglanté et chargé de coups, et fauçant la presse donna iusques à certain rocher couppé et precipiteux, où n'en pouuant plus, il print par l'vne de ses playes à deux mains ses entrailles, les deschirant et froissant, et les ietta à trauers les poursuiuans, appellant sur eux et attestant la vengeance diuine.

2.3.15 Des violences qui se font à la conscience, la plus à euiter à mon aduis, c'est celle qui se faict à la chasteté des femmes; d'autant qu'il y a quelque plaisir corporel, naturellement meslé parmy: et à cette cause, le dissentement n'y peut estre assez entier; et semble que la force soit meslée à quelque volonté. L'histoire Ecclesiastique a en reuerence plusieurs tels exemples de personnes deuotes qui appelerent la mort à garant contre les outrages que les tyrans preparoient à leur religion et conscience. Pelagia et Sophronia, toutes deux canonisées,

ENGLISH

ance was to commend himself to such-and-such a saint, with such-and-such vows, and to go eight days without taking any food, whatever faintness and weakness he felt. He believed him, and by this means, without thinking of it, rid himself of his life and of the danger.

Scribonia, advising her nephew Libo to kill himself rather than await the hand of justice, told him that to preserve his life only to hand it over to those who would come looking for it three or four days later was really doing someone else's business; and that to keep his blood only to throw it to his enemies as their quarry was to serve them.[13]

We read in the Bible that Nicanor, persecutor of the law of God, sent his henchmen to seize the good old man Razis, who was called, in honor of his virtue, the Father of the Jews. When this good man saw no other way out, his door burned, his enemies ready to seize him, he chose to die nobly rather than fall into the hands of the wicked and let himself be mauled against the honor of his rank, and he struck himself with his sword. But the blow, in his haste, was badly aimed, so he ran and threw himself from the top of a wall into the midst of the troop; and as they scattered and made way for him, he fell straight on his head.[14]

Nevertheless, feeling some remnant of life still in him, he rekindled his courage and, rising to his feet, all covered in blood and wounds, he broke through the crowd and reached a certain steep, sheer rock. There, at the end of his strength, he seized his entrails with both hands through one of his wounds, tearing and crushing them, and threw them at his pursuers, calling down divine vengeance upon them and calling it to witness.

Of the violences done to conscience, the one most to be avoided, in my opinion, is that done to the chastity of women, inasmuch as some bodily pleasure is naturally mixed in with it; and for that reason the refusal cannot be complete enough, and it seems that the force is mixed with some willingness. Ecclesiastical history holds in reverence many such examples of devout persons who called on death to protect them from the outrages tyrants were preparing against their religion and

13 Marcus Scribonius Libo Drusus, accused of conspiracy under Tiberius, killed himself in AD 16 (Seneca, Letters 70).
14 2 Maccabees 14.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
	celle-là se precipita dans la riuiere auec sa mere et ses sœurs, pour euiter la force de quelques soldats: et cette-cy se tua aussi pour euiter la force de Maxentius l'Empereur.	conscience. Pelagia and Sophronia, both canonized: the former threw herself into the river with her mother and sisters to escape being forced by some soldiers; and the latter also killed herself to escape being forced by the Emperor Maxentius.[15]
2.3.16	Il nous sera à l'aduenture honnorable aux siecles aduenir, qu'vn sçauant autheur de ce temps, et notamment Parisien, se met en peine de persuader aux Dames de nostre siecle, de prendre plustost tout autre party, que d'entrer en l'horrible conseil d'vn tel desespoir. Ie suis marry qu'il n'a sceu, pour mesler à ses comptes, le bon mot que i'apprins à Toulouse d'vne femme, passée par les mains de quelques soldats: Dieu soit loüé, disoit-elle, qu'au moins vne fois en ma vie, ie m'en suis soulée sans peché. A la verité ces cruautez ne sont pas dignes de la douceur Françoise. Aussi Dieu mercy nostre air s'en voit infiniment purgé depuis ce bon aduertissement.	It will perhaps be to our honor in centuries to come that a learned author of our time, and a Parisian at that, takes pains to persuade the ladies of our age to take any other course rather than enter into the horrible counsel of such despair. I am sorry he did not know, to put among his stories, the good saying I learned at Toulouse from a woman who had passed through the hands of some soldiers: "God be praised," she said, "that at least once in my life I have had my fill of it without sin." In truth these cruelties are not worthy of French gentleness. And so, thank God, our air has been infinitely purged of them since this good warning.
	Suffit qu'elles dient Nenny, en le faisant, suyuant la regle du bon Marot.	It is enough for them to say "No" while doing it, following the rule of good Marot.[16]
2.3.17	L'Histoire est toute pleine de ceux qui en mille façons ont changé à la mort vne vie peneuse. Lucius Aruntius se tua, pour, disoit-il, fuir et l'aduenir et le passé. Granius Siluanus et Statius Proximus, apres estre pardonnez par Neron, se tuerent: ou pour ne viure de la grace d'vn si meschant homme, ou pour n'estre en peine vne autre fois d'vn second pardon: veu sa facilité aux soupçons et accusations, à l'encontre des gents de bien. Spargapizés fils de la Royne Tomyris, prisonnier de guerre de Cyrus, employa à se tuer la premiere faueur, que Cyrus luy fit de le faire destacher: n'ayant pretendu autre fruit de sa liberté, que de venger sur soy la honte de sa prinse.	History is full of those who in a thousand ways have exchanged a painful life for death. Lucius Arruntius killed himself, as he said, to flee both the future and the past. Granius Silvanus and Statius Proximus, after being pardoned by Nero, killed themselves, either so as not to live by the grace of so wicked a man, or so as not to be troubled another time over a second pardon, given how readily he entertained suspicions and accusations against good men. Spargapises, son of Queen Tomyris, a prisoner of war of Cyrus, used the first favor Cyrus did him, that of having him unbound, to kill himself, having sought no other fruit of his freedom than to avenge on himself the shame of his capture.[17]
	Bogez gouuerneur en Eione de la part du Roy Xerxes, assiegé par l'armée des Atheniens sous la conduitte de Cimon, refusa la composition de s'en retourner seurement en Asie à tout sa cheuance, impatient de suruiure à la perte de ce que son maistre luy auoit donné en garde: et apres auoir deffendu iusqu'à l'extremité sa ville, n'y restant plus que manger, iecta premierement en la riuiere de Strymon tout l'or, et tout ce dequoy il luy	Boges, governor of Eion for King Xerxes, besieged by the Athenian army under the command of Cimon, refused the terms of returning safely to Asia with all his wealth, unable to bear surviving the loss of what his master had given into his keeping. After defending his town to the last extremity, with nothing left to eat, he first threw into the river Strymon all the gold and everything from

15 Saint Pelagia of Antioch and Saint Sophronia of Rome, early 4th-century martyrs.
16 An allusion to an epigram by the poet Clément Marot (1496–1544) praising a woman's coy "sweet no".
17 Tomyris, queen of the Massagetae; the story is in Herodotus I.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
	sembla l'ennemy pouuoir faire plus de butin. Et puis ayant ordonné allumer vn grand bucher, et d'esgosiller femmes, enfants, concubines et seruiteurs, les meit dans le feu, et puis soy-mesme.	which it seemed to him the enemy could make the most booty. And then, having ordered a great pyre to be lit and the women, children, concubines and servants to have their throats cut, he put them in the fire, and then himself.[18]
2.3.18	Ninachetuen seigneur Indois, ayant senty le premier vent de la deliberation du vice-Roy Portugais, de le deposseder, sans aucune cause apparante, de la charge qu'il auoit en Malaca, pour la donner au Roy de Campar: print à part soy, cette resolution. Il fit dresser vn eschaffault plus long que large, appuyé sur des colomnes, royallement tapissé, et orné de fleurs, et de parfuns en abondance. Et puis, s'estant vestu d'vne robbe de drap d'or chargée de quantité de pierreries de hault prix, sortit en ruë: et par des degrez monta sur l'eschaffault en vn coing duquel il y auoit vn bucher de bois aromatiques allumé. Le monde accourut voir, à quelle fin ces preparatifs inaccoustumés.	Ninachetuen, an Indian lord, having caught the first wind of the Portuguese viceroy's plan to strip him, without any apparent cause, of the office he held in Malacca, in order to give it to the King of Campar, came to this resolution on his own. He had a scaffold built, longer than it was wide, supported on columns, royally hung with tapestries and adorned with flowers and perfumes in abundance. Then, having dressed in a robe of cloth of gold loaded with a quantity of precious stones of great price, he went out into the street and climbed the steps up onto the scaffold, in one corner of which a pyre of aromatic wood had been lit. People came running to see what these unaccustomed preparations were for.[19]
	Ninachetuen remontra d'vn visage hardy et mal contant, l'obligation que la nation Portugaloise luy auoit: combien fidelement il auoit versé en sa charge: qu'ayant si souuent tesmoigné pour autruy, les armes à la main, que l'honneur luy estoit de beaucoup plus cher que la vie, il n'estoit pas pour en abandonner le soing pour soy mesme: que Fortune luy refusant tout moyen de s'opposer à l'iniure qu'on luy vouloit faire, son courage au moins luy ordonnoit de s'en oster le sentiment: et de ne seruir de fable au peuple, et de triomphe, à des personnes qui valoient moins que luy. Ce disant il se iecta dans le feu.	Ninachetuen, with a bold and angry face, set forth what the Portuguese nation owed him and how faithfully he had conducted himself in his office: having so often shown for others, weapons in hand, that honor was far dearer to him than life, he was not going to neglect it for himself; since Fortune denied him any means of resisting the injury they meant to do him, his courage at least commanded him to rid himself of the feeling of it, and not to become a tale for the people and a triumph for persons worth less than he. So saying, he threw himself into the fire.
2.3.19	Sextilia femme de Scaurus, et Paxea femme de Labeo, pour encourager leurs maris à euiter les dangers, qui les pressoient, ausquels elles n'auoyent part, que par l'interest de l'affection coniugale, engagerent volontairement la vie pour leur seruir en cette extreme necessité, d'exemple et de compagnie. Ce qu'elles firent pour leurs maris, Cocceius Nerua le fit pour sa patrie, moins vtilement, mais de pareil amour. Ce grand Iurisconsulte, fleurissant en santé, en richesses, en reputation, en credit, pres de l'Empereur, n'eut autre cause de se tuer, que la compassion du miserable estat de la chose publique Romaine. Il ne se peut rien adiouster à	Sextilia, the wife of Scaurus, and Paxaea, the wife of Labeo, wanted to encourage their husbands to escape the dangers pressing on them. The women had no share in those dangers except through the bond of married love, yet they willingly laid down their lives, to serve their husbands in that extreme necessity as example and as company. What they did for their husbands, Cocceius Nerva did for his country, less usefully but with equal love. This great jurist was flourishing in health, wealth, reputation and standing with the Emperor, and he had no other reason to kill himself than pity for

18 Eion, at the mouth of the Strymon in Thrace, was taken by Cimon about 476 BC (Herodotus VII).
19 Malacca, on the Malay Peninsula, was taken by the Portuguese in 1511; Montaigne's source is Simon Goulart's French version of Jerónimo Osório's history of Portugal.

FRENCH

la delicatesse de la mort de la femme de Fuluius, familier d'Auguste.

Auguste ayant descouuert, qu'il auoit esuenté vn secret important qu'il luy auoit fié: vn matin qu'il le vint voir, luy en fit vne maigre mine. Il s'en retourne au logis plain de desespoir, et dict tout piteusement à sa femme, qu'estant tombé en ce malheur, il estoit resolu de se tuer. Elle tout franchement, Tu ne feras que raison, veu qu'ayant assez souuent experimenté l'incontinance de ma langue, tu ne t'en és point donné de garde. Mais laisse, que ie me tue la premiere: et sans autrement marchander, se donna d'vne espée dans le corps.

2.3.20 Vibius Virius desesperé du salut de sa ville assiegée par les Romains, et de leur misericorde, en la derniere deliberation de leur Senat, apres plusieurs remonstrances employées à cette fin, conclud que le plus beau estoit d'eschapper à la Fortune par leurs propres mains. Les ennemis les en auroient en honneur, et Hannibal sentiroit de combien fideles amis il auroit abandonnés.

Conuiant ceux qui approuueroient son aduis, d'aller prendre vn bon souper, qu'on auoit dressé chez luy, où apres auoir fait bonne chere, ils boiroyent ensemble de ce qu'on luy presenteroit; breuuage qui deliurera noz corps des tourments, noz ames des iniures, noz yeux et noz oreilles du sentiment de tant de villains maux, que les vaincus ont à souffrir des vainqueurs tres cruels et offencez. I'ay, disoit-il, mis ordre qu'il y aura personnes propres à nous ietter dans vn bucher au deuant de mon huis, quand nous serons expirez. Assez approuuerent cette haute resolution: peu l'imiterent.

Vingt sept Senateurs le suiuirent: et apres auoir essayé d'estouffer dans le vin cette fascheuse pensée, finirent leur repas par ce mortel mets: et s'entre-embrassans apres auoir en commun deploré le malheur de leur païs: les vns se retirerent en leurs maisons, les autres s'arresterent, pour estre enterrez dans le feu de Vibius auec luy: et eurent tous la mort si longue, la vapeur du vin ayant occupé les veines, et retardant l'effect du

ENGLISH

the wretched state of the Roman commonwealth. Nothing could be more delicate than the death of the wife of Fulvius, an intimate of Augustus.[20]

Augustus discovered that Fulvius had let out an important secret he had confided to him, and one morning when Fulvius came to see him, he gave him a cold look. Fulvius goes back home full of despair and tells his wife, most piteously, that since he had fallen into this misfortune he was resolved to kill himself. She answered quite frankly: "You will only be doing what is right, since you have often enough experienced how loose my tongue is, and yet you did not guard against it. But let me kill myself first." And without further haggling she ran a sword into her body.[21]

Vibius Virius despaired both of saving his city, which the Romans were besieging, and of their mercy. At the last deliberation of their senate, after many speeches had been made to that end, he concluded that the finest course was to escape Fortune by their own hands. The enemy would honor them for it, and Hannibal would feel how faithful were the friends he had abandoned.[22]

He invited those who approved his advice to come and eat a good supper that had been prepared at his house. There, after a good feast, they would drink together whatever would be brought to him: "a drink that will deliver our bodies from torments, our souls from insults, our eyes and ears from witnessing all the vile evils that the vanquished must suffer from victors who are utterly cruel and have been offended. I have arranged," he said, "for there to be suitable people to throw us onto a pyre in front of my door once we have breathed our last." Plenty approved this lofty resolution; few imitated it.

Twenty-seven senators followed him. After trying to drown that grim thought in wine, they ended their meal with that deadly dish. They embraced one another, after lamenting together the misfortune of their country; then some went home, while others stayed to be buried with Vibius in his fire. And all of them had so long a death, since the fumes of the wine had filled their veins and

20 These suicides under Tiberius, around AD 33–34, are recorded by Tacitus, Annals VI; Cocceius Nerva was a leading jurist and the emperor's companion.
21 Told by Plutarch, On Talkativeness.
22 Capua, Hannibal's ally, was besieged and taken by the Romans in 211 BC; Livy, History of Rome XXVI, tells the story.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
	poison, qu'aucuns furent à vne heure pres de veoir les ennemis dans Capouë, qui fut emportée le lendemain, et d'encourir les miseres qu'ils auoyent si cherement fuy.	slowed the effect of the poison, that some came within an hour of seeing the enemy inside Capua, which was taken the next day, and of incurring the miseries they had fled at such cost.
2.3.21	Taurea Iubellius, vn autre citoyen de là, le Consul Fuluius retournant de cette honteuse boucherie qu'il auoit faicte de deux cents vingtcinq Senateurs, le rappella fierement par son nom, et l'ayant arresté: Commande, fit-il, qu'on me massacre aussi apres tant d'autres, afin que tu te puisses vanter d'auoir tué vn beaucoup plus vaillant homme que toy.	Taurea Jubellius, another citizen of that place, saw the consul Fulvius returning from the shameful butchery he had made of two hundred and twenty-five senators. He called him back proudly by name and, having stopped him, said: "Order them to slaughter me too, after so many others, so that you can boast of having killed a much braver man than yourself."[23]
	Fuluius le desdaignant, comme insensé: aussi que sur l'heure il venoit de receuoir lettres de Rome contraires à l'inhumanité de son execution, qui luy lioient les mains: Iubellius continua: Puis que mon païs prins, mes amis morts, et ayant occis de ma main ma femme et mes enfants, pour les soustraire à la desolation de cette ruine, il m'est interdict de mourir de la mort de mes concitoyens: empruntons de la vertu la vengeance de cette vie odieuse. Et tirant vn glaiue, qu'il auoit caché, s'en donna au trauers la poictrine, tumbant renuersé, mourant aux pieds du Consul.	Fulvius disdained him as a madman; besides, he had just that moment received letters from Rome condemning the inhumanity of his executions, which tied his hands. Jubellius went on: "My country is taken, my friends are dead, and I have slain my wife and children with my own hand to spare them the desolation of this ruin. Since I am forbidden to die the death of my fellow citizens, let us take from courage our revenge on this hateful life." And drawing a blade he had hidden, he drove it through his chest and fell backward, dying at the consul's feet.
2.3.22	Alexandre assiegeoit vne ville aux Indes, ceux de dedans se trouuans pressez, se resolurent vigoureusement à le priuer du plaisir de cette victoire, et s'embraiserent vniuersellement tous, quand et leur ville, en despit de son humanité. Nouuelle guerre, les ennemis combattoient pour les sauuer, eux pour se perdre, et faisoient pour garentir leur mort, toutes les choses qu'on fait pour garentir sa vie.	Alexander was besieging a city in India. Those inside, finding themselves hard pressed, resolved vigorously to deprive him of the pleasure of this victory, and set themselves on fire, every one of them, together with their city, in defiance of his humanity. A new kind of war: the enemy fought to save them, they fought to destroy themselves, and to make sure of their death they did all the things one does to make sure of one's life.
2.3.23	Astapa ville d'Espaigne se trouuant foible de murs et de deffenses, pour soustenir les Romains, les habitans firent amas de leurs richesses et meubles en la place, et ayants rengé au dessus de ce monceau les femmes et les enfants, et l'ayants entouré de bois et matiere propre à prendre feu soudainement et laissé cinquante ieunes hommes d'entre eux pour l'execution de leur resolution, feirent vne sortie, où suiuant leur vœu, à faute de pouuoir vaincre, ils se feirent tous tuer.	The Spanish city of Astapa had walls and defenses too weak to withstand the Romans. So the inhabitants heaped up their riches and goods in the public square. They placed the women and children on top of this heap and surrounded it with wood and other material that would catch fire quickly. Then, leaving fifty young men from among them to carry out their resolution, they made a sortie in which, as they had vowed, since they could not conquer, they all got themselves killed.[24]
	Les cinquante, apres auoir massacré toute ame viuante esparse par leur ville, et mis le feu en ce monceau, s'y	The fifty massacred every living soul still scattered through their city, set fire to the heap,

23 Quintus Fulvius Flaccus, the Roman consul who took Capua.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
	lancerent aussi, finissants leur genereuse liberté en un estat insensible plus tost, que douloureux et honteux: et montrant aux ennemis, que si Fortune l'eust voulu, ils eussent eu aussi bien le courage de leur oster la victoire, comme ils auoient eu de la leur rendre et frustratoire et hideuse, voire et mortelle à ceux, qui amorsez par la lueur de l'or coulant en cette flamme, s'en estants approchez en bon nombre, y furent suffoquez et bruslez: le reculer leur estant interdict par la foulle, qui les suiuoit.	and threw themselves into it too. So they ended their noble liberty in a state that was insensible rather than painful and shameful. They showed the enemy that, had Fortune willed it, they would have had the courage to take the victory from them, just as they had had the courage to make it both futile and hideous for them, and even deadly. For many Romans, lured by the gleam of the gold melting in that flame, came near in great numbers and were suffocated and burned there, unable to retreat because of the crowd pressing behind them.
2.3.24	Les Abydeens pressez par Philippus, se resolurent de mesmes: mais estans prins de trop court, le Roy qui eut horreur de voir la precipitation temeraire de cette execution (les thresors et les meubles, qu'ils auoyent diuersement condamnez au feu et au naufrage, saisis) retirant ses soldats, leur conceda trois iours à se tuer, auec plus d'ordre et plus à l'aise: lesquels ils remplirent de sang et de meurtre au delà de toute hostile cruauté: et ne s'en sauua vne seule personne, qui eust pouuoir sur soy.	The people of Abydos, hard pressed by Philip, made the same resolution. But they were caught too short. The king was horrified to see the rash haste of this execution, and once the treasures and goods they had condemned some to the fire and some to the sea had been seized, he withdrew his soldiers and granted them three days to kill themselves in better order and at greater leisure. They filled those days with blood and slaughter beyond any cruelty of an enemy, and not a single person who had power over himself escaped.[25]
2.3.25	Il y a infinis exemples de pareilles conclusions populaires, qui semblent plus aspres, d'autant que l'effect en est plus vniuersel. Elles le sont moins que separées. Ce que le discours ne feroit en chacun, il le fait en tous: l'ardeur de la societé rauissant les particuliers iugements.	There are countless examples of such resolutions taken by whole peoples, which seem harsher because their effect is more universal. In fact they are less harsh than when each person acts alone. What reasoning would not achieve in each individual, it achieves in all: the ardor of the group sweeps away individual judgments.
2.3.26	Les condamnez qui attendoyent l'execution, du temps de Tibere, perdoyent leurs biens, et estoyent priuez de sepulture: ceux qui l'anticipoyent en se tuants eux mesmes, estoyent enterrez, et pouuoyent faire testament.	Under Tiberius, condemned men who waited for their execution lost their property and were denied burial; those who forestalled it by killing themselves were buried and could make a will.
2.3.27	Mais on desire aussi quelquefois la mort, pour l'esperance d'vn plus grand bien. Ie desire, dict Sainct Paul, estre dissoult, pour estre auec Iesus Christ: et, Qui me desprendra de ces liens? Cleombrotus Ambraciota ayant leu le Phædon de Platon, entra en si grand appetit de la vie aduenir, que sans autre occasion il s'alla precipiter en la mer. Par où il appert combien improprement nous appellons desespoir cette dissolution volontaire, à laquelle la chaleur de l'espoir nous porte souuent, et souuent vne tranquille et rassise inclination de iugement.	But we also sometimes desire death in the hope of a greater good. "I desire," says Saint Paul, "to be dissolved, to be with Jesus Christ"; and "Who will deliver me from these bonds?" Cleombrotus of Ambracia, having read Plato's Phaedo, was seized with so great an appetite for the life to come that, with no other reason, he went and threw himself into the sea. This shows how wrongly we call despair this voluntary dissolution, to which we are of-

24 Astapa, in southern Spain, fell to the Romans in 206 BC; Livy, History of Rome XXVIII.
25 Philip V of Macedon besieged Abydos, on the Hellespont, in 200 BC; Livy, History of Rome XXXI.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
		ten carried by the warmth of hope, and often by a calm and settled inclination of our judgment.[26]
2.3.28	Iacques du Chastel Euesque de Soissons, au voyage d'outremer que fit Sainct Loys, voyant le Roy et toute l'armée en train de reuenir en France, laissant les affaires de la religion imparfaictes, print resolution de s'en aller plus tost en Paradis; et ayant dict à Dieu à ses amis, donna seul à la veuë d'vn chacun, dans l'armée des ennemis, où il fut mis en pieces.	Jacques du Chastel, Bishop of Soissons, was on Saint Louis's crusade overseas. Seeing the king and the whole army on the point of returning to France with the cause of religion left unfinished, he resolved to go off to Paradise instead. He bade farewell to his friends and charged alone, in full view of everyone, into the enemy army, where he was cut to pieces.[27]
	En certain Royaume de ces nouuelles terres, au iour d'vne solemne procession, auquel l'idole qu'ils adorent, est promenée en publicq, sur vn char de merueilleuse grandeur: outre ce qu'il se void plusieurs se detaillants les morceaux de leur chair viue, à luy offrir: il s'en void nombre d'autres, se prosternants emmy la place, qui se font mouldre et briser souz les rouës, pour en acquerir apres leur mort, veneration de saincteté, qui leur est rendue. La mort de cet Euesque les armes au poing, a de la generosité plus, et moins de sentiment: l'ardeur du combat en amusant vne partie.	In a certain kingdom of these new lands, there is a solemn procession on a day when the idol they worship is paraded in public on a chariot of marvelous size. Many people can be seen cutting pieces from their own living flesh to offer to it, and besides them a number of others can be seen throwing themselves down in the middle of the square and having themselves ground and crushed under the wheels, so as to win after their death the veneration due to holiness, which is duly paid them. The death of this bishop, weapons in hand, has more nobility and less suffering, since the heat of combat took his mind off part of it.[28]
2.3.29	Il y a des polices qui se sont meslées de regler la iustice et opportunité des morts volontaires. En nostre Marseille il se gardoit au temps passé du venin preparé à tout de la cigue, aux despens publics, pour ceux qui voudroient haster leurs iours; ayants premierement approuué aux six cens, qui estoit leur Senat, les raisons de leur entreprise: et n'estoit loisible autrement que par congé du magistrat, et par occasions legitimes, de mettre la main sur soy. Cette loy estoit encor' ailleurs.	Some governments have taken it upon themselves to regulate when voluntary deaths are just and timely. In our own Marseille, in times past, poison prepared from hemlock was kept at public expense for anyone who wished to hasten his days, once he had first justified the reasons for his undertaking to the Six Hundred, which was their senate. It was not permitted to lay hands on oneself in any other way, except by leave of the magistrate and for legitimate reasons. This law existed elsewhere too.[29]

THE OLD WOMAN OF CEA

Watched by Sextus Pompeius, a ninety-year-old woman calmly drinks poison among her family.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
2.3.30	Sextus Pompeius allant en Asie, passa par l'Isle de Cea de Negrepont; il aduint de fortune pendant qu'il y estoit, comme nous l'apprend l'vn de ceux de sa compagnie,	Sextus Pompeius, on his way to Asia, passed through the island of Cea, near Negropont. It

26 Paul, Philippians 1:23 and Romans 7:24. Plato's Phaedo recounts Socrates' last day and his arguments for the immortality of the soul.
27 Louis IX's crusade to Egypt ended in defeat in 1250; Joinville records the bishop's death.
28 Probably a Hindu chariot festival in India, as described in Portuguese accounts of the East Indies.
29 Valerius Maximus, Memorable Deeds and Sayings II.6, describes this custom of ancient Massalia (Marseille).

FRENCH

qu'vne femme de grande authorité, ayant rendu compte à ses citoyens, pourquoy elle estoit resolue de finir sa vie, pria Pompeius d'assister à sa mort, pour la rendre plus honorable: ce qu'il fit, et ayant long temps essayé pour neant, à force d'eloquence, [qui luy estoit merueilleusement à main] et de persuasion, de la destourner de ce dessein, souffrit en fin qu'elle se contentast.

Elle auoit passé quatre vingts dix ans, en tres-heureux estat d'esprit et de corps, mais lors couchée sur son lict, mieux paré que de coustume, et appuyée sur le coude: Les Dieux, dit elle, ô Sextus Pompeius, et plustost ceux que ie laisse, que ceux que ie vay trouuer, te sçachent gré dequoy tu n'as desdaigné d'estre et conseiller de ma vie, et tesmoing de ma mort. De ma part, ayant tousiours essayé le fauorable visage de Fortune, de peur que l'enuie de trop viure ne m'en face voir vn contraire, ie m'en vay d'vne heureuse fin donner congé aux restes de mon ame, laissant de moy deux filles et vne legion de nepueux.

Cela faict, ayant presché et enhorté les siens à l'vnion et à la paix, leur ayant departy ses biens, et recommandé les Dieux domestiques à sa fille aisnée, elle print d'vne main asseurée la coupe, où estoit le venin, et ayant faict ses vœux à Mercure, et les prieres de la conduire en quelque heureux siege en l'autre monde, auala brusquement ce mortel breuuage. Or entretint elle la compagnie, du progrez de son operation: et comme les parties de son corps se sentoyent saisies de froid l'vne apres l'autre: iusques à ce qu'ayant dict en fin qu'il arriuoit au cœur et aux entrailles, elle appella ses filles pour luy faire le dernier office, et luy clorre les yeux.

2.3.31 Pline recite de certaine nation Hyperborée, qu'en icelle, pour la douce temperature de l'air, les vies ne se finissent communément que par la propre volonté des habitans; mais qu'estans las et saouls de viure, ils ont en coustume au bout d'vn long aage, apres auoir faict bonne chere, se precipiter en la mer, du hault d'un certain rocher, destiné à ce seruice.

2.3.32

ENGLISH

happened by chance while he was there, as one of his company tells us, that a woman of great standing, having explained to her fellow citizens why she had resolved to end her life, begged Pompeius to attend her death to make it more honorable. This he did. For a long time he tried in vain, by force of eloquence (which came to him wonderfully readily) and persuasion, to turn her from this plan; in the end he allowed her to have her way.[30]

She was over ninety and had lived in a very happy state of mind and body. Now, lying on her bed, which was more finely decked than usual, and propped on her elbow, she said: "O Sextus Pompeius, may the gods, rather those I am leaving than those I am going to meet, reward you for not disdaining to be both the counselor of my life and the witness of my death. For my part, I have always known the favorable face of Fortune; and for fear that the desire to live too long might make me see her other face, I am going, by a happy end, to dismiss what remains of my soul, leaving behind me two daughters and a legion of grandchildren."

That done, she preached to her family and urged them to unity and peace, divided her goods among them, and commended the household gods to her eldest daughter. Then she took the cup containing the poison with a steady hand, made her vows to Mercury and prayed him to guide her to some happy dwelling in the other world, and briskly swallowed the deadly drink. After that she kept the company informed of how it was working, and of how the parts of her body felt the cold seize them one after another; until at last, having said that it was reaching her heart and her innards, she called her daughters to perform the last office for her and close her eyes.

Pliny tells of a certain Hyperborean nation where, thanks to the mild temperature of the air, lives commonly end only by the inhabitants' own will. When they are weary and sated with living, at the end of a long life, it is their custom to have a good feast and then throw themselves into the sea from the top of a certain rock set aside for this purpose.[31]

30 The witness is Valerius Maximus (II.6), who traveled with Sextus Pompeius. Cea is the Greek island of Kea.
31 Pliny the Elder, Natural History IV. The Hyperboreans were a legendary people of the far north.

FRENCH	ENGLISH
La douleur, et vne pire mort, me semblent les plus excusables incitations.	Pain, and a worse death, seem to me the most excusable incentives.

II.4 Business Tomorrow

A demain les affaires
Praise for Amyot's French Plutarch leads to Montaigne's own heedlessness, and the question of whether urgent letters should ever wait.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
2.4.1	IE donne auec raison, ce me semble, la palme à Iacques Amiot, sur tous noz escriuains François; non seulement pour la naïfueté et pureté du langage, en quoy il surpasse tous autres, ny pour la constance d'vn si long trauail, ny pour la profondeur de son sçauoir, ayant peu deuelopper si heureusement vn autheur si espineux et ferré: car on m'en dira ce qu'on voudra, ie n'entens rien au Grec, mais ie voy vn sens si bien ioint et entretenu, par tout en sa traduction, que ou il a certainement entendu l'imagination vraye de l'autheur, ou ayant par longue conuersation, planté viuement dans son ame, vne generale idée de celle de Plutarque, il ne luy a aumoins rien presté qui le desmente, ou qui le desdie: mais sur tout, ie luy sçay bon gré, d'auoir sçeu trier et choisir vn liure si digne et si à propos, pour en faire present à son païs.	I give the palm, rightly I think, to Jacques Amyot over all our French writers. This is not only for the natural ease and purity of his language, in which he surpasses all others, nor for his perseverance in so long a labor, nor for the depth of his learning, which allowed him to unfold so happily an author so thorny and knotty. For people may tell me what they like: I understand nothing of Greek, but I see a meaning so well connected and sustained throughout his translation that either he has certainly grasped the author's true thought, or else, having by long acquaintance planted vividly in his soul a general idea of Plutarch's soul, he has at least lent him nothing that belies or contradicts him. But above all I am grateful to him for having known how to pick and choose a book so worthy and so fitting to make a present of it to his country.[1]
	Nous autres ignorans estions perdus, si ce liure ne nous eust releué du bourbier: sa mercy nous osons à cett'heure et parler et escrire: les dames en regentent les maistres d'escole: c'est nostre breuiaire. Si ce bon homme vit, ie luy resigne Xenophon pour en faire autant. C'est vn' occupation plus aisée, et d'autant plus propre à sa vieillesse. Et puis, ie ne sçay comment il me semble, quoy qu'il se desmesle bien brusquement et nettement d'vn mauuais pas, que toutefois son stile est plus chez soy, quand il n'est pas pressé, et qu'il roulle à son aise.	We ignorant folk would have been lost if this book had not pulled us out of the mire. Thanks to him we now dare to speak and to write; ladies use it to school the schoolmasters; it is our breviary. If this good man is still alive, I hand Xenophon over to him to do the same. It is an easier task, and all the more suited to his old age. And besides, I don't know how, it seems to me that although he gets out of a tight spot very briskly and neatly, his style is nonetheless more at home when it is not hurried and rolls along at its ease.
2.4.2	I'estois à cett'heure sur ce passage, où Plutarque dit de soy-mesmes, que Rusticus assistant à vne sienne declamation à Rome, y receut vn pacquet de la part de l'Empereur, et temporisa de l'ouurir, iusques à ce que tout fust faict: En quoy, dit-il, toute l'assistance loua singulierement la grauité de ce personnage.	I was just now at the passage where Plutarch says of himself that Rusticus, attending one of his lectures in Rome, received a packet from the Emperor and put off opening it until everything was over; for which, he says, the whole audience singularly praised this man's gravity.[2]

1 Amyot (1513–1593) also translated Plutarch's Moral Works (1572); he became bishop of Auxerre.
2 Arulenus Rusticus, a Stoic senator later put to death by Domitian; the passage is in Plutarch's essay On Curiosity.

FRENCH

De vray, estant sur le propos de la curiosité, et de cette passion auide et gourmande de nouuelles, qui nous fait auec tant d'indiscretion et d'impatience abandonner toutes choses, pour entretenir vn nouueau venu, et perdre tout respect et contenance, pour crocheter soudain, où que nous soyons, les lettres qu'on nous apporte: il a eu raison de louër la grauité de Rusticus: et pouuoit encor y ioindre la louange de sa ciuilité et courtoisie, de n'auoir voulu interrompre le cours de sa declamation. Mais ie fay doubte qu'on le peust louër de prudence: car receuant à l'improueu lettres, et notamment d'vn Empereur, il pouuoit bien aduenir que le differer à les lire, eust esté d'vn grand preiudice.

2.4.3 Le vice contraire à la curiosité, c'est la nonchalance: vers laquelle ie panche euidemment de ma complexion; et en laquelle i'ay veu plusieurs hommes si extremes, que trois ou quatre iours apres, on retrouuoit encores en leur pochette les lettres toutes closes, qu'on leur auoit enuoyées. Ie n'en ouuris iamais, non seulement de celles, qu'on m'eust commises: mais de celles mesmes que la Fortune m'eust faict passer par les mains. Et fais conscience si mes yeux desrobent par mesgarde, quelque cognoissance des lettres d'importance qu'il lit, quand ie suis à costé d'vn grand. Iamais homme ne s'enquit moins, et ne fureta moins és affaires d'autruy.

2.4.4 Du temps de noz peres Monsieur de Boutieres cuida perdre Turin, pour, estant en bonne compagnie à soupper, auoir remis à lire vn aduertissement qu'on luy donnoit des trahisons qui se dressoient contre cette ville, où il commandoit. Et ce mesme Plutarque m'a appris que Iulius Cæsar se fust sauué, si allant au Senat, le iour qu'il y fut tué par les coniurez, il eust leu vn memoire qu'on luy presenta.

Et fait aussi le compte d'Archias Tyran de Thebes, que le soir auant l'execution de l'entreprise que Pelopidas auoit faicte de le tuer, pour remettre son païs en liberté, il luy fut escrit par vn autre Archias Athenien de poinct en poinct, ce qu'on luy preparoit: et que ce pacquet luy ayant esté rendu pendant son soupper, il remit à l'ouurir, disant ce mot, qui depuis passa en prouerbe en Grece: A demain les affaires.

2.4.5

ENGLISH

Indeed, since Plutarch was on the subject of curiosity, and of that avid and greedy passion for news which makes us so tactlessly and impatiently drop everything to talk to a newcomer, and lose all respect and composure in tearing open on the spot, wherever we are, the letters brought to us, he was right to praise Rusticus's gravity. He could have added praise for his civility and courtesy in not wanting to interrupt the course of the lecture. But I doubt whether he could be praised for prudence. For when one receives letters unexpectedly, and especially from an emperor, it could well happen that putting off reading them would do great harm.

The vice opposite to curiosity is heedlessness, toward which I plainly lean by temperament. I have seen many men so extreme in it that three or four days later the letters sent to them were still found unopened in their pockets. I have never opened any letters—not only those entrusted to me, but not even those that Fortune happened to pass through my hands. And I feel a scruple if my eyes inadvertently steal some knowledge of the important letters a great man is reading when I am beside him. Never did a man inquire less, or pry less, into other people's affairs.

In our fathers' time Monsieur de Boutières nearly lost Turin because, being in good company at supper, he put off reading a warning sent him about treacheries being plotted against that city, where he was in command. And this same Plutarch has taught me that Julius Caesar would have saved himself if, on his way to the Senate on the day the conspirators killed him there, he had read a note that was handed to him.[3]

Plutarch also tells the story of Archias, tyrant of Thebes. On the evening before Pelopidas was to carry out his plot to kill him and restore his country's liberty, another Archias, an Athenian, wrote to him, point by point, what was being prepared against him. This packet was delivered to him during supper, and he put off opening it, saying the words that afterward became a proverb in Greece: "Business tomorrow."[4]

3 Guigues Guiffrey de Boutières commanded the French in Piedmont under Francis I in the late 1530s.
4 Pelopidas freed Thebes from the pro-Spartan oligarchy in 379 BC; Plutarch, Life of Pelopidas.

FRENCH

Vn sage homme peut à mon opinion pour l'interest d'autruy, comme pour ne rompre indecemment compagnie ainsi que Rusticus, ou pour ne discontinuer vn autre affaire d'importance, remettre à entendre ce qu'on luy apporte de nouueau: mais pour son interest ou plaisir particulier, mesmes s'il est homme ayant charge publique; pour ne rompre son disner, voyre ny son sommeil, il est inexcusable de le faire. Et anciennement estoit à Rome la place Consulaire, qu'ils appelloyent, la plus honorable à table, pour estre plus à deliure, et plus accessible à ceux qui suruiendroyent, pour entretenir celuy qui y seroit assis. Tesmoignage, que pour estre à table, ils ne se departoyent pas de l'entremise d'autres affaires et suruenances.

Mais quand tout est dict, il est malaisé és actions humaines, de donner regle si iuste par discours de raison, que la Fortune n'y maintienne son droict.

ENGLISH

In my opinion a wise man may, for the sake of others—so as not to break up company unbecomingly, like Rusticus, or not to interrupt some other important business—put off hearing news brought to him. But for his own interest or private pleasure, especially if he holds public office, so as not to interrupt his dinner, or even his sleep, it is inexcusable to do so. In ancient Rome, the place at table they called the consular place was the most honorable, because it was freer and more accessible to anyone who might arrive to speak with the person sitting in it. This shows that being at table did not make them withdraw from dealing with other business and unexpected events.[5]

But when all is said, it is hard, in human actions, to lay down by rational argument a rule so exact that Fortune does not keep her rights over it.

5 Plutarch, Table Talk I.3.

II.5 Of Conscience

De la Conscience

A tense wartime encounter shows how a guilty conscience betrays itself, and why torture is a poor test of truth.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
2.5.1	VOYAGEANT vn iour, mon frere Sieur de la Brousse et moy, durant noz guerres ciuiles, nous rencontrasmes vn Gentilhomme de bonne façon: il estoit du party contraire au nostre, mais ie n'en sçauois rien, car il se contrefaisoit autre. Et le pis de ces guerres, c'est, que les chartes sont si meslées, vostre ennemy n'estant distingué d'auec vous d'aucune marque apparente, ny de langage, ny de port, nourry en mesmes loix, mœurs et mesme air, qu'il est mal-aisé d'y euiter confusion et desordre. Cela me faisoit craindre à moy-mesme de r'encontrer nos trouppes, en lieu où ie ne fusse cogneu, pour n'estre en peine de dire mon nom, et de pis à l'aduanture.	One day during our civil wars, as my brother the Sieur de la Brousse and I were traveling, we met a gentleman of good bearing. He belonged to the party opposed to ours, but I knew nothing of it, for he passed himself off as something else. And the worst of these wars is that the cards are so shuffled that it is hard to avoid confusion and disorder: your enemy is not distinguished from you by any visible mark, neither by language nor by bearing, and he was brought up under the same laws, customs and air. This made me fear, myself, to run into our own troops somewhere I was not known, and so be in trouble when I had to give my name, or worse, perhaps.[1]
	Comme il m'estoit autrefois aduenu: car en vn tel mescompte, ie perdis et hommes et cheuaux, et m'y tua lon miserablement, entre autres, vn page Gentil-homme Italien, que ie nourrissois soigneusement; et fut estainte en luy vne tresbelle enfance, et pleine de grande esperance. Mais cettuy-cy en auoit vne frayeur si esperduë, et ie le voyois si mort à chasque rencontre d'hommes à cheual, et passage de villes, qui tenoient pour le Roy, que ie deuinay en fin que c'estoient alarmes que sa conscience luy donnoit. Il sembloit à ce pauure homme qu'au trauers de son masque et des croix de sa cazaque on iroit lire iusques dans son cœur, ses secrettes intentions. Tant est merueilleux l'effort de la conscience.	That had happened to me once before: in such a mistake I lost both men and horses, and among others they pitifully killed a page of mine, an Italian of gentle birth whom I was carefully bringing up; and with him was extinguished a very fine boyhood, full of great promise. But this man was so wildly afraid, and I saw him go so deathly pale whenever we met horsemen or passed through towns that held for the King, that I finally guessed these were alarms his conscience was raising. It seemed to this poor man that through his mask and the crosses on his cloak they would read his secret intentions right into his heart. So marvelous is the power of conscience.
	Elle nous fait trahir, accuser, et combattre nous mesmes, et à faute de tesmoing estranger, elle nous produit contre nous, *Occultum quatiens animo tortore flagellum.*	It makes us betray, accuse and fight ourselves, and for want of an outside witness it brings us forward to testify against ourselves: *Brandishing a hidden lash, the mind its own torturer.*[2]
2.5.2	Ce conte est en la bouche des enfans. Bessus Pœnien reproché d'auoir de gayeté de cœur abbatu vn nid de moineaux, et les auoir tuez: disoit auoir eu raison, par ce	This story is in every child's mouth. Bessus the Paeonian, reproached for having wantonly knocked down a nest of sparrows and killed them,

1 Pierre de Montaigne, sieur de La Brousse, was one of Montaigne's younger brothers.
2 Juvenal, Satires XIII.

FRENCH

que ces oysillons ne cessoient de l'accuser faucement du meurtre de son pere. Ce parricide iusques lors auoit esté occulte et inconnu: mais les furies vengeresses de la conscience, le firent mettre hors à celuy mesmes qui en deuoit porter la penitence. Hesiode corrige le dire de Platon, que la peine suit de bien pres le peché: car il dit qu'elle naist en l'instant et quant et quant le peché. Quiconque attent la peine, il la souffre, et quiconque l'a meritée, l'attend. La meschanceté fabrique des tourmens contre soy.

Malum consilium consultori pessimum. Comme la mouche guespe picque et offence autruy, mais plus soy-mesme, car elle y perd son esguillon et sa force pour iamais; *Vitásque in vulnere ponunt*. Les cantharides ont en elles quelque partie qui sert contre leur poison de contrepoison, par vne contrarieté de nature.

Aussi à mesme qu'on prend le plaisir au vice, il s'engendre vn desplaisir contraire en la conscience, qui nous tourmente de plusieurs imaginations penibles, veillans et dormans, *Quippe vbi se multi, per somnia sæpe loquentes,*
Aut morbo delirantes, procraxe ferantur,
Et celata diu in medium peccata dedisse. Apollodorus songeoit qu'il se voyoit escorcher par les Scythes, et puis bouillir dedans vne marmitte, et que son cœur murmuroit en disant; Ie te suis cause de tous ces maux. Aucune cachette ne sert aux meschans, disoit Epicurus, par ce qu'ils ne se peuuent asseurer d'estre cachez, la conscience les descouurant à eux mesmes, *Prima est hæc vltio, quòd se*
Iudice nemo nocens absoluitur.

2.5.3 Comme elle nous remplit de crainte, aussi fait elle d'asseurance et de confiance. Et ie puis dire auoir marché en plusieurs hazards, d'vn pas bien plus ferme, en consideration de la secrette science que i'auois de ma volonté et innocence de mes desseins. *Conscia mens vt cuique sua est, ita concipit intra / Pectora pro facto spémque metúmque suo.* Il y en a mille exemples: il suffira d'en alleguer trois de mesme personnage. Scipion estant vn iour accusé deuant le peuple Romain d'vne accusation importante, au lieu de s'excuser ou de flatter ses iuges: Il

ENGLISH

said he had been right to, because those little birds never stopped falsely accusing him of murdering his father. Until then this parricide had been hidden and unknown; but the avenging furies of conscience made it come out from the very man who was to pay the penalty for it. Hesiod corrects Plato's saying that punishment follows close upon sin: for he says it is born at the very instant, together with the sin. Whoever awaits punishment suffers it, and whoever has deserved it awaits it. Wickedness fashions torments against itself.[3]

Evil counsel is worst for the counselor. Just as the wasp stings and hurts others, but itself more, for it loses its sting and its strength forever: *And they leave their lives in the wound.* Blister beetles have in them some part that serves as an antidote to their own poison, by a contrariety of nature.[4]

So too, at the very moment we take pleasure in vice, an opposite displeasure is engendered in our conscience, which torments us, waking and sleeping, with many painful imaginings: *For many, often talking in their dreams,*
Or raving in sickness, are said to have betrayed themselves
And brought to light sins long concealed. Apollodorus dreamed that he saw himself being flayed by the Scythians and then boiled in a pot, and that his heart murmured, saying: "I am the cause of all these ills for you." No hiding place helps the wicked, said Epicurus, because they can never be sure they are hidden, since their conscience reveals them to themselves: *This is the first punishment: that no guilty man*
Is acquitted when he is his own judge.[5]

Just as conscience fills us with fear, so it fills us with assurance and confidence. And I can say that I have walked into many dangers with a much firmer step because of the secret knowledge I had of my own will and of the innocence of my intentions. *As each man's mind knows what he has done, so within his breast / He conceives hope or fear according to his deeds.* There are a thousand examples; it will be enough to cite three about the same person. Scipio was accused one day before the Roman

3 The story and the sayings come from Plutarch, On the Delays of Divine Vengeance.
4 The first quotation is a proverb cited by Aulus Gellius; the second is Virgil, Georgics IV.
5 The first verses are from Lucretius, On the Nature of Things V; the last are Juvenal. Apollodorus was a cruel tyrant of Cassandreia in Macedonia.

FRENCH

vous siera bien, leur dit-il, de vouloir entreprendre de iuger de la teste de celuy, par le moyen duquel vous auez l'authorité de iuger de tout le monde.

Et vn' autre fois, pour toute responce aux imputations que luy mettoit sus vn Tribun du peuple, au lieu de plaider sa cause: Allons, dit-il, mes citoyens, allons rendre graces aux Dieux de la victoire qu'ils me donnerent contre les Carthaginois en pareil iour que cettuy-cy. Et se mettant à marcher deuant vers le temple, voylà toute l'assemblée, et son accusateur mesmes à sa suitte.

Et Petilius ayant esté suscité par Caton pour luy demander compte de l'argent manié en la prouince d'Antioche, Scipion estant venu au Senat pour cet effect, produisit le liure des raisons qu'il auoit dessoubs sa robbe, et dit, que ce liure en contenoit au vray la recepte et la mise: mais comme on le luy demanda pour le mettre au greffe, il le refusa, disant, ne se vouloir pas faire cette honte à soy-mesme: et de ses mains en la presence du Senat le deschira et mit en pieces.

Ie ne croy pas qu'vne ame cauterizée sçeust contrefaire vne telle asseurance: il auoit le cœur trop gros de nature, et accoustumé à trop haute fortune, dit Tite Liue, pour sçauoir estre criminel, et se demettre à la bassesse de deffendre son innocence.

2.5.4 C'est vne dangereuse inuention que celle des gehennes, et semble que ce soit plustost vn essay de patience que de verité. Et celuy qui les peut souffrir, cache la verité, et celuy qui ne les peut souffrir. Car pourquoy la douleur me fera elle plustost confesser ce qui en est, qu'elle ne me forcera de dire ce qui n'est pas? Et au rebours, si celuy qui n'a pas faict ce dequoy on l'accuse, est assez patient pour supporter ces tourments, pourquoy ne le sera celuy qui l'a faict, vn si beau guerdon, que de la vie, luy estant proposé? Ie pense que le fondement de cette inuention, vient de la consideration de l'effort de la conscience.

Car au coulpable il semble qu'elle aide à la torture pour luy faire confesser sa faute, et qu'elle l'affoiblisse: et de l'autre part qu'elle fortifie l'innocent contre la torture. Pour dire vray, c'est vn moyen plein d'incertitude et de danger. Que ne diroit on, que ne feroit on pour fuyr à si

ENGLISH

people on a serious charge. Instead of excusing himself or flattering his judges, he said to them: "It would suit you well indeed to set about passing judgment on the life of the man through whom you have the authority to judge the whole world."[6]

Another time, as his only answer to the charges a tribune of the people laid against him, instead of pleading his case, he said: "Come, my fellow citizens, let us go and give thanks to the gods for the victory they gave me over the Carthaginians on this very day." And as he set off walking ahead toward the temple, off went the whole assembly after him, and even his accuser.

And when Petilius had been put up by Cato to demand an account of the money handled in the province of Antioch, Scipio came to the Senate for that purpose and produced the account book from under his robe, saying that it contained a true record of receipts and expenses. But when they asked him for it so that it could be deposited in the record office, he refused, saying he did not wish to do himself that shame; and with his own hands, in the presence of the Senate, he tore it apart and ripped it to pieces.

I do not believe that a seared soul could counterfeit such assurance. He had a heart too great by nature, says Livy, and too used to high fortune, to know how to be a criminal and to stoop to the baseness of defending his innocence.

Torture is a dangerous invention, and it seems to be a test of endurance rather than of truth. The man who can bear it hides the truth, and so does the man who cannot. For why should pain make me confess what is so, rather than force me to say what is not? And conversely, if the man who has not done what he is accused of is enduring enough to bear these torments, why should not the man who has done it be so too, when so fine a reward as his life is held out to him? I think the basis of this invention lies in a view of the power of conscience.

For in the guilty man conscience seems to help the torture make him confess his fault, and to weaken him; while on the other hand it seems to strengthen the innocent against the torture. To tell the truth, it is a means full of uncertainty and

6 Ovid, Fasti I. Scipio Africanus the Elder, conqueror of Hannibal, faced prosecutions in Rome in the 180s BC.

FRENCH

griefues douleurs? *Etiam innocentes cogit mentiri dolor.* D'où il aduient, que celuy que le iuge a gehenné pour ne le faire mourir innocent, il le face mourir et innocent et gehenné. Mille et mille en ont chargé leur teste de faulces confessions. Entre lesquels ie loge Philotas, considerant les circonstances du procez qu'Alexandre luy fit, et le progrez de sa gehenne.

Mais tant y a que c'est, dit-on, le moins mal que l'humaine foiblesse aye peu inuenter: bien inhumainement pourtant, et bien inutilement à mon aduis.

2.5.5 Plusieurs nations moins barbares en cela que la Grecque et la Romaine, qui les appellent ainsin, estiment horrible et cruel de tourmenter et desrompre vn homme, de la faute duquel vous estes encore en doubte. Que peut il mais de vostre ignorance? Estes vous pas iniustes, qui pour ne le tuer sans occasion, luy faites pis que le tuer? Qu'il soit ainsi, voyez combien de fois il ayme mieux mourir sans raison, que de passer par cette information plus penible que le supplice, et qui souuent par son aspreté deuance le supplice, et l'execute. Ie ne sçay d'où ie tiens ce conte, mais il rapporte exactement la conscience de nostre iustice.

Vne femme de village accusoit deuant le General d'armée, grand justicier, vn soldat, pour auoir arraché à ses petits enfants ce peu de bouillie qui luy restoit à les substanter, cette armée ayant tout rauagé. De preuue il n'y en auoit point. Le General apres auoir sommé la femme, de regarder bien à ce qu'elle disoit, d'autant qu'elle seroit coulpable de son accusation, si elle mentoit: et elle persistant, il fit ouurir le ventre au soldat, pour s'esclaircir de la verité du faict: et la femme se trouua auoir raison. Condemnation instructiue.

ENGLISH

danger. What would one not say, what would one not do, to escape such grievous pains? *Pain forces even the innocent to lie.* So it happens that the man the judge has tortured so as not to put him to death innocent, he puts to death both innocent and tortured. Thousands upon thousands have loaded their heads with false confessions. Among them I place Philotas, considering the circumstances of the trial Alexander brought against him and the course of his torture.[7]

But be that as it may, it is, they say, the least bad thing that human weakness has been able to invent; most inhumanly, however, and most uselessly, in my opinion.

Many nations, less barbarous in this respect than the Greeks and Romans who call them so, consider it horrible and cruel to torment and break a man whose guilt you are still in doubt about. Is it his fault that you do not know? Are you not unjust, you who, so as not to kill him without cause, do worse to him than kill him? To see that this is so, consider how often he would rather die without reason than go through this inquiry, which is more painful than the execution and often, by its harshness, forestalls the execution and carries it out. I do not know where I got this story, but it exactly reflects the conscience of our justice.

A village woman accused a soldier, before the general of an army who was a stern dispenser of justice, of having snatched from her little children the bit of porridge she had left to feed them, since the army had ravaged everything. There was no proof at all. The general warned the woman to be very careful what she was saying, since she would be guilty of her own accusation if she lied; and when she persisted, he had the soldier's belly cut open to establish the truth of the matter. And the woman turned out to be right. An instructive sentence.[8]

7 Publilius Syrus, Sentences. Philotas, one of Alexander's generals, was tortured and executed in 330 BC for an alleged conspiracy (Quintus Curtius VI).
8 Froissart's Chronicles tell this story of the Ottoman sultan Bayezid I.

II.6 Of Practice

De l'exercitation

Montaigne recounts his near-fatal fall from a horse to show how gently dying may come, then defends writing about himself.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
2.6.1	IL est malaisé que le discours et l'instruction, encore que nostre creance s'y applique volontiers, soyent assez puissants pour nous acheminer iusques à l'action, si outre cela nous n'exerçons et formons nostre ame par experience au train, auquel nous la voulons renger: autrement quand elle sera au propre des effets, elle s'y trouuera sans doute empeschée. Voylà pourquoy parmy les Philosophes, ceux qui ont voulu atteindre à quelque plus grande excellence, ne se sont pas contentez d'attendre à couuert et en repos les rigueurs de la Fortune, de peur qu'elle ne les surprinst inexperimentez et nouueaux au combat: ains ils luy sont allez au deuant, et se sont iettez à escient à la preuue des difficultez.	It is hard for reasoning and instruction, however willingly our belief embraces them, to be powerful enough to carry us all the way to action, unless in addition we exercise and train our soul by experience in the course we want to set it on; otherwise, when it comes to the point of acting, it will no doubt find itself at a loss. That is why, among the philosophers, those who sought to attain some greater excellence were not content to await the rigors of Fortune in shelter and at rest, for fear she might catch them inexperienced and new to the fight. Instead they went out to meet her and deliberately threw themselves into the test of hardships.
	Les vns en ont abandonné les richesses, pour s'exercer à vne pauureté volontaire: les autres ont recherché le labeur, et vne austerité de vie penible, pour se durcir au mal et au trauail: d'autres se sont priuez des parties du corps les plus cheres, comme de la veuë et des membres propres à la generation, de peur que leur seruice trop plaisant et trop mol, ne relaschast et n'attendrist la fermeté de leur ame.	Some gave up their riches to train themselves in voluntary poverty; others sought out labor and a painful austerity of life to harden themselves to pain and toil; others deprived themselves of the dearest parts of the body, such as their sight and their organs of generation, for fear that the too pleasant and too soft service of these might slacken and soften the firmness of their soul.
2.6.2	Mais à mourir, qui est la plus grande besoigne que nous ayons à faire, l'exercitation ne nous y peut ayder. On se peut par vsage et par experience fortifier contre les douleurs, la honte, l'indigence; et tels autres accidents: mais quant à la mort, nous ne la pouuons essayer qu'vne fois: nous y sommes tous apprentifs, quand nous y venons.	But for dying, which is the greatest task we have to perform, practice cannot help us. We can fortify ourselves by habit and experience against pain, shame, poverty and other such accidents; but as for death, we can try it only once. We are all apprentices when we come to it.
2.6.3	Il s'est trouué anciennement des hommes si excellens mesnagers du temps, qu'ils ont essayé en la mort mesme, de la gouster et sauourer: et ont bandé leur esprit, pour voir que c'estoit de ce passage: mais ils ne sont pas reuenus nous en dire les nouuelles. *Nemo expergitus extat, / Frigida quem semel est vitaï pausa sequuta.*	There have been men in ancient times who managed their time so well that they tried to taste and savor death even as they died, and strained their minds to see what this passage was like; but they have not come back to tell us the news. *No one wakes and rises again / Once the cold pause of life has overtaken him.*[1]

1 Lucretius, On the Nature of Things III.

FRENCH

2.6.4 Canius Iulius noble Romain, de vertu et fermeté singuliere, ayant esté condamné à la mort par ce marault de Caligula: outre plusieurs merueilleuses preuues qu'il donna de sa resolution, comme il estoit sur le poinct de souffrir la main du bourreau, vn Philosophe son amy luy demanda: Et bien Canius, en quelle démarche est à cette heure vostre ame? que fait elle? en quels pensemens estes vous?

Ie pensois, luy respondit-il, à me tenir prest et bandé de toute ma force, pour voir, si en cet instant de la mort, si court et si brief, ie pourray apperceuoir quelque deslogement de l'ame, et si elle aura quelque ressentiment de son yssuë, pour, si i'en aprens quelque chose, en reuenir donner apres, si ie puis, aduertissement à mes amis. Cestuy-cy philosophe non seulement iusqu'à la mort, mais en la mort mesme. Quelle asseurance estoit-ce, et quelle fierté de courage, de vouloir que sa mort luy seruist de leçon, et auoir loisir de penser ailleurs en vn si grand affaire? *Ius hoc animi morientis habebat.*

2.6.5 Il me semble toutesfois qu'il y a quelque façon de nous appriuoiser à elle, et de l'essayer aucunement. Nous en pouuons auoir experience, sinon entiere et parfaicte: aumoins telle qu'elle ne soit pas inutile, et qui nous rende plus fortifiez et asseurez. Si nous ne la pouuons ioindre, nous la pouuons approcher, nous la pouuons reconnoistre: et si nous ne donnons iusques à son fort, aumoins verrons nous et en pratiquerons les aduenuës. Ce n'est pas sans raison qu'on nous fait regarder à nostre sommeil mesme, pour la ressemblance qu'il a de la mort. Combien facilement nous passons du veiller au dormir, auec combien peu d'interest nous perdons la connoissance de la lumiere et de nous!

A l'aduenture pourroit sembler inutile et contre Nature la faculté du sommeil, qui nous priue de toute action et de tout sentiment, n'estoit que par iceluy Nature nous instruict, quelle nous a pareillement faicts pour mourir, que pour viure, et dés la vie nous presente l'eternel estat qu'elle nous garde apres icelle, pour nous y accoustumer et nous en oster la crainte.

2.6.6 Mais ceux qui sont tombez par quelque violent accident en defaillance de cœur, et qui y ont perdu tous sentimens,

ENGLISH

Canius Julius, a Roman nobleman of singular virtue and firmness, was condemned to death by that scoundrel Caligula. Besides many marvelous proofs he gave of his resolution, when he was on the point of submitting to the executioner's hand, a philosopher who was his friend asked him: "Well, Canius, what state is your soul in now? What is it doing? What are your thoughts?"[2]

"I was thinking," he answered, "of holding myself ready and braced with all my strength, to see whether in this instant of death, so short and brief, I shall be able to perceive the soul moving out, and whether it will have any feeling of its departure; so that, if I learn anything about it, I may come back afterward, if I can, and let my friends know." This man philosophizes not only up to death but in death itself. What assurance it was, and what pride of courage, to want his death to serve him as a lesson, and to have the leisure to think of other things in so great a business! *Such command over his mind he kept in dying.*[3]

It seems to me, however, that there is some way of taming ourselves to death and trying it out in some measure. We can have an experience of it which, if not whole and perfect, is at least not useless, and makes us stronger and more assured. If we cannot reach it, we can approach it, we can reconnoiter it; and if we do not get as far as its fortress, at least we shall see and travel the roads that lead to it. It is not without reason that we are told to look at our very sleep, for the resemblance it bears to death. How easily we pass from waking to sleeping! With how little concern we lose awareness of the light and of ourselves!

Perhaps the faculty of sleep, which deprives us of all action and all feeling, might seem useless and contrary to Nature, were it not that through it Nature teaches us that she has made us for dying as much as for living, and while we are still alive shows us the eternal state she keeps for us after life, to accustom us to it and take away our fear of it.

But those who have fainted from some violent accident and lost all feeling—those, in my view, have

2 The story is told by Seneca, On Tranquility of Mind 14.
3 Lucan, Pharsalia VIII.

FRENCH

ceux là à mon aduis ont esté bien pres de voir son vray et naturel visage. Car quant à l'instant et au poinct du passage, il n'est pas à craindre, qu'il porte auec soy aucun trauail ou desplaisir: d'autant que nous ne pouuons auoir nul sentiment, sans loisir. Nos souffrances ont besoing de temps, qui est si court et si precipité en la mort, qu'il faut necessairement qu'elle soit insensible. Ce sont les approches que nous auons à craindre: et celles-là peuuent tomber en experience.

2.6.7 Plusieurs choses nous semblent plus grandes par imagination, que par effect. I'ay passé vne bonne partie de mon aage en vne parfaite et entiere santé: ie dy non seulement entiere, mais encore allegre et bouillante. Cet estat plein de verdeur et de feste, me faisoit trouuer si horrible la consideration des maladies, que quand ie suis venu à les experimenter, i'ay trouué leurs pointures molles et lasches au prix de ma crainte. Voicy que i'espreuue tous les iours: Suis-ie à couuert chaudement dans vne bonne sale, pendant qu'il se passe vne nuict orageuse et tempesteuse: ie m'estonne et m'afflige pour ceux qui sont lors en la campaigne: y suis-ie moy-mesme, ie ne desire pas seulement d'estre ailleurs.

Cela seul, d'estre tousiours enfermé dans vne chambre, me sembloit insupportable: ie fus incontinent dressé à y estre vne semaine, et vn mois, plein d'émotion, d'alteration et de foiblesse: et ay trouué que lors de ma santé, ie plaignois les malades beaucoup plus, que ie ne me trouue à plaindre moy-mesme, quand i'en suis; et que la force de mon apprehension encherissoit pres de moitié l'essence et verité de la chose. I'espere qu'il m'en aduiendra de mesme de la mort: et qu'elle ne vaut pas la peine que ie prens à tant d'apprests que ie dresse, et tant de secours que i'appelle et assemble pour en soustenir l'effort. Mais à toutes aduantures nous ne pouuons nous donner trop d'auantage.

ENGLISH

come very close to seeing death's true and natural face. For as to the instant and point of passing, there is no need to fear that it brings any pain or distress with it, since we can have no feeling without time. Our sufferings need time, and in death time is so short and so hurried that death must necessarily be imperceptible. It is the approaches we have to fear; and those can fall within our experience.

Many things seem greater to us in imagination than in reality. I spent a good part of my life in perfect and entire health: I say not only entire, but lively and full of fire. That state, so full of vigor and festivity, made the thought of illness so horrible to me that when I came to experience it, I found its pangs mild and feeble compared with my fear. Here is what I find every day. If I am snug and warm under cover in a good room while a stormy, tempestuous night is going on outside, I am dismayed and distressed for those who are out in the open country; if I am out there myself, I do not even wish to be elsewhere.

Just being shut up in a room all the time seemed unbearable to me; I was soon trained to stay there a week, and a month, full of agitation, disturbance and weakness. And I have found that when I was healthy I pitied the sick much more than I find myself to be pitied when I am sick, and that the force of my apprehension inflated the substance and truth of the thing by nearly half. I hope the same will happen to me with death, and that it is not worth all the trouble I take over the many preparations I make and the many aids I call up and assemble to withstand its assault. But at all events, we can never give ourselves too much of an advantage.

THE FALL FROM THE HORSE

Montaigne recounts being knocked senseless in a riding accident during the civil wars.

FRENCH

2.6.8 Pendant nos troisiesmes troubles, ou deuxiesmes, il ne me souuient pas bien de cela, m'estant allé vn iour promener à vne lieuë de chez moy, qui suis assis dans le moiau de tout le trouble des guerres ciuiles de France; estimant estre en toute seureté, et si voisin de ma retraicte, que ie n'auoy, point besoin de meilleur

ENGLISH

During our third troubles, or the second—I do not remember that well—I went out riding one day a league from my house, which is set at the very hub of all the turmoil of the civil wars of France. I thought myself perfectly safe and so near home that I had no need of better equipment, and I had

FRENCH

equipage, i'auoy pris vn cheual bien aisé, mais non guere ferme.

A mon retour, vne occasion soudaine s'estant presentée de m'aider de ce cheual à vn seruice, qui n'estoit pas bien de son vsage, vn de mes gens grand et fort, monté sur vn puissant roussin, qui auoit vne bouche desesperée, frais au demeurant et vigoureux, pour faire le hardy et deuancer ses compaignons, vint à le pousser à toute bride droict dans ma route, et fondre comme vn colosse sur le petit homme et petit cheual, et le foudroyer de sa roideur et de sa pesanteur, nous enuoyant l'vn et l'autre les pieds contre-mont: si que voila le cheual abbatu et couché tout estourdy, moy dix ou douze pas au delà, estendu à la renuerse, le visage tout meurtry et tout escorché, mon espée que i'auoy à la main, à plus de dix pas au delà, ma ceinture en pieces, n'ayant ny mouuement, ny sentiment, non plus qu'vne souche.

C'est le seul esuanouissement que i'aye senty, iusques à cette heure. Ceux qui estoient auec moy, apres auoir essayé par tous les moyens qu'ils peurent, de me faire reuenir, me tenans pour mort, me prindrent entre leurs bras, et m'emportoient auec beaucoup de difficulté en ma maison, qui estoit loing de là, enuiron vne demy lieuë Françoise. Sur le chemin, et apres auoir esté plus de deux grosses heures tenu pour trespassé, ie commençay à me mouuoir et respirer: car il estoit tombé si grande abondance de sang dans mon estomach, que pour l'en descharger, Nature eut besoin de resusciter ses forces.

On me dressa sur mes pieds, où ie rendy vn plein seau de bouillons de sang pur: et plusieurs fois par le chemin, il m'en falut faire de même. Par là ie commençay à reprendre vn peu de vie, mais ce fut par les menus, et par vn si long traict de temps, que mes premiers sentimens estoient beaucoup plus approchans de la mort que de la vie. *Perchè, dubbiosa anchor del suo ritorno, / Non s'assecura attonita la mente.*

2.6.9 Cette recordation que i'en ay fort empreinte en mon ame, me representant son visage et son idée si pres du naturel, me concilie aucunement à elle. Quand ie commençay à y voir, ce fut d'vne veuë si trouble, si foible, et si morte, que ie ne discernois encores rien que la lumiere, *—come quel ch'or apre, or chiude / Gli occhi, mezzo tra'l sonno è l'esser desto.* Quant aux functions de l'ame, elles naissoient auec mesme progrez, que celles du corps. Ie me vy tout

ENGLISH

taken a horse that was very easy to ride but not very sturdy.[4]

On my way back, a sudden occasion arose to use this horse for a task it was not much used to. One of my men, big and strong, was riding a powerful workhorse that had a desperately hard mouth but was otherwise fresh and vigorous. To show off his daring and get ahead of his companions, he spurred it at full tilt straight into my path, came down like a colossus on the little man and the little horse, and struck us like a thunderbolt with all his stiffness and weight, sending us both heels over head. So there lay the horse, knocked down and completely stunned, and there was I, ten or twelve paces beyond, stretched out on my back, my face all bruised and skinned, my sword, which I had had in my hand, more than ten paces further on, my belt in pieces, with no more movement or feeling than a log.

It is the only time I have fainted, up to now. Those who were with me tried every means they could to bring me round; then, taking me for dead, they lifted me in their arms and carried me with great difficulty toward my house, which was some way off, about half a French league. On the way, after I had been taken for dead for more than two full hours, I began to move and breathe: for so much blood had poured into my stomach that Nature had to revive her forces to get rid of it.

They set me on my feet, and I threw up a whole bucketful of clots of pure blood; and several times along the way I had to do the same. That is how I began to recover a little life; but it came bit by bit, and over so long a stretch of time that my first sensations were much closer to death than to life. *For, still uncertain of its return, / The stunned mind cannot steady itself.*[5]

This memory, deeply imprinted on my soul, shows me death's face and image so true to life that it somewhat reconciles me to it. When I began to see, it was with sight so blurred, so weak and so dead that I still could make out nothing but the light, *—like one who now opens, now closes / His eyes, halfway between sleep and waking.* As for the functions of the soul, they came back at the same pace

4 The second and third civil wars between Catholics and Protestants ran from 1567 to 1568 and from 1568 to 1570.
5 Tasso, Jerusalem Delivered XII.

FRENCH

sanglant: car mon pourpoinct estoit taché par tout du sang que i'auoy rendu. La premiere pensée qui me vint, ce fut que i'auoy vne harquebusade en la teste: de vray en mesme temps, il s'en tiroit plusieurs autour de nous.

Il me sembloit que ma vie ne me tenoit plus qu'au bout des léures: ie fermois les yeux pour ayder, ce me sembloit, à la pousser hors, et prenois plaisir à m'alanguir et à me laisser aller. C'estoit vne imagination qui ne faisoit que nager superficiellement en mon ame, aussi tendre et aussi foible que tout le reste: mais à la verité non seulement exempte de desplaisir, ains meslée à cette douceur, que sentent ceux qui se laissent glisser au sommeil.

2.6.10 Ie croy que c'est ce mesme estat, où se trouuent ceux qu'on void défaillans de foiblesse, en l'agonie de la mort: et tiens que nous les plaignons sans cause, estimans qu'ils soyent agitez de griéues douleurs, ou auoir l'ame pressée de cogitations penibles.

Ç'a esté tousiours mon aduis, contre l'opinion de plusieurs, et mesme d'Estienne de la Boetie, que ceux que nous voyons ainsi renuersez et assoupis aux approches de leur fin, ou accablez de la longueur du mal, ou par accident d'vne apoplexie, ou mal caduc, *(vi morbi sæpe coactus*
Ante oculos aliquis nostros, vt fulminis ictu,
Concidit, et spumas agit: ingemit, et fremit artus,
Desipit, extentat neruos, torquetur, anhelat,
Inconstanter et in iactando membra fatigat.) ou blessez en la teste, que nous oyons rommeller, et rendre par fois des souspirs trenchans, quoy que nous en tirons aucuns signes, par où il semble qu'il leur reste encore de la cognoissance, et quelques mouuemens que nous leur voyons faire du corps: i'ay tousiours pensé, dis-ie, qu'ils auoient et l'ame et le corps enseueli, et endormy.

Viuit, et est vitæ nescius ipse suæ. Et ne pouuois croire qu'à vn si grand estonnement de membres, et si grande défaillance des sens, l'ame peust maintenir aucune force au dedans pour se recognoistre: et que par ainsin ils n'auoient aucun discours qui les tourmentast, et qui leur

ENGLISH

as those of the body. I saw I was covered in blood, for my doublet was stained all over with the blood I had thrown up. The first thought that came to me was that I had taken an arquebus shot in the head; and in fact several shots were being fired around us at that same moment.

It seemed to me that my life was hanging on only by the tip of my lips. I closed my eyes in order, as it seemed to me, to help push it out, and I took pleasure in growing languid and letting myself go. It was a notion that merely floated on the surface of my soul, as tender and as feeble as all the rest; but in truth it was not only free from distress but mingled with that sweetness people feel when they let themselves slip into sleep.

I believe this is the very state in which we find those whom we see fainting from weakness in the throes of death; and I hold that we pity them without cause, thinking they are racked by grievous pains or that their souls are oppressed by painful thoughts.

It has always been my view, against the opinion of many, and even of Étienne de La Boétie, that those whom we see thus prostrate and drowsy as their end approaches, or overwhelmed by the length of their illness, or struck by apoplexy or the falling sickness, *(often, overcome by the violence of the disease,*
A man falls before our eyes as if struck by lightning,
And foams at the mouth; he groans, his limbs tremble,
He raves, his sinews stiffen, he writhes, he pants,
And wears out his limbs in fitful tossing.) or wounded in the head, whom we hear rattle in their throats and sometimes utter piercing sighs—although we draw from these some signs that seem to show that some awareness remains to them, as we do from certain movements we see them make with their bodies—I have always thought, I say, that both their soul and their body were buried and asleep.[6]

He lives, and is himself unaware of his life. And I could not believe that, with the limbs so stunned and the senses so far gone, the soul could keep any strength within by which to recognize itself; and so I believed that they had no reasoning to torment them and make them judge and feel the

6 The verses are from Lucretius, On the Nature of Things VI.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
	peust faire iuger et sentir la misere de leur condition, et que par consequent, ils n'estoient pas fort à plaindre.	wretchedness of their condition, and consequently that they were not much to be pitied.[7]
2.6.11	Ie n'imagine aucun estat pour moy si insupportable et horrible, que d'auoir l'ame vifue, et affligée, sans moyen de se declarer. Comme ie dirois de ceux qu'on enuoye au supplice, leur ayant couppé la langue: si ce n'estoit qu'en cette sorte de mort, la plus muette me semble la mieux seante, si elle est accompaignée d'vn ferme visage et graue. Et comme ces miserables prisonniers qui tombent és mains des vilains bourreaux soldats de ce temps, desquels ils sont tourmentez de toute espece de cruel traictement, pour les contraindre à quelque rançon excessiue et impossible: tenus cependant en condition et en lieu, où ils n'ont moyen quelconque d'expression et signification de leurs pensées et de leur misere.	I can imagine no state so unbearable and horrible for me as having my soul alive and afflicted with no means of expressing itself. I would say the same of those who are sent to execution with their tongues cut out—were it not that in this kind of death the most silent seems to me the most becoming, if it is accompanied by a firm and grave countenance. And the same goes for those wretched prisoners who fall into the hands of the vile soldier-torturers of our time, who torment them with every kind of cruel treatment to force them into paying some excessive and impossible ransom, while keeping them in such a condition and place that they have no means whatever of expressing and making known their thoughts and their misery.
2.6.12	Les Poëtes ont feint quelques Dieux fauorables à la deliurance de ceux qui trainoient ainsin vne mort languissante: *Hunc ego Diti / Sacrum iussa fero, téque isto corpore soluo.* Et les voix et responses courtes et descousues, qu'on leur arrache quelquefois à force de crier autour de leurs oreilles, et de les tempester, ou des mouuemens qui semblent auoir quelque consentement à ce qu'on leur demande, ce n'est pas tesmoignage qu'ils viuent pourtant, au moins vne vie entiere.	The poets have imagined certain gods who favor the deliverance of those who are thus dragging out a lingering death: *This I bear, as bidden, sacred to Dis, / And release you from that body.* And the short, disjointed words and answers sometimes wrung from them by shouting in their ears and badgering them, or the movements that seem to show some assent to what is asked of them, are no proof that they are alive, at least not with a full life.[8]
	Il nous aduient ainsi sur le beguayement du sommeil, auant qu'il nous ait du tout saisis, de sentir comme en songe, ce qui se faict autour de nous, et suyure les voix, d'vne ouye trouble et incertaine, qui semble ne donner qu'aux bords de l'ame: et faisons des responses à la suitte des dernieres paroles, qu'on nous a dites, qui ont plus de fortune que de sens.	The same thing happens to us in the first stammerings of sleep, before it has entirely taken hold of us: we sense, as if in a dream, what is going on around us, and we follow voices with a blurred and uncertain hearing that seems to touch only the edges of the soul; and we give answers, following on from the last words spoken to us, that have more luck than sense.
2.6.13	Or à present que ie l'ay essayé par effect, ie ne fay nul doubte que ie n'en aye bien iugé iusques à cette heure. Car premierement estant tout esuanouy, ie me trauaillois d'entr'ouurir mon pourpoinct à beaux ongles, car i'estoy desarmé, et si sçay que ie ne sentois en l'imagination rien qui me blessast. Car il y a plusieurs mouuemens en nous, qui ne partent pas de nostre ordonnance.	Now that I have tested it in practice, I have no doubt that I judged rightly until now. For first, while I was quite unconscious, I was struggling to tear open my doublet with my bare nails (for I was unarmed), and yet I know that I felt nothing in my imagination that hurt me. For there are many movements in us that do not proceed from our command.
	Semianimésque micant digiti, ferrúmque retractant. Ceux qui tombent, eslancent ainsi les bras au deuant de leur	*The half-dead fingers twitch and clutch at the sword again.* People who fall throw their arms out in

7 Ovid, Tristia I.3.

FRENCH

cheute, par vne naturelle impulsion, qui fait que nos membres se prestent des offices, et ont des agitations à part de nostre discours: *Falciferos memorant currus abscindere membra,*
Vt tremere in terra videatur ab artubus, id quod
Decidit abscissum, cùm mens tamen atque hominis vis
Mobilitate mali, non quit sentire dolorem. I'auoy mon estomach pressé de ce sang caillé, mes mains y couroient d'elles-memes, comme elles font souuent, où il nous demange, contre l'aduis de nostre volonté. Il y a plusieurs animaux, et des hommes mesmes, apres qu'ils sont trespassez, ausquels on voit resserrer et remuer des muscles.

Chacun sçait par experience, qu'il a des parties qui se branslent, dressent et couchent souuent sans son congé. Or ces passions qui ne nous touchent que par l'escorse, ne se peuuent dire nostres. Pour les faire nostres, il faut que l'homme y soit engagé tout entier: et les douleurs que le pied ou la main sentent pendant que nous dormons, ne sont pas à nous.

2.6.14 Comme i'approchay de chez moy, où l'alarme de ma cheute auoit desia couru, et que ceux de ma famille m'eurent rencontré, auec les cris accoustumez en telles choses: non seulement ie respondois quelque mot à ce qu'on me demandoit, mais encore ils disent que ie m'aduisay de commander qu'on donnast vn cheual à ma femme, que ie voyoy s'empestrer et se tracasser dans le chemin, qui est montueux et mal-aisé. Il semble que cette consideration deust partir d'vne ame esueillée; si est-ce que ie n'y estois aucunement: c'estoyent des pensemens vains en nuë, qui estoyent esmeuz par les sens des yeux et des oreilles: ils ne venoyent pas de chez moy.

Ie ne sçauoy pourtant ny d'où ie venoy, ny où i'aloy, ny ne pouuois poiser et considerer ce qu'on me demandoit: ce sont de legers effects, que les sens produysoyent d'eux mesmes, comme d'vn vsage: ce que l'ame y prestoit, c'estoit en songe, touchée bien legerement, et comme lechée seulement et arrosée par la molle impression des sens. Cependant mon assiette estoit à la verité tres-douce et paisible: ie n'auoy affliction ny pour autruy ny pour moy: c'estoit vne langueur et vne extreme foiblesse, sans aucune douleur. Ie vy ma maison sans la recognoistre.

ENGLISH

front of them in this way as they fall, by a natural impulse which makes our limbs lend one another their services and have stirrings of their own, apart from our reasoning: *They tell how scythe-bearing chariots lop off limbs so swiftly*
that what has fallen, severed from the body, is seen to quiver
on the ground, while yet the man's mind and strength, through the speed of the harm, cannot feel the pain.
My stomach was oppressed with that clotted blood, and my hands ran to it of their own accord, as they often do where we itch, against the advice of our will. There are many animals, and even men, in whom muscles can be seen to contract and move after they are dead.[9]

Everyone knows from experience that he has parts that often stir, stand up and lie down without his leave. Now these passions that touch us only on the bark cannot be called ours. To make them ours, the whole man must be engaged in them; and the pains that the foot or the hand feels while we are asleep are not ours.

As I approached my house, where the alarm of my fall had already run ahead, and my household had come to meet me with the cries customary on such occasions, not only did I answer a word or two to what I was asked, but they say I even thought to order that a horse be given to my wife, whom I saw stumbling and struggling along the road, which is hilly and rough. It would seem that this consideration must have come from a soul that was awake; and yet I was not there at all. These were empty thoughts, up in the clouds, stirred up by the senses of the eyes and ears; they did not come from inside me.

Yet I did not know where I was coming from or where I was going, nor could I weigh and consider what I was asked. These are slight effects that the senses produced by themselves, as if out of habit. What the soul contributed was in a dream, touched very lightly, and as it were only licked and sprinkled by the soft impression of the senses. Meanwhile my state was in truth very gentle and peaceful. I felt no distress either for others or for myself; it was a languor and an extreme weakness,

8 Virgil, Aeneid IV: the goddess Iris cuts a lock of the dying Dido's hair to free her soul; Dis is the god of the underworld.
9 Virgil, Aeneid X.396; Lucretius, On the Nature of Things III.642–645.

FRENCH

ENGLISH

without any pain. I saw my house without recognizing it.

Quand on m'eut couché, ie senty vne infinie douceur à ce repos: car i'auoy esté vilainement tirassé par ces pauures gens, qui auoyent pris la peine de me porter sur leurs bras, par vn long et tres-mauuais chemin, et s'y estoient lassez deux ou trois fois les vns apres les autres. On me presenta force remedes, dequoy ie n'en receuz aucun, tenant pour certain, que i'estoy blessé à mort par la teste. C'eust esté sans mentir vne mort bien heureuse: car la foiblesse de mon discours me gardoit d'en rien iuger, et celle du corps d'en rien sentir. Ie me laissoy couler si doucement, et d'vne façon si molle et si aisée, que ie ne sens guere autre action moins poisante que celle-la estoit.

When they had put me to bed, I felt an infinite sweetness in that rest, for I had been wretchedly hauled about by those poor people, who had taken the trouble to carry me in their arms over a long and very bad road, and had worn themselves out two or three times, taking turns. They offered me plenty of remedies, of which I accepted none, being certain that I was mortally wounded in the head. It would truly have been a very happy death; for the weakness of my reasoning kept me from judging anything of it, and the weakness of my body from feeling anything. I was letting myself slip away so gently, in so soft and easy a manner, that I can hardly feel any action less burdensome than that one was.

2.6.15 Quand ie vins à reuiure, et à reprendre mes forces, *Vt tandem sensus conualuere mei,* qui fut deux ou trois heures apres, ie me senty tout d'vn train rengager aux douleurs, ayant les membres tous moulus et froissez de ma cheute, et en fus si mal deux ou trois nuits apres, que i'en cuiday remourir encore vn coup: mais d'vne mort plus vifue, et me sens encore de la secousse de cette froissure. Ie ne veux pas oublier cecy, que la derniere chose en quoy ie me peuz remettre, ce fut la souuenance de cet accident: et me fis redire plusieurs fois, où i'aloy, d'où ie venoy, à quelle heure cela m'estoit aduenu, auant que de le pouuoir conceuoir.

When I came back to life and regained my strength, *When at last my senses grew strong again*, which was two or three hours later, I felt myself caught up all at once in pain again, my limbs all battered and bruised from my fall; and for two or three nights afterward I was so ill from it that I thought I would die all over again, but this time a death more keenly felt; and I still feel the shock of that bruising. I do not want to forget this: the last thing I was able to recover was the memory of this accident. I had them tell me several times where I was going, where I was coming from, at what time it had happened to me, before I could take it in.[10]

Quant à la façon de ma cheute, on me la cachoit, en faueur de celuy, qui en auoit esté cause, et m'en forgeoit on d'autres. Mais long temps apres, et le lendemain, quand ma memoire vint à s'entr'ouurir, et me representer l'estat, où ie m'estoy trouué en l'instant que i'auoy aperçeu ce cheual fondant sur moy (car ie l'auoy veu à mes talons, et me tins pour mort: mais ce pensement auoit esté si soudain, que la peur n'eut pas loisir de s'y engendrer) il me sembla que c'estoit vn esclair qui me frapoit l'ame de secousse, et que ie reuenoy de l'autre monde.

As for the way I fell, they hid it from me, out of consideration for the man who had caused it, and made up other versions for me. But long afterward, the next day, when my memory began to open a little and to bring back to me the state I had been in at the instant I saw that horse bearing down on me (for I had seen it at my heels and taken myself for dead, but that thought had been so sudden that fear had no time to arise from it), it seemed to me that it was a flash of lightning striking my soul with a jolt, and that I was coming back from the other world.

10 Ovid, Tristia I.3.14.

PORTRAYING ONESELF

Why studying and describing himself is useful, and why speaking of oneself is no vice.

FRENCH

2.6.16 Ce conte d'vn euénement si leger, est assez vain, n'estoit l'instruction que i'en ay tirée pour moy: car à la verité pour s'apriuoiser à la mort, ie trouue qu'il n'y a que de s'en auoisiner. Or, comme dit Pline, chacun est à soy-mesmes vne tres bonne discipline, pourueu qu'il ait la suffisance de s'espier de pres. Ce n'est pas icy ma doctrine, c'est mon estude: et n'est pas la leçon d'autruy, c'est la mienne. Et ne me doibt on pourtant sçauoir mauuais gré, si ie la communique. Ce qui me sert, peut aussi par accident seruir à vn autre. Au demeurant, ie ne gaste rien, ie n'vse que du mien.

Et si ie fay le fol, c'est à mes despends, et sans l'interest de personne: car c'est en follie, qui meurt en moy, qui n'a point de suitte. Nous n'auons nouuelles que de deux ou trois anciens, qui ayent battu ce chemin: et si ne pouuons dire, si c'est du tout en pareille maniere à cette-cy, n'en connoissant que les noms. Nul depuis ne s'est ietté sur leur trace.

C'est vne espineuse entreprinse, et plus qu'il ne semble, de suyure vne alleure si vagabonde, que celle de nostre esprit: de penetrer les profondeurs opaques de ses replis internes: de choisir et arrester tant de menus airs de ses agitations: et est vn amusement nouueau et extraordinaire, qui nous retire des occupations communes du monde: ouy, et des plus recommandées.

2.6.17 Il y a plusieurs années que ie n'ay que moy pour visée à mes pensées, que ie ne contrerolle et n'estudie que moy. Et si i'estudie autre chose, c'est pour soudain le coucher sur moy, ou en moy, pour mieux dire. Et ne me semble point faillir, si, comme il se faict des autres sciences, sans comparaison moins vtiles, ie fay part de ce que i'ay apprins en cette cy: quoy que ie ne me contente guere du progrez que i'y ay faict. Il n'est description pareille en difficulté, à la description de soy-mesmes, ny certes en vtilité. Encore se faut il testonner, encore se faut il ordonner et renger pour sortir en place.

Or ie me pare sans cesse: car ie me descris sans cesse.

ENGLISH

This account of so trivial an event would be rather pointless, were it not for the lesson I have drawn from it for myself; for truly, to grow used to death, I find there is nothing for it but to draw near to it. Now, as Pliny says, each man is a very good schooling for himself, provided he has the ability to spy on himself from close up. What I give here is not my teaching but my study; it is not a lesson for others, but for me. And yet no one should hold it against me if I share it. What serves me may also by chance serve someone else. Besides, I spoil nothing; I use only what is mine.

And if I play the fool, it is at my own expense and without harm to anyone; for it is a folly that dies with me and has no consequences. We have word of only two or three ancients who have beaten this path; and even so we cannot say whether it was at all in the same way as this, since we know only their names. No one since has followed in their tracks.

It is a thorny undertaking, more so than it seems, to follow a course as wandering as that of our mind; to penetrate the opaque depths of its inner folds; to pick out and pin down so many slight nuances of its stirrings. And it is a new and extraordinary pastime, which draws us away from the common occupations of the world—yes, and from the most highly recommended.

For many years now I have had nothing but myself as the target of my thoughts; I examine and study nothing but myself. And if I study anything else, it is to apply it at once to myself—or rather, within myself. And I do not think I am at fault if, as is done with the other sciences, which are incomparably less useful, I share what I have learned in this one, though I am hardly satisfied with the progress I have made in it. There is no description equal in difficulty to the description of oneself, nor certainly in usefulness. Even so, one has to do one's hair, one has to tidy and arrange oneself before going out in public.

Now I am constantly dressing myself up, for I am constantly describing myself.

FRENCH

ENGLISH

2.6.18 La coustume a faict le parler de soy, vicieux: et le prohibe obstinéement en hayne de la ventance, qui semble tousiours estre attachée aux propres tesmoignages. Au lieu qu'on doit moucher l'enfant, cela s'appelle l'enaser, *In vicium ducit culpæ fuga.* Ie trouue plus de mal que de bien à ce remede. Mais quand il seroit vray, que ce fust necessairement, presomption, d'entretenir le peuple de soy: ie ne doy pas suyuant mon general dessein, refuser vne action qui publie cette maladiue qualité, puis qu'elle est en moy: et ne doy cacher cette faute, que i'ay non seulement en vsage, mais en profession. Toutesfois à dire ce que i'en croy, cette coustume a tort de condamner le vin, par ce que plusieurs s'y enyurent.

Custom has made speaking of oneself a vice, and stubbornly forbids it out of hatred for the boasting that always seems to be attached to testimony about oneself. Where one ought to wipe the child's nose, this amounts to cutting it off. *Fleeing a fault leads into vice.* I find more harm than good in this remedy. But even if it were true that it is necessarily presumptuous to entertain people with talk about oneself, I must not, given my general plan, refuse an action that displays this unhealthy quality, since it is in me; and I must not hide this fault, which I not only practice but profess. Still, to say what I think of it, this custom is wrong to condemn wine because many get drunk on it.[11]

On ne peut abuser que des choses qui sont bonnes. Et croy de cette regle, qu'elle ne regarde que la populaire defaillance. Ce sont brides à veaux, desquelles ny les Saincts, que nous oyons si hautement parler d'eux, ny les Philosophes, ny les Theologiens ne se brident. Ne fay-ie moy, quoy que ie soye aussi peu l'vn que l'autre. S'ils n'en escriuent à point nommé, aumoins, quand l'occasion les y porte, ne feignent ils pas de se ietter bien auant sur le trottoir. Dequoy traitte Socrates plus largement que de soy? A quoy achemine il plus souuent les propos de ses disciples, qu'à parler d'eux, non pas de la leçon de leur liure, mais de l'estre et branle de leur ame?

Only good things can be abused. And I believe this rule concerns only the failings of ordinary people. These are bridles for calves, with which neither the saints, whom we hear speaking of themselves so loftily, nor the philosophers, nor the theologians bridle themselves. Nor do I, though I am as little the one as the other. If they do not write about themselves expressly, at least, when occasion leads them to it, they do not hesitate to step well out onto the public promenade. What does Socrates discuss more fully than himself? To what does he more often lead his disciples' talk than to speaking of themselves—not of the lesson in their book, but of the being and motion of their soul?

Nous nous disons religieusement à Dieu, et à nostre confesseur, comme noz voisins à tout le peuple. Mais nous n'en disons, me respondra-on, que les accusations. Nous disons donc tout: car nostre vertu mesme est fautiere et repentable. Mon mestier et mon art, c'est viure. Qui me defend d'en parler selon mon sens, experience et vsage: qu'il ordonne à l'architecte de parler des bastiments non selon soy, mais selon son voisin, selon la science d'vn autre, non selon la sienne. Si c'est gloire, de soy-mesme publier ses valeurs, que ne met Cicero en auant l'eloquence de Hortense; Hortense celle de Cicero? A l'aduenture entendent ils que ie tesmoigne de moy par ouurage et effects, non nuement par des paroles.

We speak of ourselves devoutly to God and to our confessor, as our neighbors do to the whole congregation. "But we tell only our accusations," someone will answer. Then we tell everything; for even our virtue is faulty and calls for repentance. My trade and my art is living. Whoever forbids me to speak of it according to my own sense, experience and practice, let him order the architect to speak of buildings not according to himself but according to his neighbor, according to someone else's knowledge and not his own. If it is glory-seeking to proclaim one's own merits oneself, why does Cicero not put forward the eloquence of Hortensius, and Hortensius that of Cicero? Perhaps they mean that I should bear witness to myself by works and deeds, not by bare words.[12]

Ie peins principalement mes cogitations, subiect informe, qui ne peut tomber en production ouuragere. A toute

What I portray is chiefly my thoughts, a shapeless subject that cannot be turned into tangible works.

11 Horace, Art of Poetry 31.

FRENCH

peine le puis ie coucher en ce corps aëré de la voix. Des plus sages hommes, et des plus deuots, ont vescu fuyants tous apparents effects. Les effects diroyent plus de la Fortune, que de moy. Ils tesmoignent leur roolle, non pas le mien, si ce n'est coniecturalement et incertainement. Eschantillons d'vne montre particuliere. Ie m'estalle entier: c'est vn *skeletos*, où d'vne veuë les veines, les muscles, les tendons paroissent, chasque piece en son siege. L'effect de la toux en produisoit vne partie: l'effect de la palleur ou battement de cœur vn' autre, et doubteusement. Ce ne sont mes gestes que i'escris; c'est moy, c'est mon essence.

2.6.19 Ie tien qu'il faut estre prudent à estimer de soy, et pareillement conscientieux à en tesmoigner: soit bas, soit haut, indifferemment. Si ie me sembloy bon et sage tout à fait, ie l'entonneroy à pleine teste. De dire moins de soy, qu'il n'y en a, c'est sottise, non modestie: se payer de moins, qu'on ne vaut, c'est lascheté et pusillanimité selon Aristote. Nulle vertu ne s'ayde de la fausseté: et la verité n'est iamais matiere d'erreur. De dire de soy plus qu'il n'en y a, ce n'est pas tousiours presomption, c'est encore souuent sottise. Se complaire outre mesure de ce qu'on est, en tomber en amour de soy indiscrete, est à mon aduis la substance de ce vice.

Le supreme remede à le guarir, c'est faire tout le rebours de ce que ceux icy ordonnent, qui en défendant le parler de soy, defendent par consequent encore plus de penser à soy. L'orgueil gist en la pensée: la langue n'y peut auoir qu'vne bien legere part.

2.6.20 De s'amuser à soy, il leur semble que c'est se plaire en soy: de se hanter et prattiquer, que c'est se trop cherir. Mais cet excez naist seulement en ceux qui ne se tastent que superficiellement, qui se voyent apres leurs affaires, qui appellent resuerie et oysiueté de s'entretenir de soy, et s'estoffer et bastir, faire des chasteaux en Espaigne: s'estimants chose tierce et estrangere à eux mesmes. Si quelcun s'enyure de sa science, regardant souz soy: qu'il tourne les yeux au dessus vers les siecles passez, il baissera les cornes, y trouuant tant de milliers d'esprits, qui le foulent aux pieds.

ENGLISH

Only with great difficulty can I set it down in this airy body of the voice. Some of the wisest and most devout men have lived avoiding all visible deeds. Deeds would say more about Fortune than about me. They bear witness to their own part, not mine, except by conjecture and uncertainly: samples that show only a single detail. I lay myself out whole: it is a *skeletos*, where at a single glance the veins, the muscles, the tendons appear, each part in its place. The effect of a cough would reveal one part of it; the effect of pallor or a pounding heart another, and doubtfully at that. It is not my deeds that I write; it is myself, it is my essence.[13]

I hold that one must be careful in assessing oneself, and equally conscientious in bearing witness to it, whether low or high, without distinction. If I seemed to myself good and wise through and through, I would sing it out at the top of my voice. To say less of oneself than is true is stupidity, not modesty; to rate oneself at less than one is worth is cowardice and pusillanimity, according to Aristotle. No virtue helps itself with falsehood, and truth is never matter for error. To say more of oneself than is true is not always presumption; often it is also stupidity. To be pleased beyond measure with what one is, to fall into an indiscreet love of oneself, is in my opinion the substance of this vice.

The supreme remedy to cure it is to do the exact opposite of what these people prescribe, who, by forbidding us to speak of ourselves, consequently forbid even more strongly that we think of ourselves. Pride lies in thought; the tongue can have only a very slight share in it.

To them, occupying oneself with oneself seems to mean being pleased with oneself; frequenting and keeping company with oneself seems to mean being too fond of oneself. But this excess arises only in those who feel themselves out only superficially, who look at themselves only after their business is done, who call it daydreaming and idleness to converse with oneself, to furnish and build oneself up—building castles in Spain—regarding themselves as a third party, a stranger to

12 "Our neighbors" are the Protestants, who practiced a general public confession. Quintus Hortensius was Cicero's great rival in Roman oratory.
13 Greek for a dried body; here, an anatomical figure showing the body's inner structure.

FRENCH

S'il entre en quelque flateuse presomption de sa vaillance, qu'il se ramentoiue les vies de Scipion, d'Epaminondas, de tant d'armées, de tant de peuples, qui le laissent si loing derriere eux. Nulle particuliere qualité n'enorgueillira celuy, qui mettra quand et quand en compte, tant d'imparfaittes et foibles qualitez autres, qui sont en luy, et au bout, la nihilité de l'humaine condition. Parce que Socrates auoit seul mordu à certes au precepte de son Dieu, de se connoistre, et par cet estude estoit arriué à se mespriser, il fut estimé seul digne du nom de Sage. Qui se connoistra ainsi, qu'il se donne hardiment à connoistre par sa bouche.

ENGLISH

themselves. If someone is intoxicated with his learning, looking at those beneath him, let him turn his eyes upward toward past ages: he will lower his horns, finding there so many thousands of minds that trample him underfoot.

If he falls into some flattering presumption about his valor, let him recall the lives of Scipio, of Epaminondas, of so many armies, so many peoples, who leave him so far behind. No particular quality will make a man proud who at the same time takes into account so many other imperfect and weak qualities that are in him, and in the end the nothingness of the human condition. Because Socrates alone had seriously taken to heart the precept of his god, to know himself, and through that study had come to despise himself, he alone was judged worthy of the name of Wise. Whoever knows himself in this way, let him boldly make himself known with his own mouth.[14]

14 "Know thyself" was inscribed at Apollo's temple at Delphi, whose oracle declared Socrates the wisest of men.

II.7 Of Rewards of Honor

Des récompenses d'honneur

Honors without monetary value reward virtue best, Montaigne argues, but only while rare—as France's Order of Saint Michael no longer is.

FRENCH

2.7.1 CEVX qui escriuent la vie d'Auguste Cæsar, remerquent cecy en sa discipline militaire, que des dons il estoit merueilleusement liberal enuers ceux qui le meritoient: mais que des pures recompenses d'honneur il en estoit bien autant espargnant. Si est-ce qu'il auoit esté luy mesme gratifié par son oncle, de toutes les recompenses militaires, auant qu'il eust iamais esté à la guerre.

Ç'a esté vne belle inuention, et receuë en la plus part des polices du monde, d'establir certaines merques vaines et sans prix, pour en honnorer et recompenser la vertu: comme sont les couronnes de laurier, de chesne, de meurte, la forme de certain vestement, le priuilege d'aller en coche par ville, ou de nuit auecques flambeau, quelque assiette particuliere aux assemblées publiques, la prerogatiue d'aucuns surnoms et titres, certaines merques aux armoiries, et choses semblables dequoy l'vsage a esté diuersement receu selon l'opinion des nations, et dure encores.

2.7.2 Nous auons pour nostre part, et plusieurs de nos voisins, les ordres de cheualerie, qui ne sont establis qu'à cette fin. C'est à la verité vne bien bonne et profitable coustume, de trouuer moyen de recognoistre la valeur des hommes rares et excellens, et de les contenter et satisfaire par des payemens, qui ne chargent aucunement le publiq, et qui ne coustent rien au Prince. Et ce qui a esté tousiours conneu par experience ancienne, et que nous auons autrefois aussi peu voir entre nous, que les gens de qualité auoyent plus de ialousie de telles recompenses, que de celles où il y auoit du guain et du profit, cela n'est pas sans raison et grande apparence.

Si au prix qui doit estre simplement d'honneur, on y mesle d'autres commoditez, et de la richesse: ce meslange au lieu d'augmenter l'estimation, il la rauale et en retranche. L'ordre Sainct Michel, qui a esté si long

ENGLISH

Those who write the life of Augustus Caesar note this about his military discipline: that he was marvelously generous with gifts to those who deserved them, but quite as sparing with purely honorary rewards. And yet he himself had been granted every military reward by his uncle before he had ever been to war.[1]

It was a fine invention, and one accepted in most governments of the world, to establish certain marks that are empty and of no monetary value in order to honor and reward virtue: such as crowns of laurel, of oak, of myrtle; the cut of a certain garment; the privilege of riding in a carriage through the city, or of going about at night with a torch; some special seat at public assemblies; the prerogative of certain surnames and titles; certain marks on coats of arms; and similar things, whose use has been variously received according to the opinion of nations, and still endures.

We, for our part, and several of our neighbors, have orders of knighthood, which are established for this purpose alone. It is truly a very good and profitable custom to find a way of recognizing the worth of rare and excellent men, and of contenting and satisfying them with payments that are no burden at all on the public and cost the Prince nothing. And what has always been known from ancient experience, and what we too could once see among ourselves—that people of quality were more eager for such rewards than for those that brought gain and profit—is not without reason and strong likelihood.

If with a prize that ought to be purely one of honor we mix other advantages and wealth, this mixture, instead of increasing its esteem, debases and diminishes it. The Order of Saint Michael, which was

1 The source is Suetonius, Life of Augustus 25; the "uncle" was in fact his great-uncle Julius Caesar.

FRENCH

temps en credit parmy nous, n'auoit point de plus grande commodité que celle-la, de n'auoir communication d'aucune autre commodité. Cela faisoit, qu'autre-fois il n'y auoit ne charge ny estat, quel qu'il fust, auquel la Noblesse pretendist auec tant de desir et d'affection, qu'elle faisoit à l'ordre, ny qualité qui apportast plus de respect et de grandeur: la vertu embrassant et aspirant plus volontiers à vne recompense purement sienne, plustost glorieuse, qu'vtile.

2.7.3 Car à la verité les autres dons n'ont pas leur vsage si digne, d'autant qu'on les employe à toute sorte d'occasions. Par des richesses on satisfaict le seruice d'vn valet, la diligence d'vn courrier, le dancer, le voltiger, le parler, et les plus viles offices qu'on reçoiue: voire et le vice s'en paye, la flaterie, le maquerelage, la trahison: ce n'est pas merueille si la vertu reçoit et desire moins volontiers cette sorte de monnoye commune, que celle qui luy est propre et particuliere, toute noble et genereuse. Auguste auoit raison d'estre beaucoup plus mesnager et espargnant de cette-cy, que de l'autre: d'autant que l'honneur, c'est vn priuilege qui tire sa principale essence de la rareté: et la vertu mesme.

Cui malus est nemo, quis bonus esse potest? On ne remerque pas pour la recommandation d'vn homme, qu'il ait soin de la nourriture de ses enfans, d'autant que c'est vne action commune, quelque iuste qu'elle soit: non plus qu'vn grand arbre, où la forest est toute de mesmes. Ie ne pense pas qu'aucun citoyen de Sparte se glorifiast de sa vaillance: car c'estoit vne vertu populaire en leur nation: et aussi peu de la fidelité et mespris des richesses. Il n'eschoit pas de recompense à vne vertu, pour grande qu'elle soit, qui est passée en coustume: et ne sçay auec, si nous l'appellerions iamais grande, estant commune.

2.7.4 Puis donc que ces loyers d'honneur, n'ont autre prix et estimation que cette là, que peu de gens en iouyssent, il n'est, pour les aneantir, que d'en faire largesse. Quand il se trouueroit plus d'hommes qu'au temps passé, qui meritassent nostre ordre, il n'en faloit pas pourtant corrompre l'estimation. Et peut aysément aduenir que plus le meritent: car il n'est aucune des vertuz qui s'espande si aysement que la vaillance militaire.

ENGLISH

in credit among us for so long, had no greater advantage than this: that it brought with it no other advantage. That is why there was once no office or position, whatever it might be, to which the nobility aspired with as much desire and eagerness as to the Order, nor any rank that brought more respect and grandeur: virtue more willingly embracing and aspiring to a reward that is purely its own, glorious rather than useful.[2]

For in truth other gifts are not put to so worthy a use, since they are employed on all sorts of occasions. With riches we pay for a valet's service, a courier's diligence, dancing, vaulting, speaking, and the vilest services we receive; indeed vice is paid with them too—flattery, pimping, treachery. It is no wonder if virtue accepts and desires this sort of common coin less willingly than the kind that is proper and peculiar to it, wholly noble and generous. Augustus was right to be much more thrifty and sparing with the latter than with the former, since honor is a privilege that draws its principal essence from rarity—and so does virtue itself.

If no one is bad, who can be good? We do not mention, in praise of a man, that he takes care to bring up his children, because it is a common action, however right it may be—any more than we notice a tall tree where the whole forest is the same. I do not think any citizen of Sparta prided himself on his valor, for it was a common virtue in their nation; and just as little on loyalty and contempt for riches. No reward falls due to a virtue, however great it may be, that has become customary; and I am not sure, besides, that we would ever call it great when it is common.[3]

Since, then, these rewards of honor have no other value and esteem than this, that few people enjoy them, the only way to destroy them is to hand them out freely. Even if there were more men than in times past who deserved our Order, its esteem should not therefore have been corrupted. And it may easily happen that more do deserve it; for there is no virtue that spreads so easily as military valor.

2 Founded by Louis XI in 1469, the Order was conferred so freely during the civil wars that it lost its prestige; Montaigne received it in 1571.
3 Martial, Epigrams XII.82.

FRENCH

Il y en a vne autre vraye, perfaicte et philosophique, dequoy ie ne parle point (et me sers de ce mot, selon nostre vsage) bien plus grande que cette cy, et plus pleine: qui est vne force et asseurance de l'ame, mesprisant également toute sorte de contraires accidens; equable, vniforme et constante, de laquelle la nostre n'est qu'vn bien petit rayon.

2.7.5 L'vsage, l'institution, l'exemple et la coustume, peuuent tout ce qu'elles veulent en l'establissement de celle, dequoy ie parle, et la rendent aysement vulgaire, comme il est tres-aysé à voir par l'experience que nous en donnent nos guerres ciuiles. Et qui nous pourroit ioindre à cette heure, et acharner à vne entreprise commune tout nostre peuple, nous ferions refleurir nostre ancien nom militaire. Il est bien certain, que la recompense de l'ordre ne touchoit pas au temps passé seulement la vaillance, elle regardoit plus loing. Ce n'a iamais esté le payement d'vn valeureux soldat, mais d'vn Capitaine fameux.

La science d'obeïr ne meritoit pas vn loyer si honorable: on y requeroit anciennement vne expertise bellique plus vniuerselle, et qui embrassast la plus part et plus grandes parties d'vn homme militaire, *neque enim eædem militares et imperatoriæ artes sunt*, qui fust encore, outre cela de condition accommodable à vne telle dignité. Mais ie dy, quand plus de gens en seroyent dignes qu'il ne s'en trouuoit autresfois, qu'il ne falloit pas pourtant s'en rendre plus liberal: et eust mieux vallu faillir à n'en estrener pas tous ceux, à qui il estoit deu, que de perdre pour iamais, comme nous venons de faire, l'vsage d'vne inuention si vtile. Aucun homme de cœur ne daigne s'auantager de ce qu'il a de commun auec plusieurs.

Et ceux d'auiourd'huy qui ont moins merité cette recompense, font plus de contenance de la desdaigner, pour se loger par là, au reng de ceux à qui on fait tort d'espandre indignement et auilir cette marque qui leur estoit particulierement deuë.

2.7.6 Or de s'attendre en effaçant et abolissant cette-cy, de pouuoir soudain remettre en credit, et renouueller vne semblable coustume, ce n'est pas entreprinse propre à vne saison si licentieuse et malade, qu'est celle, où nous nous trouuons à present: et en aduiendra que la derniere encourra dés sa naissance, les incommoditez qui viennent de ruiner l'autre. Les regles de la dispensation

ENGLISH

There is another valor, true, perfect and philosophical, of which I am not speaking (and I use this word in our ordinary sense), much greater than this one and fuller: a strength and assurance of the soul, despising equally every kind of adverse accident; even, uniform and constant; of which ours is only a very small ray.

Practice, education, example and custom can do all they wish in establishing the kind I am speaking of, and easily make it common, as is very easy to see from the experience our civil wars give us. And if someone could unite us now and set our whole people fiercely upon a common enterprise, we would make our ancient military name flourish again. It is quite certain that in times past the reward of the Order did not concern valor alone; it looked further. It was never the pay of a valiant soldier, but of a famous captain.

The science of obeying did not deserve so honorable a reward. In former times a more universal military expertise was required for it, one that embraced most of a military man's qualities, and the greatest of them—*for the skills of a soldier and those of a general are not the same*—and the man was also required to be, in addition, of a rank suited to such a dignity. But I say that even if more people were worthy of it than were found in former times, one should not therefore have become more liberal with it; and it would have been better to fail to bestow it on all those to whom it was due than to lose forever, as we have just done, the use of so useful an invention. No man of spirit deigns to pride himself on what he has in common with many.[4]

And those today who have least deserved this reward make the greatest show of disdaining it, so as thereby to place themselves among those who are wronged when this mark, which was particularly due to them, is unworthily scattered about and cheapened.

Now to expect, by effacing and abolishing this order, to be able suddenly to restore a similar custom to credit and renew it is not an undertaking suited to so licentious and sick a season as the one we find ourselves in now; and the result will be that the new one will incur from its birth the drawbacks that have just ruined the other. The

4 Livy, History of Rome XXV.19.

FRENCH

de ce nouuel ordre, auroyent besoing d'estre extremement tendues et contraintes, pour luy donner authorité: et cette saison tumultuaire n'est pas capable d'vne bride courte et reglée. Outre ce qu'auant qu'on luy puisse donner credit, il est besoing qu'on ayt perdu la memoire du premier, et du mespris auquel il est cheut.

2.7.7 Ce lieu pourroit receuoir quelque discours sur la consideration de la vaillance, et difference de cette vertu aux autres: mais Plutarque estant souuent retombé sur ce propos, ie me meslerois pour neant de rapporter icy ce qu'il en dit. Cecy est digne d'estre consideré, que nostre nation donne à la vaillance le premier degré des vertus, comme son nom montre, qui vient de valeur: et qu'à nostre vsage, quand nous disons vn homme qui vaut beaucoup, ou vn homme de bien, au stile de nostre Cour, et de nostre Noblesse, ce n'est à dire autre chose qu'vn vaillant homme: d'vne façon pareille à la Romaine. Car la generale appellation de vertu prend chez eux etymologie de la force.

La forme propre, et seule, et essencielle, de noblesse en France, c'est la vacation militaire. Il est vray-semblable que la premiere vertu qui se soit faict paroistre entre les hommes, et qui a donné aduantage aux vns sur les autres, ç'a esté cette-cy: par laquelle les plus forts et courageux se sont rendus maistres des plus foibles, et ont acquis reng et reputation particuliere: d'où luy est demeuré cet honneur et dignité de langage: ou bien que ces nations estans tres-belliqueuses, ont donné le prix à celle des vertus, qui leur estoit plus familiere, et le plus digne tiltre.

Tout ainsi que nostre passion, et cette fieureuse solicitude que nous auons de la chasteté des femmes, fait aussi qu'vne bonne femme, vne femme de bien, et femme d'honneur et de vertu, ce ne soit en effect à dire autre chose pour nous, qu'vne femme chaste: comme si pour les obliger à ce deuoir, nous mettions à nonchaloir tous les autres, et leur laschions la bride à toute autre faute, pour entrer en composition de leur faire quitter cette-cy.

ENGLISH

rules for dispensing this new order would need to be extremely tight and strict to give it authority; and this tumultuous season is not capable of a short, controlled rein. Besides, before it can be given credit, the memory of the first must be lost, along with the contempt into which it has fallen.[5]

This might be the place for some reasoning on the nature of valor and how this virtue differs from the others; but since Plutarch has often returned to this subject, I would be meddling to no purpose if I repeated here what he says of it. This is worth considering: that our nation gives valor the first rank among the virtues, as its name shows, for it comes from "value"; and that in our usage, when we speak of a man who is worth a great deal, or a man of worth, in the style of our court and our nobility, it means nothing other than a valiant man—in a way similar to the Romans. For with them the general term for virtue takes its etymology from strength.[6]

The proper, sole and essential form of nobility in France is the military profession. It is likely that the first virtue to show itself among men, and to give some the advantage over others, was this one, by which the strongest and most courageous made themselves masters of the weaker and acquired special rank and reputation; whence this honor and dignity of language has remained attached to it. Or else these nations, being very warlike, gave the prize and the worthiest title to the virtue that was most familiar to them.

Just as our passion and the feverish anxiety we have about the chastity of women also brings it about that a good woman, a woman of worth, a woman of honor and virtue, in effect means nothing else to us than a chaste woman: as if, to bind them to this duty, we neglected all the others and gave them free rein for every other fault, striking a bargain to make them give up this one.

5 Henry III founded the Order of the Holy Spirit in 1578.
6 Latin virtus (virtue) derives from vir, "man," and carried the sense of manly strength and courage.

II.8 Of the Affection of Fathers for Their Children

De l'affection des pères aux enfants
Addressed to Madame d'Estissac, this essay argues that fathers should earn their children's love through reason, not hoard their wealth and authority.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
2.8.1	*A Madame d'Estissac.*	*To Madame d'Estissac.*[1]
2.8.2	MADAME, si l'estrangeté ne me sauue, et la nouuelleté, qui ont accoustumé de donner prix aux choses, ie ne sors iamais à mon honneur de cette sotte entreprinse: mais elle est si fantastique, et a vn visage si esloigné de l'vsage commun, que cela luy pourra donner passage. C'est vne humeur melancolique, et vne humeur par consequent tres-ennemie de ma complexion naturelle, produite par le chagrin de la solitude, en laquelle il y a quelques années que ie m'estoy ietté, qui m'a mis premierement en teste cette resuerie de me mesler d'escrire. Et puis me trouuant entierement despourueu et vuide de toute autre matiere, ie me suis presenté moy-mesmes à moy pour argument et pour subiect.	Madam, if strangeness and novelty, which usually give value to things, do not save me, I shall never come out of this foolish undertaking with honor; but it is so fantastic, and has a face so remote from common practice, that this may let it pass. It was a melancholy humor—and therefore a humor very hostile to my natural temperament—produced by the gloom of the solitude into which I had thrown myself some years ago, that first put into my head this daydream of meddling with writing. And then, finding myself entirely unprovided and empty of any other matter, I offered myself to myself as argument and subject.
	C'est le seul liure au monde de son espece, et d'vn dessein farousche et extrauaguant. Il n'y a rien aussi en cette besoigne digne d'estre remerqué que cette bizarrerie: car à vn subiect si vain et si vil, le meilleur ouurier du monde n'eust sçeu donner façon qui merite qu'on en face conte. Or Madame, ayant à m'y pourtraire au vif, i'en eusse oublié vn traict d'importance, si ie n'y eusse representé l'honneur, que i'ay tousiours rendu à vos merites. Et I'ay voulu dire signamment à la teste de ce chapitre, d'autant que parmy vos autres bonnes qualitez, celle de l'amitié que vous auez montrée à vos enfans, tient l'vn des premiers rengs.	It is the only book in the world of its kind, and of a wild and extravagant design. Nor is there anything in this work worth remarking except this oddity; for on so vain and base a subject the best craftsman in the world could not have put a form that deserves to be taken into account. Now, Madam, since I have to portray myself to the life, I would have left out an important feature if I had not represented the honor I have always paid to your merits. And I wanted to say it particularly at the head of this chapter, since among your other good qualities, the love you have shown your children holds one of the first places.
	Qui sçaura l'aage auquel Monsieur d'Estissac vostre mari vous laissa veufue, les grands et honorables partis, qui vous ont esté offerts, autant qu'à Dame de France de vostre condition, la constance et fermeté dequoy vous auez soustenu tant d'années et au trauers de tant d'espineuses difficultez, la charge et conduite de leurs affaires, qui vous ont agitée par tous les coins de France, et vous tiennent encores assiegée, l'heureux acheminement que vous y auez donné, par vostre seule	Whoever knows at what age Monsieur d'Estissac, your husband, left you a widow; the great and honorable matches that have been offered you, as many as to any lady in France of your station; the constancy and firmness with which, for so many years and through so many thorny difficulties, you have sustained the charge and management of their affairs, which have driven you about to every corner of France and still keep you besieged; and

1 Louise de La Béraudière, widow of Louis d'Estissac; her son Charles accompanied Montaigne on his journey to Italy in 1580.

FRENCH

prudence ou bonne Fortune: il dira aisément auec moy, que nous n'auons point d'exemple d'affection maternelle en nostre temps plus exprez que le vostre.

Ie louë Dieu, Madame, qu'elle aye esté si bien employée: car les bonnes esperances que donne de soy Monsieur d'Estissac vostre fils, asseurent assez que quand il sera en aage, vous en tirerez l'obeïssance et reconnoissance d'vn tres-bon enfant.

Mais d'autant qu'à cause de sa puerilité, il n'a peu remerquer les extremes offices qu'il a receu de vous en si grand nombre, ie veux, si ces escrits viennent vn iour à luy tomber, en main, lors que ie n'auray plus ny bouche ny parole qui le puisse dire, qu'il reçoiue de moy ce tesmoignage en toute verité: qui luy sera encore plus vifuement tesmoigné par les bons effects, dequoy si Dieu plaist il se ressentira, qu'il n'est Gentilhomme en France, qui doiue plus à sa mere qu'il fait, et qu'il ne peut donner à l'aduenir plus certaine preuue de sa bonté, et de sa vertu, qu'en vous reconnoissant pour telle.

ENGLISH

the happy progress you have brought them to by your own prudence or good Fortune—will readily say with me that we have no example of maternal affection in our time more striking than yours.

I praise God, Madam, that it has been so well employed; for the good hopes that Monsieur d'Estissac, your son, gives of himself are sufficient assurance that when he comes of age you will receive from him the obedience and gratitude of a very good son.

But since, because of his childhood, he has not been able to notice the extreme services he has received from you in such great number, I want him—if these writings should one day fall into his hands, when I no longer have mouth or speech to say it—to receive this testimony from me in all truth (and it will be borne out still more vividly to him by the good effects he will feel, if it please God): that there is no gentleman in France who owes more to his mother than he does, and that he can give no surer proof in the future of his goodness and his virtue than by acknowledging you as such.

WHY LOVE FLOWS DOWNWARD

Parents love their children more than children love parents, since the giver loves more than the receiver.

FRENCH

2.8.3 S'il y a quelque loy vrayement naturelle, c'est à dire quelque instinct, qui se voye vniuersellement et perpetuellement empreinct aux bestes et en nous, ce qui n'est pas sans controuerse, ie puis dire à mon aduis, qu'apres le soin que chasque animal a de sa conseruation, et de fuir ce qui nuit, l'affection que l'engendrant porte à son engeance, tient le second lieu en ce rang. Et parce que Nature semble nous l'auoir recommandée, regardant à estendre et faire aller auant, les pieces successiues de cette sienne machine: ce n'est pas merueille, si à reculons des enfans aux peres, elle n'est pas si grande. Ioint cette autre consideration Aristotelique: que celuy qui bien faict à quelcun, l'aime mieux, qu'il n'en est aimé.

Et celuy à qui il est deu, aime mieux, que celuy qui doibt: et tout ouurier aime mieux son ouurage, qu'il n'en seroit aimé, si l'ouurage auoit du sentiment: d'autant que nous auons cher, estre, et estre consiste en mouuement et

ENGLISH

If there is any truly natural law, that is to say any instinct seen to be universally and perpetually imprinted in animals and in us (which is not without controversy), I can say, in my opinion, that after the care every animal has for its own preservation and for avoiding what harms it, the affection that the begetter bears its offspring holds second place in this ranking. And because Nature seems to have commended it to us, looking to extend and carry forward the successive pieces of this machine of hers, it is no wonder if, going backward from children to fathers, it is not so great. Add to this another, Aristotelian consideration: that he who does good to someone loves him more than he is loved by him.[2]

And he to whom something is owed loves more than he who owes it; and every craftsman loves his work more than he would be loved by it if the

2 Aristotle, Nicomachean Ethics IX.7.

FRENCH

action. Parquoy chascun est aucunement en son ouurage. Qui bien fait, exerce vne action belle et honneste: qui reçoit, l'exerce vtile seulement. Or l'vtile est de beaucoup moins aimable que l'honneste. L'honneste est stable et permanent, fournissant à celuy qui l'a faict, vne gratification constante. L'vtile se perd et eschappe facilement, et n'en est la memoire ny si fresche ny si douce. Les choses nous sont plus cheres, qui nous ont plus cousté. Et donner, est de plus de coust que le prendre.

2.8.4 Puis qu'il a pleu à Dieu nous doüer de quelque capacité de discours, affin que comme les bestes nous ne fussions pas seruilement assubiectis aux loix communes, ains que nous nous y appliquassions par iugement et liberté volontaire: nous deuons bien prester vn peu à la simple authorité de Nature: mais non pas nous laisser tyranniquement emporter à elle: la seule raison doit auoir la conduite de nos inclinations. I'ay de ma part le goust estrangement mousse à ces propensions, qui sont produites en nous sans l'ordonnance et entremise de nostre iugement.

Comme sur ce subiect, duquel ie parle, ie ne puis receuoir cette passion, dequoy on embrasse les enfans à peine encore naiz, n'ayants ny mouuement en l'ame, ny forme recognoissable au corps, par où ils se puissent rendre aimables: et ne les ay pas souffert volontiers nourrir pres de moy. Vne vraye affection et bien reglée, deuroit naistre, et s'augmenter auec la cognoissance qu'ils nous donnent d'eux; et lors, s'ils le valent, la propension naturelle marchant quant et quant la raison, les cherir d'vne amitié vrayement paternelle; et en iuger de mesme s'ils sont autres, nous rendans tousiours à la raison, nonobstant la force naturelle.

Il en va fort souuent au rebours, et le plus communement nous nous sentons plus esmeuz des trepignemens, ieux et niaiseries pueriles de noz enfans, que nous ne faisons apres, de leurs actions toutes formées: comme si nous les auions aymez pour nostre passe-temps, comme des guenons, non comme des hommes. Et tel fournit bien liberalement de iouëts à leur enfance, qui se trouue resserré à la moindre despence qu'il leur faut estans en aage. Voire il semble que la ialousie que nous auons de les voir paroistre et iouyr du monde, quand nous sommes à mesme de le quitter, nous rende plus espargnans et

ENGLISH

work had feeling, since we hold being dear, and being consists in movement and action. Therefore each man is in some way in his work. He who does good performs a fine and honorable action; he who receives performs only a useful one. Now the useful is much less lovable than the honorable. The honorable is stable and permanent, furnishing the one who did it with a constant gratification. The useful is easily lost and slips away, and its memory is neither so fresh nor so sweet. Things are dearer to us the more they have cost us. And giving costs more than taking.

Since it has pleased God to endow us with some capacity for reasoning, so that we should not, like the animals, be slavishly subjected to the common laws, but should apply ourselves to them by judgment and voluntary freedom, we must indeed yield a little to the simple authority of Nature, but not let ourselves be tyrannically carried away by her: reason alone must have the guidance of our inclinations. For my part, my taste is strangely dull toward those propensities that are produced in us without the command and mediation of our judgment.

So, on the subject I am speaking of, I cannot accept that passion with which people embrace children barely born, who have neither movement in their soul nor recognizable form in their body by which they could make themselves lovable; and I have not willingly allowed them to be nursed near me. A true and well-regulated affection ought to be born and to grow with the knowledge they give us of themselves; and then, if they are worth it, natural propensity marching along with reason, we should cherish them with a truly paternal love; and we should judge likewise if they are otherwise, always submitting to reason in spite of natural force.

It very often goes the other way, and most commonly we feel more moved by the stamping, games and childish silliness of our children than we are later by their fully formed actions—as if we had loved them for our amusement, like monkeys, and not as human beings. And a man who supplies toys very liberally for their childhood turns tightfisted at the slightest expense they need once they are grown. Indeed it seems that the jealousy we feel at seeing them make their appearance and en-

FRENCH

restrains enuers eux. Il nous fasche qu'ils nous marchent sur les talons, comme pour nous solliciter de sortir.

Et si nous auions à craindre cela, puis que l'ordre des choses porte qu'ils ne peuuent, à dire verité, estre, ny viure, qu'aux despens de nostre estre et de nostre vie, nous ne deuions pas nous mesler d'estre peres.

ENGLISH

joy the world, just when we are about to leave it, makes us more sparing and close-fisted with them. It annoys us that they tread on our heels, as if urging us to leave.

And if we had to fear that, since the order of things provides that they cannot, to tell the truth, exist or live except at the expense of our existence and our life, we should not have meddled with being fathers.

SHARING WITH GROWN CHILDREN

Old fathers who hoard their goods drive their sons to despair and even to theft.

FRENCH

2.8.5 Quant à moy, ie treuue que c'est cruauté et iniustice de ne les receuoir au partage et societé de noz biens, et compagnons en l'intelligence de noz affaires domestiques, quand ils en sont capables, et de ne retrancher et resserrer noz commoditez pour pouruoir aux leurs, puis que nous les auons engendrez à cet effect. C'est iniustice de voir qu'vn pere vieil, cassé, et demy-mort, iouysse seul à vn coing du foyer, des biens qui suffiroient à l'auancement et entretien de plusieurs enfans, et qu'il les laisse cependant par faute de moyen, perdre leurs meilleures années, sans se pousser au seruice public, et cognoissance des hommes. On les iecte au desespoir de chercher par quelque voye, pour iniuste qu'elle soit, à prouuoir à leur besoing.

Comme i'ay veu de mon temps, plusieurs ieunes hommes de bonne maison, si addonnez au larcin, que nulle correction les en pouuoit destourner. I'en cognois vn bien apparenté, à qui par la priere d'vn sien frere, tres-honneste et braue Gentil-homme, ie parlay vne fois pour cet effect. Il me respondit et confessa tout rondement, qu'il auoit esté acheminé à cett'ordure, par la rigueur et auarice de son pere; mais qu'à present il y estoit si accoustumé, qu'il ne s'en pouuoit garder. Et lors il venoit d'estre surpris en larrecin des bagues d'vne dame, au leuer de laquelle il s'estoit trouué auec beaucoup d'autres.

Il me fit souuenir du compte que i'auois ouy faire d'vn autre Gentil-homme, si faict et façonné à ce beau mestier, du temps de sa ieunesse, que venant apres à estre maistre de ses biens, deliberé d'abandonner cette trafique, il ne se pouuoit garder pourtant s'il passoit pres d'vne boutique, où il y eust chose, dequoy il eust besoin, de la desrobber, en peine de l'enuoyer payer apres. Et en ay

ENGLISH

As for me, I find it cruel and unjust not to admit them to a share and partnership in our goods, and as companions in the understanding of our domestic affairs when they are capable of it, and not to cut back and restrict our own comforts to provide for theirs, since we begot them for that purpose. It is unjust that an old father, broken and half dead, should enjoy alone, in a corner by the fire, goods that would suffice for the advancement and maintenance of several children, and meanwhile let them, for lack of means, lose their best years without making their way into public service and the knowledge of men. They are driven to the despair of seeking some means, however unjust, to provide for their needs.

So I have seen in my time several young men of good family so given to theft that no correction could turn them from it. I know one, well connected, to whom I once spoke for this purpose at the request of his brother, a very honorable and gallant gentleman. He answered and confessed to me quite frankly that he had been led into this filthy practice by the harshness and avarice of his father, but that now he was so used to it that he could not keep from it. And at that very time he had just been caught stealing the rings of a lady, at whose morning rising he had been present along with many others.

He reminded me of a story I had heard told about another gentleman, so practiced and trained in this fine trade in his youth that when he later came into his property and resolved to give up this traffic, he still could not keep himself, if he passed near a shop where there was something he

FRENCH

veu plusieurs si dressez et duitz à cela, que parmy leurs compagnons mesmes, ils desrobboient ordinairement des choses qu'ils vouloient rendre. Ie suis Gascon, et si n'est vice auquel ie m'entende moins.

Ie le hay vn peu plus par complexion, que ie ne l'accuse par discours: seulement par desir, ie ne soustrais rien à personne. Ce quartier en est à la verité vn peu plus descrié que les autres de la Françoise nation. Si est-ce que nous auons veu de nostre temps à diuerses fois, entre les mains de la Iustice, des hommes de maison, d'autres contrées, conuaincus de plusieurs horribles voleries. Ie crains que de cette desbauche il s'en faille aucunement prendre à ce vice des peres.

2.8.6 Et si on me respond ce que fit vn iour vn Seigneur de bon entendement, qu'il faisoit espargne des richesses, non pour en tirer autre fruict et vsage, que pour se faire honorer et rechercher aux siens; et que l'aage luy ayant osté toutes autres forces, c'estoit le seul remede qui luy restoit pour se maintenir en authorité en sa famille, et pour euiter qu'il ne vinst à mespris et desdain à tout le monde (de vray non la vieillesse seulement, mais toute imbecillité, selon Aristote, est promotrice d'auarice) cela est quelque chose: mais c'est la medecine à vn mal, duquel on deuoit euiter la naissance.

Vn pere est bien miserable, qui ne tient l'affection de ses enfans, que par le besoin qu'ils ont de son secours, si cela se doit nommer affection: il faut se rendre respectable par sa vertu, et par sa suffisance, et aymable par sa bonté et douceur de ses mœurs. Les cendres mesmes d'vne riche matiere, elles ont leur prix: et les os et reliques des personnes d'honneur, nous auons accoustumé de les tenir en respect et reuerence.

Nulle vieillesse peut estre si caducque et si rance, à vn personnage qui a passé en honneur son aage, qu'elle ne soit venerable; et notamment à ses enfans, desquels il faut auoir reglé l'ame à leur deuoir par raison, non par necessité et par le besoin, ny par rudesse et par force. *Et errat longè, mea quidem sententia,*
Qui imperium credat esse grauius aut stabilius,
Vi quod fit, quàm illud quod amicitia adiungitur.

ENGLISH

needed, from stealing it, even though he then took the trouble to send payment for it. And I have seen several so trained and broken to it that even among their own companions they habitually stole things they meant to give back. I am a Gascon, and yet there is no vice I understand less.[3]

I hate it a little more by temperament than I condemn it by reasoning; not even in desire do I take anything from anyone. This region is, truth to tell, a little more decried for it than the other parts of the French nation. And yet in our time we have seen, on various occasions, men of good family from other regions in the hands of justice, convicted of several horrible robberies. I fear that for this depravity we must to some extent blame this vice of the fathers.

And if I am answered as a lord of good understanding once answered me—that he saved up his riches not to get any other fruit or use from them than to make himself honored and sought after by his family; and that, since age had taken away all his other strengths, this was the only remedy left to him to maintain his authority in his household and to avoid falling into contempt and disdain with everyone (indeed, according to Aristotle, not only old age but every weakness promotes avarice)—that is something; but it is the medicine for an ailment whose birth one ought to have prevented.

A father is very wretched who holds his children's affection only through their need of his help—if that can be called affection. One must make oneself respected by one's virtue and ability, and loved by one's kindness and gentleness of manner. Even the ashes of a rich substance have their value; and the bones and relics of honorable persons we are accustomed to hold in respect and reverence.

No old age can be so decrepit and stale, in a man who has spent his life in honor, that it is not venerable; and especially to his children, whose souls he must have trained to their duty by reason, not by necessity and need, nor by harshness and force. *And he is far mistaken, in my opinion at least, who believes that authority is weightier or more stable*

3 Gascons had a proverbial reputation for thieving and boasting.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
		when founded on force than when it is joined by friendship.[4]

AGAINST THE ROD

Montaigne condemns violence in education and recalls how gently he and his daughter were raised.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
2.8.7	I'accuse toute violence en l'education d'vne ame tendre, qu'on dresse pour l'honneur, et la liberté. Il y a ie ne sçay quoi de seruile en la rigueur, et en la contraincte: et tiens que ce qui ne se peut faire par la raison, et par prudence, et addresse, ne se fait iamais par la force. On m'a ainsin esleué: ils disent qu'en tout mon premier aage, ie n'ay tasté des verges qu'à deux coups, et bien mollement. I'ay deu la pareille aux enfans que i'ay eu.	I condemn all violence in the education of a tender soul that is being trained for honor and freedom. There is something servile about rigor and constraint; and I hold that what cannot be done by reason, prudence and skill is never done by force. That is how I was brought up: they say that in all my early years I tasted the rod only twice, and very softly. I owed the same to the children I have had.
	Ils me meurent tous en nourrisse: mais Leonor, vne seule fille qui est eschappée à cette infortune, a attaint six ans et plus, sans qu'on ayt employé à sa conduicte, et pour le chastiement de ses fautes pueriles, l'indulgence de sa mere s'y appliquant aysément, autre chose que parolles, et bien douces. Et quand mon desir y seroit frustré, il est assez d'autres causes ausquelles nous prendre, sans entrer en reproche auec ma discipline, que ie sçay estre iuste et naturelle. I'eusse esté beaucoup plus religieux encores en cela vers des masles, moins nais à seruir, et de condition plus libre: i'eusse aymé à leur grossir le cœur d'ingenuité et de franchise.	They all died on me while at nurse; but Léonor, an only daughter who escaped that misfortune, has reached the age of six and more without anything being used to guide her or to punish her childish faults—her mother's indulgence readily lending itself to this—other than words, and very gentle ones. And even if my hopes were disappointed in this, there are plenty of other causes to blame without finding fault with my method, which I know to be just and natural. I would have been still more scrupulous about this with boys, who are less born to serve and of a freer condition: I would have liked to swell their hearts with candor and frankness.
	Ie n'ay veu autre effect aux verges, sinon de rendre les ames plus lasches, ou plus malitieusement opiniastres.	I have seen no other effect of the rod than to make souls more cowardly, or more maliciously stubborn.
2.8.8	Voulons nous estre aymez de noz enfans? leur voulons nous oster l'occasion de souhaiter nostre mort? (combien que nulle occasion d'vn si horrible souhait, ne peut estre ny iuste ny excusable, *nullum scelus rationem habet*) accommodons leur vie raisonnablement, de ce qui est en nostre puissance. Pour cela, il ne nous faudroit pas marier si ieunes que nostre aage vienne quasi à se confondre auec le leur. Car cet inconuenient nous iette à plusieurs grandes difficultez.	Do we want to be loved by our children? Do we want to take away their reason for wishing us dead? (Although no reason for so horrible a wish can be either just or excusable: *no crime has a reason*.) Let us furnish their lives reasonably with what is in our power. For that, we ought not to marry so young that our age comes almost to merge with theirs. For this drawback throws us into many great difficulties.[5]
	Ie dy specialement à la Noblesse, qui est d'vne condition oysifue, et qui ne vit, comme on dit, que de ses rentes: car ailleurs, où la vie est questuaire, la pluralité et compagnie	I say this especially to the nobility, who are of an idle condition and live, as they say, only on their rents; for elsewhere, where life depends on earn-

4 Terence, The Brothers 65–67.
5 Livy, History of Rome XXVIII.28.

FRENCH

des enfans, c'est vn agencement de mesnage, ce sont autant de nouueaux vtils et instrumens à s'enrichir.

2.8.9 Ie me mariay à trente trois ans, et louë l'opinion de trente cinq, qu'on dit estre d'Aristote. Platon ne veut pas qu'on se marie auant les trente: mais il a raison de se mocquer de ceux qui font les œuures de mariage apres cinquante cinq: et condamne leur engeance indigne d'aliment et de vie. Thales y donna les plus vrayes bornes: qui ieune, respondit à sa mere le pressant de se marier, qu'il n'estoit pas temps: et, deuenu sur l'aage, qu'il n'estoit plus temps. Il faut refuser l'opportunité à toute action importune.

Les anciens Gaulois estimoient à extreme reproche d'auoir eu accointance de femme, auant l'aage de vingt ans: et recommandoient singulierement aux hommes, qui se vouloient dresser pour la guerre, de conseruer bien auant en l'aage leur pucellage; d'autant que les courages s'amollissent et diuertissent par l'accouplage des femmes. *Ma hor congiunto à giouinetta sposa,*
Lieto homai de' figli, era inuilito
Ne gli affetti di padre et di marito. Muleasses Roy de Thunes, celuy que l'Empereur Charles cinquiesme remit en ses Estats, reprochoit la memoire de Mahomet son pere, de sa hantise auec les femmes, l'appellant brode, effeminé, engendreur d'enfants.

L'histoire Grecque remarque de Iecus Tarentin, de Chryso, d'Astylus, de Diopompus, et d'autres, que pour maintenir leurs corps fermes au seruice de la course des ieux Olympiques, de la Palæstrine, et tels exercices, ils se priuerent autant que leur dura ce soing, de toute sorte d'acte Venerien. En certaine contrée des Indes Espagnolles, on ne permettoit aux hommes de se marier, qu'apres quarante ans, et si le permettoit-on aux filles à dix ans.

Vn Gentilhomme qui a trente cinq ans, il n'est pas temps qu'il face place à son fils qui en a vingt: il est luy-mesme au train de paroistre et aux voyages des guerres, et en la cour de son Prince: il a besoin de ses pieces; et en doit certainement faire part, mais telle part, qu'il ne s'oublie pas pour autruy. Et à celuy-là peut seruir iustement cette response que les peres ont ordinairement en la bouche: Ie

ENGLISH

ing, having many children around is a convenience for the household: they are so many new tools and instruments for growing rich.

I married at thirty-three, and I approve of thirty-five, the age said to be Aristotle's opinion. Plato does not want people to marry before thirty; but he is right to mock those who perform the works of marriage after fifty-five, and he condemns their offspring as unworthy of food and life. Thales set the truest limits: when he was young, he answered his mother, who was pressing him to marry, that it was not yet time; and when he was getting on in years, that it was no longer time. One must deny opportunity to every inopportune action.

The ancient Gauls considered it an extreme disgrace to have had intercourse with a woman before the age of twenty, and they particularly recommended to men who wanted to train for war that they keep their virginity until well on in years, since courage is softened and diverted by coupling with women. *But now, joined to a young bride,*
happy at last in his children, he had grown soft
in the affections of father and husband. Muleasses, King of Tunis, the one whom the Emperor Charles V restored to his states, reproached the memory of his father Mahomet for his frequenting of women, calling him a sluggard, spineless, a begetter of children.[6]

Greek history notes of Iccus of Tarentum, of Chryso, of Astylus, of Diopompus and others that, to keep their bodies firm for running in the Olympic Games, for wrestling and such exercises, they deprived themselves of every kind of act of Venus for as long as that concern lasted. In a certain region of the Spanish Indies, men were not allowed to marry until after forty, and yet girls were allowed to at ten.[7]

A gentleman of thirty-five: it is not yet time for him to make way for his son of twenty. He himself is in the midst of making his appearance, on military expeditions and at his Prince's court; he needs his resources. He should certainly share them, but share them in such a way that he does not forget himself for others. And to such a man the reply

6 Tasso, Jerusalem Delivered X.39.
7 Iccus of Tarentum was a celebrated athlete whose continence Plato cites in the Laws.

FRENCH

ENGLISH

ne me veux pas despouiller deuant que de m'aller coucher.

that fathers commonly have on their lips may justly apply: "I don't want to undress before I go to bed."

2.8.10 Mais vn pere atterré d'années et de maux, priué par sa foiblesse et faute de santé, de la commune societé des hommes, il se faict tort, et aux siens, de couuer inutilement vn grand tas de richesses. Il est assez en estat, s'il est sage, pour auoir desir de se despouiller pour se coucher, non pas iusques à la chemise, mais iusques à vne robbe de nuict bien chaude: le reste des pompes, dequoy il n'a plus que faire, il doit en estrener volontiers ceux, à qui par ordonnance naturelle cela doit appartenir. C'est raison qu'il leur en laisse l'vsage, puis que Nature l'en priue: autrement sans doute il y a de la malice et de l'enuie.

But a father crushed by years and ailments, deprived by his weakness and poor health of the common company of men, wrongs himself and his family by uselessly brooding over a great heap of riches. He is in a fit state, if he is wise, to want to undress for bed—not down to his shirt, but down to a good warm nightgown. The rest of the finery, for which he has no further use, he should willingly bestow on those to whom by natural order it ought to belong. It is reasonable that he should leave them the use of it, since Nature deprives him of it; otherwise there is no doubt malice and envy in it.

La plus belle des actions de l'Empereur Charles cinquiesme fut celle-là, à l'imitation d'aucuns anciens de son qualibre, d'auoir sçeu recognoistre que la raison nous commande assez de nous despouiller, quand noz robbes nous chargent et empeschent, et de nous coucher quand les iambes nous faillent. Il resigna ses moyens, grandeur et puissance à son fils, lors qu'il sentit defaillir en soy la fermeté et la force pour conduire les affaires, auec la gloire qu'il y auoit acquise. *Solue senescentem maturè sanus equum, ne / Peccet ad extremùm ridendus, et ilia ducat.*

The finest of the Emperor Charles V's actions was this, in imitation of some ancients of his caliber: that he was able to recognize that reason commands us to undress when our robes weigh on us and hamper us, and to go to bed when our legs fail us. He resigned his wealth, greatness and power to his son when he felt failing in himself the firmness and strength to conduct affairs with the glory he had won in them. *Be sensible and unharness the aging horse in good time, lest / at the end he stumble, a laughingstock, and heave his flanks.*[8]

KNOWING WHEN TO STEP ASIDE

Old men should hand over their affairs in time, as Charles V did.

FRENCH

ENGLISH

2.8.11 Cette faute, de ne se sçauoir recognoistre de bonne heure, et ne sentir l'impuissance et extreme alteration que l'aage apporte naturellement et au corps et à l'ame, qui à mon opinion est esgale, si l'ame n'en a plus de la moitié, a perdu la reputation de la plus part des grands hommes du monde. I'ay veu de mon temps et cognu familierement, des personnages de grande authorité, qu'il estoit bien aisé à voir, estre merueilleusement descheuz de cette ancienne suffisance, que ie cognoissois par la reputation qu'ils en auoient acquise en leurs meilleurs ans. Ie les eusse pour leur honneur volontiers souhaitez retirez en leur maison à leur aise, et deschargez des occupations publiques et guerrieres, qui n'estoient plus pour leurs espaules.

This failing has ruined the reputation of most of the great men of the world: not knowing how to recognize ourselves in good time, and not feeling the impotence and extreme alteration that age naturally brings to both body and soul. In my opinion it affects both equally, unless the soul gets more than half. In my time I have seen, and known intimately, persons of great authority who had plainly fallen a marvelous distance from that former ability which I knew from the reputation they had won in their best years. For their honor's sake I would gladly have wished them retired to their homes at their ease, relieved of public and

8 Charles V abdicated in 1555–1556 in favor of his son Philip II and retired to the monastery of Yuste. The verse is Horace, Epistles I.1.8–9.

FRENCH

ENGLISH

military duties that were no longer for their shoulders.

I'ay autrefois esté priué en la maison d'vn Gentilhomme veuf et fort vieil, d'vne vieillesse toutefois assez verte. Cettuy-cy auoit plusieurs filles à marier, et vn fils desia en aage de paroistre; cela chargeoit sa maison de plusieurs despences et visites estrangeres, à quoy il prenoit peu de plaisir, non seulement pour le soin de l'espargne, mais encore plus, pour auoir, à cause de l'aage, pris vne forme de vie fort esloignée de la nostre.

I was once on intimate terms in the household of a gentleman who was a widower and very old, though his old age was still quite green. He had several daughters to marry off and a son already old enough to make his appearance in the world. This burdened his house with many expenses and with visits from outsiders, which gave him little pleasure. This was not only out of concern for economy, but still more because, on account of his age, he had adopted a way of life very far removed from ours.

Ie luy dy vn iour vn peu hardiment, comme i'ay accoustumé, qu'il luy sieroit mieux de nous faire place, et de laisser à son fils sa maison principale, car il n'auoit que celle-là de bien logée et accommodée, et se retirer en vne sienne terre voisine, où personne n'apporteroit incommodité à son repos, puis qu'il ne pouuoit autrement euiter nostre importunité, veu la condition de ses enfans. Il m'en creut depuis, et s'en trouua bien.

One day, a little boldly, as is my habit, I told him it would become him better to make way for us. He should leave his main house to his son, for it was the only one he had that was well built and well furnished, and retire to an estate of his nearby, where no one would disturb his repose. Given his children's situation, he could not otherwise escape our importunity. He took my advice afterward, and was the better for it.

2.8.12 Ce n'est pas à dire qu'on leur donne, par telle voye d'obligation, de laquelle on ne se puisse plus desdire: ie leur lairrois, moy qui suis à mesme de iouer ce rolle, la iouyssance de ma maison et de mes biens, mais auec liberté de m'en repentir, s'ils m'en donnoyent occasion: ie leur en lairrois l'vsage, par ce qu'il ne me seroit plus commode. Et de l'authorité des affaires en gros, ie m'en reseruerois autant qu'il me plairoit.

This is not to say that we should give to them by a binding deed that we could never go back on. I am in a position to play this part myself. I would leave them the enjoyment of my house and my property, but with the freedom to repent of it if they gave me cause. I would leave them the use of it because it was no longer convenient for me. And of authority over affairs in general, I would keep as much for myself as I pleased.

Ayant tousiours iugé que ce doit estre vn grand contentement à vn pere vieil, de mettre luy-mesme ses enfans en train du gouuernement de ses affaires, et de pouuoir pendant sa vie contreroller leurs deportemens: leur fournissant d'instruction et d'aduis suyuant l'experience qu'il en a, et d'acheminer luy mesme l'ancien honneur et ordre de sa maison en la main de ses successeurs, et se respondre par là, des esperances qu'il peut prendre de leur conduicte à venir. Et pour cet effect, ie ne voudrois pas fuir leur compagnie, ie voudrois les esclairer de pres, et iouyr selon la condition de mon aage, de leur allegresse, et de leurs festes.

For I have always judged that it must be a great satisfaction for an old father to set his children on the way to managing his affairs himself, and to be able to oversee their conduct during his lifetime. He can furnish them with instruction and advice from his own experience. He can hand on the ancient honor and order of his house into the hands of his successors himself, and so assure himself of the hopes he may place in their future conduct. And to that end I would not shun their company. I would want to watch over them from close by, and to enjoy their gaiety and their festivities, as far as my age allowed.

Si ie ne viuoy parmy eux (comme ie ne pourroy sans offencer leur assemblée par le chagrin de mon aage, et l'obligation de mes maladies, et sans contraindre aussi et forcer les regles et façons de viure que i'auroy lors) ie

Perhaps I could not live among them without spoiling their gatherings with the moroseness of my age and the constraints of my illnesses, and without also forcing and bending the rules and

FRENCH

voudroy au moins viure pres d'eux en vn quartier de ma maison, non pas le plus en parade, mais le plus en commodité. Non comme ie vy il y a quelques années, vn Doyen de S.

Hilaire de Poictiers, rendu à telle solitude par l'incommodité de sa melancholie, que lors que i'entray en sa chambre, il y auoit vingt deux ans, qu'il n'en estoit sorty vn seul pas; et si auoit toutes ses actions libres et aysées, sauf vn reume qui luy tomboit sur l'estomac. A peine vne fois la sepmaine, vouloit-il permettre qu'aucun entrast pour le voir. Il se tenoit tousiours enfermé par le dedans de sa chambre seul, sauf qu'vn valet luy portoit vne fois le iour à manger, qui ne faisoit qu'entrer et sortir. Son occupation estoit se promener, et lire quelque liure, car il cognoissoit aucunement les lettres, obstiné au demeurant de mourir en cette desmarche, comme il fit bien tost apres.

I'essayeroy par vne douce conuersation, de nourrir en mes enfans vne viue amitié et bien-vueillance non feinte en mon endroict. Ce qu'on gaigne aisément enuers des natures bien nées: car si ce sont bestes furieuses, comme nostre siecle en produit à miliers, il les faut hayr et fuyr pour telles.

2.8.13 Ie veux mal à cette coustume, d'interdire aux enfants l'appellation paternelle, et leur en enioindre vn' estrangere, comme plus reuerentiale: Nature n'aiant volontiers pas suffisamment pourueu à nostre authorité. Nous appellons Dieu tout-puissant, pere, et desdaignons que noz enfants nous en appellent. I'ay reformé cett' erreur en ma famille. C'est aussi folie et iniustice de priuer les enfans qui sont en aage, de la familiarité des peres, et vouloir maintenir en leur endroit vne morgue austere et desdaigneuse, esperant par là, les tenir en crainte et obeissance. Car c'est vne farce tres-inutile, qui rend les peres ennuieux aux enfans, et qui pis est, ridicules.

Ils ont la ieunesse et les forces en la main, et par consequent le vent et la faueur du monde; et reçoiuent auecques mocquerie, ces mines fieres et tyranniques, d'vn homme qui n'a plus de sang, ny au cœur, ny aux veines: vrais espouuantails de cheneuiere. Quand ie pourroy me faire craindre, i'aimeroy encore mieux me faire aymer. Il y a tant de sortes de deffauts en la vieillesse, tant d'impuissance, elle est si propre au mespris, que le meilleur acquest qu'elle puisse faire, c'est

ENGLISH

ways of living I would then have. If so, I would at least want to live near them, in a part of my house —not the showiest, but the most comfortable. Not as I saw, some years ago, a Dean of Saint

Hilary's at Poitiers, reduced to such solitude by the burden of his melancholy that when I entered his room, he had not taken a single step out of it for twenty-two years. And yet all his movements were free and easy, except for a catarrh that settled on his stomach. Barely once a week would he allow anyone to come in to see him. He always kept himself shut up alone in his room, locked from the inside, except that once a day a valet brought him his food, and the valet did nothing but come in and go out. His occupation was walking up and down and reading some book, for he had some acquaintance with letters. For the rest, he was determined to die in this way of life, as he did soon after.

I would try, by gentle conversation, to foster in my children a lively affection and an unfeigned goodwill toward me. That is easily won with well-born natures. For if they are raging beasts, such as our age produces by the thousands, they must be hated and shunned as such.

I dislike the custom of forbidding children to call their fathers "father" and requiring them to use some other title, as being more respectful—as if Nature had not sufficiently provided for our authority. We call Almighty God father, and we disdain to have our children call us so. I have reformed this error in my family. It is also folly and injustice to deprive grown children of familiarity with their fathers, and to try to keep up a stern and disdainful haughtiness toward them, hoping thereby to keep them in fear and obedience. For it is a quite useless farce, which makes fathers irksome to their children and, what is worse, ridiculous.

They have youth and strength in their hands, and consequently the wind and favor of the world. And they greet with mockery these proud and tyrannical airs of a man who has no blood left either in his heart or in his veins—real scarecrows in a hemp field. Even if I could make myself feared, I would still rather make myself loved. There are so many kinds of defects in old age, so much impotence, and it is so liable to contempt, that the best

FRENCH	ENGLISH
l'affection et amour des siens: le commandement et la crainte, ce ne sont plus ses armes.	acquisition it can make is the affection and love of its own people. Command and fear are no longer its weapons.

THE DECEIVED OLD MASTER

An imperious old man believes he rules his house while everyone cheats him.

FRENCH	ENGLISH
2.8.14 I'en ay veu quelqu'vn, duquel la ieunesse auoit esté tres-imperieuse, quand c'est venu sur l'aage, quoy qu'il le passe sainement ce qu'il se peut, il frappe, il mord, il iure, le plus tempestatif maistre de France, il se ronge de soing et de vigilance, tout cela n'est qu'vn bastelage, auquel la famille mesme complotte: du grenier, du celier, voire et de sa bource, d'autres ont la meilleure part de l'vsage, cependant qu'il en a les clefs en sa gibbessiere, plus cherement que ses yeux. Cependant qu'il se contente de l'espargne et chicheté de sa table, tout est en desbauche en diuers reduits de sa maison, en ieu, et en despence, et en l'entretien des comptes de sa vaine cholere et prouuoyance.	I have seen one man whose youth had been very imperious. Now that he has come to old age, though he is getting through it as healthily as anyone can, he strikes, he bites, he swears—the most tempestuous master in France. He eats himself up with worry and vigilance. All of it is mere play-acting, and his own household is in on the plot. Others have the best part of the use of the granary, the cellar, and even his purse, while he keeps the keys in his pouch, dearer to him than his eyes. While he contents himself with a thrifty and stingy table, there is debauchery going on in various corners of his house—gambling, spending, and swapping tales of his futile anger and precautions.
Chacun est en sentinelle contre luy. Si par fortune quelque chetif seruiteur s'y addonne, soudain il luy est mis en soupçon: qualité à laquelle la vieillesse mord si volontiers de soy-mesme. Quantes fois s'est-il vanté à moy, de la bride qu'il donnoit aux siens, et exacte obeïssance et reuerence qu'il en receuoit; combien il voyoit clair en ses affaires! *Ille solus nescit omnia.* Ie ne sçache homme qui peust apporter plus de parties et naturelles et acquises, propres à conseruer la maistrise, qu'il faict, et si en est descheu comme vn enfant. Partant l'ay-ie choisi parmy plusieurs telles conditions que ie cognois, comme plus exemplaire. Ce seroit matiere à vne question scholastique, s'il est ainsi mieux, ou autrement. En presence, toutes choses luy cedent.	Everyone keeps watch against him. If by chance some wretched servant becomes devoted to him, that servant is at once made suspect in his eyes—and suspicion is a trait old age is all too ready to bite at of its own accord. How many times has he boasted to me of the tight rein he kept on his people, the exact obedience and reverence he received from them, and how clearly he saw into his affairs! *He alone knows nothing of it all.* I know of no man who could bring more qualities, natural and acquired, suited to keeping mastery than he does, and yet he has lost it like a child. That is why I have chosen him, among several such situations that I know, as the most instructive example. Whether he is better off this way or otherwise would make a matter for a scholastic debate. In his presence, everything gives way to him.[9]
Et laisse-on ce vain cours à son authorité, qu'on ne luy resiste iamais. On le croit, on le craint, on le respecte tout son saoul. Donne-il congé à vn valet? il plie son pacquet, le voila party: mais hors de deuant luy seulement. Les pas de la vieillesse sont si lents, les sens si troubles, qu'il viura et fera son office en mesme maison, vn an, sans estre apperceu. Et quand la saison en est, on faict venir des lettres lointaines, piteuses, suppliantes, pleines de	They let his authority run its empty course so far that no one ever resists him. He is believed, he is feared, he is respected to his heart's content. Does he dismiss a valet? The man packs his bundle, and off he goes—but only out of his sight. The steps of old age are so slow and its senses so dim that the man will live in the same house and do his job for a year without being noticed. And when the time

9 Terence, The Brothers (Adelphoe).

FRENCH

promesse de mieux faire, par où on le remet en grace. Monsieur fait-il quelque marché ou quelque depesche, qui desplaise? on la supprime: forgeant tantost apres, assez de causes, pour excuser la faute d'execution ou de response.

Nulles lettres estrangeres ne luy estants premierement apportées, il ne void que celles qui semblent commodes à sa science. Si par cas d'aduanture il les saisit, ayant en coustume de se reposer sur certaine personne, de les luy lire, on y trouue sur le champ ce qu'on veut: et faict-on à tous coups que tel luy demande pardon, qui l'iniurie par sa lettre. Il ne void en fin affaires, que par vne image disposée et desseignée et satisfactoire le plus qu'on peut, pour n'esueiller son chagrin et son courroux. I'ay veu souz des figures differentes, assez d'œconomies longues, constantes, de tout pareil effect.

2.8.15 Il est tousiours procliue aux femmes de disconuenir à leurs maris. Elles saisissent à deux mains toutes couuertures de leur contraster: la premiere excuse leur sert de pleniere iustification. I'en ay veu, qui desrobboit gros à son mary, pour, disoit-elle à son confesseur, faire ses aulmosnes plus grasses. Fiez vous à cette religieuse dispensation. Nul maniement leur semble auoir assez de dignité, s'il vient de la concession du mary. Il faut qu'elles l'vsurpent ou finement ou fierement, et tousiours iniurieusement, pour luy donner de la grace et de l'authorité.

Comme en mon propos, quand c'est contre vn pauure vieillard, et pour des enfants, lors empoignent elles ce tiltre, et en seruent leur passion, auec gloire: et comme en vn commun seruage, monopolent facilement contre sa domination et gouuernement. Si ce sont masles, grands et fleurissans, ils subornent aussi incontinent ou par force, ou par faueur, et maistre d'hostel et receueur, et tout le reste. Ceux qui n'ont ny femme ny fils, tombent en ce malheur plus difficilement, mais plus cruellement aussi et indignement. Le vieil Caton disoit en son temps, qu'autant de valets, autant d'ennemis. Voyez si selon la distance de la pureté de son siecle au nostre, il ne nous a pas voulu aduertir, que femme, fils, et valet, autant d'ennemis à nous.

ENGLISH

is ripe, letters are made to arrive from far away, pitiful and pleading, full of promises to do better, and by this means he is restored to favor. Does Monsieur make some bargain or send some dispatch that others dislike? It is suppressed, and soon afterward enough reasons are forged to excuse the failure to carry it out or to reply.

Since no letters from outside are brought to him first, he sees only those that seem convenient for him to know about. If by some chance he gets hold of them, he is in the habit of relying on a certain person to read them to him, and that person finds in them on the spot whatever is wanted. Time and again they make a man beg his pardon who is insulting him in his letter. In short, he sees his affairs only through an image that has been arranged, designed, and made as satisfying as possible, so as not to stir up his ill humor and his wrath. Under different guises, I have seen plenty of households, long-lasting and steady, run with exactly the same result.

Women are always inclined to be at odds with their husbands. They seize with both hands every pretext for opposing them, and the first excuse serves them as full justification. I knew one who robbed her husband heavily so that, as she told her confessor, she could make her alms more generous. Trust that pious dispensation! No management seems to them to have enough dignity if it comes as a grant from the husband. They must usurp it, either craftily or boldly, and always wrongfully, to give it grace and authority.

This is what happens in the case I am speaking of. When it is against a poor old man and on behalf of the children, they seize on that title and serve their passion with it, and pride themselves on it. As if in a common servitude, they readily conspire against his rule and government. If the children are sons, grown and flourishing, they too promptly suborn the steward, the receiver, and all the rest, by force or by favor. Those who have neither wife nor son fall into this misfortune less easily, but also more cruelly and shamefully. Old Cato said in his day: so many servants, so many enemies. Consider the distance between the purity of his age and ours, and see whether he did not mean to warn us that wife, son, and servant are so many enemies to us.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
	Bien sert à la decrepitude de nous fournir le doux benefice d'inapperceuance et d'ignorance, et facilité à nous laisser tromper. Si nous y mordions, que seroit-ce de nous; mesme en ce temps, où les Iuges qui ont à decider noz controuerses, sont communément partisans de l'enfance et interessez?	Decrepitude does us a service by supplying the sweet benefit of not noticing and not knowing, and the ease with which we let ourselves be deceived. If we took it to heart, what would become of us? Especially in these times, when the judges who have to settle our disputes are commonly partisans of the young, and interested ones.
2.8.16	Au cas que cette pipperie m'eschappe à voir, aumoins ne m'eschappe-il pas, à voir que ie suis tres-pippable. Et aura-on iamais assez dit, de quel prix est vn amy, à comparaison de ces liaisons ciuiles? L'image mesme, que i'en voy aux bestes, si pure, auec quelle religion ie la respecte! Si les autres me pippent, au moins ne me pippe-ie pas moy-mesme à m'estimer capable de m'en garder: ny à me ronger la ceruelle pour m'en rendre. Ie me sauue de telles trahisons en mon propre giron, non par vne inquiete et tumultuaire curiosité, mais par diuersion plustost, et resolution. Quand i'oy reciter l'estat de quelqu'vn, ie ne m'amuse pas à luy: ie tourne incontinent les yeux à moy, voir comment i'en suis.	If I fail to see this cheating, at least I do not fail to see that I am very easy to cheat. And can anyone ever say enough about the value of a friend, compared with these civil ties? Even the image of friendship that I see in animals, so pure—with what reverence I respect it! If others cheat me, at least I do not cheat myself into thinking I can guard against it, nor rack my brains to make myself able to. I save myself from such betrayals in my own bosom, not by an anxious and turbulent curiosity, but rather by diversion and resolution. When I hear someone's situation described, I do not dwell on him; I immediately turn my eyes on myself, to see how I stand.
	Tout ce qui le touche me regarde. Son accident m'aduertit et m'esueille de ce costé-là. Tous les iours et à toutes heures, nous disons d'vn autre ce que nous dirions plus proprement de nous, si nous sçauions replier aussi bien qu'estendre nostre consideration. Et plusieurs autheurs blessent en cette maniere la protection de leur cause, courant en auant temerairement à l'encontre de celle qu'ils attaquent, et lanceant à leurs ennemis des traits, propres à leur estre relancez plus auantageusement.	Everything that touches him concerns me. His misfortune warns me and puts me on my guard on that side. Every day and at every hour we say of another what we could more properly say of ourselves, if we knew how to turn our attention back on ourselves as well as to extend it outward. And many authors harm the defense of their own cause in this way. They charge rashly forward against the cause they attack, and hurl at their enemies darts that could be hurled back at them to better effect.
2.8.17	Feu M. le Mareschal de Monluc, ayant perdu son filz, qui mourut en l'Isle de Maderes, braue Gentil-homme à la verité et de grande esperance, me faisoit fort valoir entre ses autres regrets, le desplaisir et creue-cœur qu'il sentoit de ne s'estre iamais communiqué à luy: et sur cette humeur d'vne grauité et grimace paternelle, auoir perdu la commodité de gouster et bien cognoistre son filz; et aussi de luy declarer l'extreme amitié qu'il luy portoit, et le digne iugement qu'il faisoit de sa vertu. Et ce pauure garçon, disoit-il, n'a rien veu de moy qu'vne contenance refroignée et pleine de mespris, et a emporté cette creance, que ie n'ay sçeu ny l'aimer ny l'estimer selon son merite.	The late Marshal de Monluc had lost his son, who died on the island of Madeira, truly a brave gentleman and of great promise. Among his other regrets, he stressed to me the sorrow and heartbreak he felt at never having opened himself to him. Through that humor of paternal gravity and grimace, he had lost the chance of enjoying and truly knowing his son, and also of telling him of the extreme affection he bore him and the high opinion he had of his virtue. "And that poor boy," he said, "saw nothing of me but a scowling face full of contempt, and has carried away the belief that I could neither love him nor esteem him as he deserved."[10]

10 Blaise de Monluc (c. 1500–1577), marshal of France and author of memoirs; his son Pierre-Bertrand died on Madeira in 1566.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
	A qui gardoy-ie à descouurir cette singuliere affection que ie luy portoy dans mon ame? estoit-ce pas luy qui en deuoit auoir tout le plaisir et toute l'obligation? Ie me suis contraint et gehenné pour maintenir ce vain masque: et y ay perdu le plaisir de sa conuersation, et sa volonté quant et quant, qu'il ne me peut auoir portée autre que bien froide, n'ayant iamais receu de moy que rudesse, ny senti qu'vne façon tyrannique. Ie trouue que cette plainte estoit bien prise et raisonnable.	"Whom was I saving it for, the revealing of that singular affection I bore him in my soul? Was it not he who should have had all the pleasure of it and all the obligation? I constrained and tormented myself to keep up this empty mask. In doing so I lost the pleasure of his company, and with it his goodwill, which can only have been very cold toward me, since he never received anything from me but harshness, nor felt anything but a tyrannical manner." I find that this complaint was well taken and reasonable.
	Car comme ie sçay par vne trop certaine experience, il n'est aucune si douce consolation en la perte de noz amis, que celle que nous apporte la science de n'auoir rien oublié à leur dire, et d'auoir eu auec eux vne parfaite et entiere communication. O mon amy! En vaux-ie mieux d'en auoir le goust, ou si i'en vaux moins? i'en vaux certes bien mieux. Son regret me console et m'honnore. Est-ce pas vn pieux et plaisant office de ma vie, d'en faire à tout iamais les obseques? Est-il iouyssance qui vaille cette priuation?	For, as I know by an all too certain experience, there is no consolation so sweet in the loss of our friends as the knowledge that we left nothing unsaid to them, and that we had a perfect and complete communication with them. O my friend! Am I the better for having had the taste of it, or am I the worse? I am certainly much the better. My grief for him consoles me and honors me. Is it not a pious and pleasant duty of my life to keep up his funeral rites forever? Is there any enjoyment worth this loss?[11]
2.8.18	Ie m'ouure aux miens tant que ie puis, et leur signifie tres-volontiers l'estat de ma volonté, et de mon iugement enuers eux, comme enuers vn chacun: ie me haste de me produire, et de me presenter: car ie ne veux pas qu'on s'y mesconte, à quelque part que ce soit. Entre autres coustumes particulieres qu'auoient noz anciens Gaulois, à ce que dit Cæsar, cette-cy en estoit l'vne, que les enfans ne se presentoyent aux peres, ny s'osoyent trouuer en public en leur compagnie, que lors qu'ils commençoyent à porter les armes; comme s'ils vouloyent dire que lors il estoit aussi saison, que les peres les receussent en leur familiarité et accointance.	I open myself to my family as much as I can, and very willingly let them know the state of my will and of my judgment toward them, as toward everyone. I hasten to bring myself forward and present myself, for I do not want anyone to be mistaken about me in any respect. Caesar tells us that our ancient Gauls had several customs of their own, and this was one of them: children did not present themselves to their fathers, nor dare appear in public in their company, until they began to bear arms. It was as if they meant that this was also the time for fathers to admit them into their familiarity and acquaintance.[12]

WILLS AND WIDOWS

Fathers should not leave everything to their wives, and estates should follow the custom of the country.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
2.8.19	I'ay veu encore vne autre sorte d'indiscretion en aucuns peres de mon temps, qui ne se contentent pas d'auoir priué pendant leur longue vie, leurs enfans de la part qu'ils deuoient auoir naturellement en leurs fortunes, mais laissent encore apres eux, à leurs femmes cette	I have seen yet another kind of indiscretion in some fathers of my time. They are not content to have deprived their children, throughout their own long lives, of the share they should naturally have had in their fortunes. They also leave this

11 Montaigne's friend Étienne de La Boétie, who died in 1563.
12 Caesar, The Gallic War, VI.18.

FRENCH

mesme authorité sur tous leurs biens, et loy d'en disposer à leur fantasie. Et ay cognu tel Seigneur des premiers officiers de nostre Couronne, ayant par esperance de droit à venir, plus de cinquante mille escus de rente, qui est mort necessiteux et accablé de debtes, aagé de plus de cinquante ans, sa mere en son extreme decrepitude, iouyssant encore de tous ses biens par l'ordonnance du pere, qui auoit de sa part vescu pres de quatre vingts ans.

Cela ne me semble aucunement raisonnable. Pourtant trouue-ie peu d'aduancement à vn homme de qui les affaires se portent bien, d'aller chercher vne femme qui le charge d'vn grand dot; il n'est point de debte estrangere qui apporte plus de ruyne aux maisons: mes predecesseurs ont communement suyui ce conseil bien à propos, et moy aussi. Mais ceux qui nous desconseillent les femmes riches, de peur qu'elles soyent moins traictables et recognoissantes, se trompent, de faire perdre quelque reelle commodité, pour vne si friuole coniecture. A vne femme desraisonnable, il ne couste non plus de passer par dessus vne raison, que par dessus vne autre. Elles s'ayment le mieux où elles ont plus de tort.

L'iniustice les alleche: comme les bonnes, l'honneur de leurs actions vertueuses: et en sont debonnaires d'autant plus, qu'elles sont plus riches: comme plus volontiers et glorieusement chastes, de ce qu'elles sont belles.

2.8.20 C'est raison de laisser l'administration des affaires aux meres pendant que les enfans ne sont pas en l'aage selon les loix pour en manier la charge: mais le pere les a bien mal nourris, s'il ne peut esperer qu'en leur maturité, ils auront plus de sagesse et de suffisance que sa femme, veu l'ordinaire foiblesse du sexe. Bien seroit-il toutesfois à la verité plus contre Nature, de faire despendre les meres de la discretion de leurs enfans. On leur doit donner largement, dequoy maintenir leur estat selon la condition de leur maison et de leur aage, d'autant que la necessité et l'indigence est beaucoup plus mal seante et mal-aisée à supporter à elles qu'aux masles: il faut plustost en charger les enfans que la mere.

2.8.21 En general, la plus saine distribution de noz biens en mourant, me semble estre, les laisser distribuer à l'vsage du païs. Les loix y ont mieux pensé que nous: et vaut mieux les laisser faillir en leur eslection, que de nous hazarder de faillir temerairement en la nostre. Ils ne sont

ENGLISH

same authority over all their property to their wives after them, with the right to dispose of it as they fancy. I knew a certain lord, one of the first officers of our Crown, who had expectations of inheriting more than fifty thousand crowns a year in income. Yet he died needy and buried in debt at more than fifty years of age. His mother, in her extreme decrepitude, still enjoyed all the property by the father's will—and the father had himself lived nearly eighty years.

That does not seem reasonable to me in any way. So I see little advantage for a man whose affairs are going well in seeking a wife who burdens him with a large dowry; no outside debt brings more ruin to families. My forebears commonly followed this advice, very wisely, and so have I. But those who advise us against rich wives, for fear that they may be less tractable and grateful, are mistaken. They make us lose a real advantage for the sake of so frivolous a conjecture. For an unreasonable woman, it costs no more to override one reason than another. Such women like themselves best where they are most in the wrong.

Injustice entices them, as the honor of their virtuous actions entices good women. And good women are the more gracious the richer they are, just as they are chaste more willingly and proudly for being beautiful.

It is reasonable to leave the administration of affairs to mothers while the children are not of legal age to take on the charge. But the father has brought them up very badly if he cannot hope that in their maturity they will have more wisdom and ability than his wife, given the ordinary weakness of the sex. Yet it would truly be more against Nature to make mothers depend on the discretion of their children. They should be given generously the means to keep up their station according to the rank of their house and their age. Need and want are much more unbecoming to them, and much harder for them to bear, than for men. The burden should rather be put on the children than on the mother.

In general, the soundest way of distributing our goods at death seems to me to be to let them be distributed according to the custom of the country. The laws have thought about it better than we have, and it is better to let them err in their choice

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
	pas proprement nostres, puis que d'vne prescription ciuile et sans nous, ils sont destinez à certains successeurs. Et encore que nous ayons quelque liberté audelà, ie tien qu'il faut vne grande cause et bien apparente pour nous faire oster à vn, ce que sa Fortune luy auoit acquis, et à quoy la iustice commune l'appelloit: et que c'est abuser contre raison de cette liberté, d'en seruir noz fantasies friuoles et priuées.	than to risk erring rashly in ours. These goods are not properly ours, since by civil prescription, and without us, they are destined for certain heirs. And although we have some freedom beyond that, I hold that it takes a great and very evident cause to make us take away from someone what his fortune had won for him and what common justice called him to. It is an unreasonable abuse of that freedom to make it serve our frivolous and private fancies.
	Mon sort m'a faict grace, de ne m'auoir presenté des occasions qui me peussent tenter, et diuertir mon affection de la commune et legitime ordonnance. I'en voy, enuers qui c'est temps perdu d'employer vn long soin de bons offices. Vn mot receu de mauuais biais efface le merite de dix ans. Heureux, qui se trouue à point, pour leur oindre la volonté sur ce dernier passage. La voisine action l'emporte, non pas les meilleurs et plus frequents offices, mais les plus recents et presents font l'operation. Ce sont gents qui se iouent de leurs testaments, comme de pommes ou de verges, à gratifier ou chastier chaque action de ceux qui y pretendent interest.	My lot has done me the favor of not presenting me with occasions that might tempt me and divert my affection from the common and lawful order. I see some people with whom it is a waste of time to spend long care on good offices. One word taken the wrong way wipes out the merit of ten years. Happy the man who is on hand at the right moment to anoint their will at that last passage! The latest act carries the day. Not the best and most frequent services, but the most recent and present ones do the trick. These are people who play with their wills as with apples or rods, to reward or punish every action of those who claim an interest in them.
	C'est chose de trop longue suitte, et de trop de poids, pour estre ainsi promenée à chasque instant: et en laquelle les sages se plantent vne fois pour toutes, regardans sur tout à la raison et obseruance publique.	It is a matter of too long consequence and too much weight to be carried about like this at every moment. Wise men take their stand on it once and for all, looking above all to reason and public custom.
2.8.22	Nous prenons vn peu trop à cœur ces substitutions masculines: et proposons vne eternité ridicule à noz noms. Nous poisons aussi trop les vaines coniectures de l'aduenir, que nous donnent les esprits puerils. A l'aduenture eust on faict iniustice, de me deplacer de mon rang, pour auoir esté le plus lourd et plombé, le plus long et desgousté en ma leçon, non seulement que tous mes freres, mais que tous les enfans de ma prouince: soit leçon d'exercice d'esprit, soit leçon d'exercice de corps. C'est follie de faire des triages extraordinaires, sur la foy de ces diuinations, ausquelles nous sommes si souuent trompez.	We take these entails in the male line a little too much to heart, and propose a ridiculous eternity for our names. We also give too much weight to the vain conjectures about the future that children's minds give us. It might have been an injustice to displace me from my rank for having been the dullest and most leaden, the slowest and most unwilling at my lessons. I was worse not only than all my brothers but than all the children in my province, whether the lessons were exercises of the mind or exercises of the body. It is folly to make extraordinary selections on the strength of such divinations, in which we are so often deceived.[13]
	Si on peut blesser cette regle, et corriger les destinées aux chois qu'elles ont faict de noz heritiers, on le peut auec plus d'apparence, en consideration de quelque	If this rule may be broken, and the destinies corrected in their choice of our heirs, there is more reason for doing so on account of some remark-

13 Entails ("substitutions") were legal settlements binding an estate to pass down a fixed line of heirs, usually male.

FRENCH

remarquable et enorme difformité corporelle: vice constant inamandable: et selon nous, grands estimateurs de la beauté, d'important preiudice.

2.8.23 Le plaisant dialogue du legislateur de Platon, auec ses citoyens, fera honneur à ce passage. Comment donc, disent ils sentans leur fin prochaine, ne pourrons nous point disposer de ce qui est à nous, à qui il nous plaira? O Dieux, quelle cruauté! Qu'il ne nous soit loisible, selon que les nostres nous auront seruy en noz maladies, en nostre vieillesse, en noz affaires, de leur donner plus et moins selon noz fantasies! A quoy le legislateur respond en cette maniere: Mes amis, qui auez sans doubte bien tost à mourir, il est mal-aisé, et que vous vous cognoissiez, et que vous cognoissiez ce qui est à vous, suiuant l'inscription Delphique.

Moy, qui fay les loix, tien, que ny vous n'estes à vous, ny n'est à vous ce que vous iouyssez. Et voz biens et vous, estes à vostre famille tant passée que future: mais encore plus sont au public, et vostre famille et voz biens. Parquoy de peur que quelque flatteur en vostre vieillesse ou en vostre maladie, ou quelque passion vous sollicite mal à propos, de faire testament iniuste, ie vous en garderay. Mais ayant respect et à l'interest vniuersel de la cité, et à celuy de vostre maison, i'establiray des loix, et feray sentir, comme de raison, que la commodité particuliere doit ceder à la commune. Allez vous en ioyeusement où la necessité humaine vous appelle.

C'est à moy, qui ne regarde pas l'vne chose plus que l'autre, qui autant que ie puis, me soingne du general, d'auoir soucy de ce que vous laissez.

2.8.24 Reuenant à mon propos, il me semble en toutes façons, qu'il naist rarement des femmes à qui la maistrise soit deuë sur des hommes, sauf la maternelle et naturelle: si ce n'est pour le chastiment de ceux, qui par quelque humeur fiebureuse, se sont volontairement soubsmis à elles: mais cela ne touche aucunement les vieilles, dequoy nous parlons icy. C'est l'apparence de cette consideration, qui nous a faict forger et donner pied si volontiers, à cette loy, que nul ne veit onques, qui priue les femmes de la succession de cette couronne: et n'est guere Seigneurie au monde, où elle ne s'allegue, comme icy, par vne vray-semblance de raison qui l'authorise: mais la Fortune luy a donné plus de credit en certains lieux qu'aux autres.

ENGLISH

able and enormous bodily deformity. That is a constant, incurable defect, and, in the eyes of people like us who prize beauty so highly, a seriously damaging one.

The pleasant dialogue between Plato's lawgiver and his citizens will do honor to this passage. "What then," they say, feeling their end approaching, "may we not dispose of what is ours to whom we please? O gods, what cruelty! That we should not be allowed to give more or less to our people, as we fancy, according to how they have served us in our illnesses, in our old age, in our affairs!" To which the lawgiver replies as follows: "My friends, who no doubt are soon to die, it is hard for you to know yourselves, and to know what is yours, as the Delphic inscription bids.[14]

"I, who make the laws, hold that neither are you your own, nor is what you enjoy your own. Both you and your goods belong to your family, past as well as future. But still more do your family and your goods belong to the public. Some flatterer in your old age or your illness, or some passion, might wrongly urge you to make an unjust will, and I will guard you against that. I will have regard both to the universal interest of the city and to that of your house. So I will establish laws, and make it felt, as is right, that private advantage must give way to the common good. Go your way cheerfully where human necessity calls you.

"It is for me, who regard no one thing more than another and who take care of the general good as far as I can, to concern myself with what you leave behind."

To return to my subject, it seems to me in every way that women are rarely born to whom mastery over men is due, except the maternal and natural kind. The exception is for the punishment of men who, from some feverish humor, have voluntarily submitted to them. But that does not apply at all to old women, whom we are speaking of here. It is the plausibility of this consideration that has made us so ready to invent this law and give it footing, though no one ever saw it: the law that excludes women from succession to this crown. There is hardly a lordship in the world where it is not alleged, as it is here, on the strength of a plaus-

14 Plato, Laws, Book XI. The inscription on Apollo's temple at Delphi read "Know thyself."

FRENCH

ENGLISH

ible reason that authorizes it. But Fortune has given it more credit in some places than in others.[15]

Il est dangereux de laisser à leur iugement la dispensation de nostre succession, selon le choix qu'elles feront des enfans, qui est à tous les coups inique et fantastique. Car cet appetit desreglé et goust malade, qu'elles ont au temps de leurs groisses, elles l'ont en l'ame, en tout temps. Communement on les void s'addonner aux plus foibles et malotrus, ou à ceux, si elles en ont, qui leur pendent encores au col. Car n'ayans point assez de force de discours, pour choisir et embrasser ce qui le vault, elles se laissent plus volontiers aller, où les impressions de Nature sont plus seules: comme les animaux qui n'ont cognoissance de leurs petits, que pendant qu'ils tiennent à leurs mammelles.

It is dangerous to leave the dispensing of our estate to their judgment, according to the choice they will make among the children, which is unfair and capricious every time. For that disordered appetite and sick taste they have in their pregnancies, they have in their souls at all times. Commonly you see them devote themselves to the weakest and most ill-favored, or to those, if they have any, who still hang about their necks. They do not have enough power of reasoning to choose and embrace what deserves it. So they more readily let themselves go where Nature's impulses act alone—like animals, which know their young only while they hang at their teats.

2.8.25 Au demeurant il est aisé à voir par experience, que cette affection naturelle, à qui nous donnons tant d'authorité, a les racines bien foibles. Pour vn fort leger profit, nous arrachons tous les iours leurs propres enfans d'entre les bras des meres, et leur faisons prendre les nostres en charge: nous leur faisons abandonner les leurs à quelque chetiue nourrisse, à qui nous ne voulons pas commettre les nostres, ou à quelque cheure; leur deffendant non seulement de les allaiter, quelque danger qu'ils en puissent encourir: mais encore d'en auoir aucun soin, pour s'employer du tout au seruice des nostres.

Moreover, it is easy to see by experience that this natural affection to which we give so much authority has very weak roots. For a very slight profit we tear their own children from mothers' arms every day and make them take charge of ours. We make them abandon theirs to some wretched nurse to whom we would not want to entrust ours, or to some goat. We forbid them not only to suckle their own children, whatever danger the children may run as a result, but even to take any care of them, so that they may devote themselves wholly to the service of ours.

Et voit-on en la plus part d'entre elles, s'engendrer bien tost par accoustumance vn'affection bastarde, plus vehemente que la naturelle, et plus grande sollicitude de la conseruation des enfans empruntez, que des leurs propres. Et ce que i'ay parlé des cheures, c'est d'autant qu'il est ordinaire autour de chez moy, de voir les femmes de village, lors qu'elles ne peuuent nourrir les enfans de leurs mammelles, appeller des cheures à leurs secours. Et i'ay à cette heure deux lacquais, qui ne tetterent iamais que huict iours laict de femmes.

And in most of these women we see a spurious affection soon arise through habit, more vehement than the natural one, and a greater solicitude for the preservation of the borrowed children than of their own. The reason I spoke of goats is that around my home it is common to see village women call goats to their aid when they cannot feed children at their breasts. And at this moment I have two lackeys who never sucked woman's milk for more than a week.

Ces cheures sont incontinent duites à venir allaicter ces petits enfans, recognoissent leur voix quand ils crient, et y accourent: si on leur en presente vn autre que leur nourrisson, elles le refusent, et l'enfant en fait de mesme d'vne autre cheure. I'en vis vn l'autre iour, à qui on osta la sienne, par ce que son pere ne l'auoit qu'empruntée d'vn sien voisin, il ne peut iamais s'adonner à l'autre qu'on luy presenta, et mourut sans doute, de faim. Les

These goats are quickly trained to come and suckle these little children. They recognize their voices when they cry, and come running. If they are offered a child other than their nursling, they refuse it, and the child does the same with another goat. The other day I saw a child whose goat was taken away from him because his father had only borrowed it from a neighbor. He could never take

15 The so-called Salic law, invoked to bar women from the French throne.

FRENCH

bestes alterent et abbastardissent aussi aisément que nous, l'affection naturelle.

Ie croy qu'en ce que recite Herodote de certain destroit de la Lybie, il y a souuent du mesconte: il dit qu'on s'y mesle aux femmes indifferemment: mais que l'enfant ayant force de marcher, trouue son pere celuy, vers lequel, en la presse, la naturelle inclination porte ses premiers pas.

ENGLISH

to the other goat he was offered, and died, no doubt of hunger. Animals alter and corrupt natural affection as easily as we do.

I believe that in what Herodotus relates of a certain district of Libya there is often a mistake. He says that there men mate with women indiscriminately, but that when the child has the strength to walk, it takes as its father the man toward whom, in the crowd, its natural inclination carries its first steps.[16]

CHILDREN OF THE MIND

Books are offspring dearer than bodily children, as Labienus, Lucan and Epicurus show.

FRENCH

2.8.26 Or à considerer cette simple occasion d'aymer noz enfans, pour les auoir engendrez, pour laquelle nous les appellons autres nous mesmes: il semble qu'il y ait bien vne autre production venant de nous, qui ne soit pas de moindre recommendation. Car ce que nous engendrons par l'ame, les enfantements de nostre esprit, de nostre courage et suffisance, sont produits par vne plus noble partie que la corporelle, et sont plus nostres. Nous sommes pere et mere ensemble en cette generation: ceux-cy nous coustent bien plus cher, et nous apportent plus d'honneur, s'ils ont quelque chose de bon.

Car la valeur de nos autres enfans, est beaucoup plus leur, que nostre: la part que nous y auons est bien legere: mais de ceux-cy, toute la beauté, toute la grace et prix est nostre. Par ainsin ils nous representent et nous rapportent bien plus viuement que les autres. Platon adiouste, que ce sont icy des enfants immortels, qui immortalisent leurs peres, voire et les deïfient, comme Lycurgus, Solon, Minos. Or les Histoires estants pleines d'exemples de cette amitié commune des peres enuers les enfans, il ne m'a pas semblé hors de propos d'en trier aussi quelqu'vn de cette-cy.

Heliodorus ce bon Euesque de Tricea, ayma mieux perdre la dignité, le profit, la deuotion d'vne prelature si venerable, que de perdre sa fille: fille qui dure encore bien gentille: mais à l'aduenture pourtant vn peu trop curieusement et mollement goderonnée pour fille ecclesiastique et sacerdotale, et de trop amoureuse façon. Il y eut vn Labienus à Rome, personnage de grande valeur et authorité, et entre autres qualitez, excellent en toute sorte de literature, qui estoit, ce croy-ie, fils de ce grand Labienus, le premier des capitaines qui furent soubs

ENGLISH

Now consider this simple reason for loving our children: that we begot them, which is why we call them our other selves. It seems that there is indeed another production coming from us that deserves no less esteem. For what we beget by the soul—the offspring of our mind, of our courage and ability—is produced by a nobler part than the body, and is more our own. We are father and mother together in this generation. These children cost us much more dearly, and bring us more honor, if there is anything good in them.

For the worth of our other children is much more theirs than ours; the share we have in it is very slight. But in these, all the beauty, all the grace and value is ours. So they represent us and reflect us much more vividly than the others. Plato adds that these are immortal children, who immortalize their fathers and even deify them, like Lycurgus, Solon, and Minos. Now since histories are full of examples of the common love of fathers for their children, it did not seem out of place to me to pick out a few examples of this other kind too.

Heliodorus, that good bishop of Tricca, preferred to lose the dignity, the revenue, and the devotion of so venerable a prelacy rather than lose his daughter. She is a daughter who still survives, very charming, but perhaps a little too elaborately and softly frilled for the daughter of a churchman and priest, and of too amorous a fashion. There was a Labienus at Rome, a person of great worth and authority, who among other qualities excelled

16 Herodotus, Histories, IV.180.

FRENCH

Cæsar en la guerre des Gaules, et qui depuis s'estant ietté au party du grand Pompeius, s'y maintint si valeureusement iusques à ce que Cæsar le deffit en Espaigne.

Ce Labienus dequoy ie parle, eut plusieurs enuieux de sa vertu, et comme il est vray-semblable, les courtisans et fauoris des Empereurs de son temps, pour ennemis de sa franchise, et des humeurs paternelles, qu'il retenoit encore contre la tyrannie, desquelles il est croiable qu'il auoit teint ses escrits et ses liures. Ses aduersaires poursuiuirent deuant le magistrat à Rome, et obtindrent de faire condamner plusieurs siens ouurages qu'il auoit mis en lumiere, à estre bruslés. Ce fut par luy que commença ce nouuel exemple de peine, qui depuis fut continué à Rome à plusieurs autres, de punir de mort les escrits mesmes, et les estudes.

Il n'y auoit point assez de moyen et matiere de cruauté, si nous n'y meslions des choses que Nature a exemptées de tout sentiment et de toute souffrance, comme la reputation et les inuentions de nostre esprit: et si nous n'allions communiquer les maux corporels aux disciplines et monumens des Muses. Or Labienus ne peut souffrir cette perte, ny de suruiure à cette sienne si chere geniture; il se fit porter et enfermer tout vif dans le monument de ses ancestres, là où il pourueut tout d'vn train à se tuer et à s'enterrer ensemble. Il est malaisé de montrer aucune autre plus vehemente affection paternelle que celle-là.

Cassius Seuerus, homme tres-eloquent et son familier, voyant brusler ses liures, crioit que par mesme sentence on le deuoit quant et quant condamner à estre bruslé tout vif, car il portoit et conseruoit en sa memoire ce qu'ils contenoient. Pareil accident aduint à Greuntius Cordus accusé d'auoir en ses liures loué Brutus et Cassius. Ce Senat vilain, seruile, et corrompu, et digne d'vn pire maistre que Tibere, condamna ses escrits au feu. Il fut content de faire compagnie à leur mort, et se tua par abstinence de manger.

ENGLISH

in every kind of literature. He was, I believe, the son of the great Labienus, the foremost of the captains who served under Caesar in the Gallic War. That Labienus later threw in his lot with Pompey the Great and held out valiantly until Caesar defeated him in Spain.[17]

Many people envied the virtue of the Labienus I am speaking of. As is likely, the courtiers and favorites of the emperors of his time were his enemies, hostile to his frankness and to the temper inherited from his father, which he still kept up against tyranny. It may be believed that he had tinged his writings and books with it. His adversaries prosecuted him before the magistrate at Rome and obtained a sentence condemning several of his published works to be burned. It was with him that this new kind of punishment began, which was later continued at Rome against several others: punishing with death the writings themselves, and the studies.[18]

Apparently there were not enough means and matter for cruelty unless we mixed in things that Nature has exempted from all feeling and all suffering, like reputation and the inventions of our mind. We had to go on and extend bodily ills to the disciplines and monuments of the Muses. Now Labienus could not bear this loss, nor survive his own beloved offspring. He had himself carried and shut up alive in the tomb of his ancestors, where at one stroke he saw to killing himself and burying himself together. It is hard to show any other paternal affection more vehement than that.

Cassius Severus, a very eloquent man and his friend, seeing his books burned, cried out that by the same sentence they ought to condemn him to be burned alive along with them, for he carried and preserved in his memory what they contained. A similar misfortune befell Cremutius Cordus, accused of having praised Brutus and Cassius in his books. That base, servile, and corrupt Senate, worthy of a worse master than Tiberius, condemned his writings to the fire. He was content to keep them company in their death, and killed himself by refusing food.[19]

17 Heliodorus, Greek author of the romance Aethiopica (the story of Theagenes and Chariclea), was said to have given up his bishopric rather than disown the book.
18 Titus Labienus, orator and historian under Augustus, whose books were burned by order of the Senate.
19 Montaigne's text reads "Greuntius"; Aulus Cremutius Cordus, Roman historian, died in AD 25.

FRENCH

Le bon Lucanus estant iugé par ce coquin Neron; sur les derniers traits de sa vie, comme la pluspart du sang fut desia escoulé par les veines des bras, qu'il s'estoit faictes tailler à son medecin pour mourir, et que la froideur eut saisi les extremitez de ses membres, et commençast à s'approcher des parties vitales; la derniere chose qu'il eut en sa memoire, ce furent aucuns des vers de son liure de la guerre de Pharsale, qu'il recitoit, et mourut ayant cette derniere voix en la bouche.

Cela qu'estoit-ce, qu'vn tendre et paternel congé qu'il prenoit de ses enfans; representant les a-dieux et les estroits embrassemens que nous donnons aux nostres en mourant; et vn effet de cette naturelle inclination, qui r'appelle en nostre souuenance en cette extremité, les choses, que nous auons eu les plus cheres pendant nostre vie?

2.8.27 Pensons nous qu'Epicurus qui en mourant tourmenté, comme il dit, des extremes douleurs de la cholique, auoit toute sa consolation en la beauté de la doctrine qu'il laissoit au monde, eust receu autant de contentement d'vn nombre d'enfans bien nais et bien esleuez, s'il en eust eu, comme il faisoit de la production de ses riches escrits? et que s'il eust esté au chois de laisser apres luy vn enfant contrefaict et mal nay, ou vn liure sot et inepte, il ne choisist plustost, et non luy seulement, mais tout homme de pareille suffisance, d'encourir le premier mal'heur que l'autre?

Ce seroit à l'aduenture impieté en Sainct Augustin, pour exemple, si d'vn costé on luy proposoit d'enterrer ses escrits, dequoy nostre religion reçoit vn si grand fruict, ou d'enterrer ses enfans au cas qu'il en eust, s'il n'aymoit mieux enterrer ses enfans. Et ie ne sçay si ie n'aymerois pas mieux beaucoup en auoir produict vn parfaictement bien formé, de l'accointance des Muses, que de l'accointance de ma femme. A cettuy-cy tel qu'il est, ce que ie donne, ie le donne purement et irreuocablement, comme on donne aux enfans corporels. Ce peu de bien, que ie luy ay faict, il n'est plus en ma disposition.

Il peut sçauoir assez de choses que ie ne sçay plus, et tenir de moy ce que ie n'ay point retenu: et qu'il faudroit que tout ainsi qu'vn estranger, i'empruntasse de luy, si besoin m'en venoit. Si ie suis plus sage que luy, il est plus

ENGLISH

Good Lucan was condemned by that scoundrel Nero. In the last moments of his life, most of his blood had already drained out through the veins of his arms, which he had had his doctor cut so that he might die, and the cold had seized the extremities of his limbs and was beginning to approach the vital parts. The last thing he had in his memory was some lines from his book on the war of Pharsalia. He recited them, and died with those last words on his lips.[20]

What was that but a tender, fatherly leave-taking of his children, like the farewells and close embraces we give our own when we die? And what was it but an effect of that natural inclination which, in that extremity, brings back to our memory the things we have held dearest during our life?

Epicurus, dying tormented, as he says, by the extreme pains of colic, found all his consolation in the beauty of the doctrine he was leaving to the world. Do we think he would have received as much satisfaction from a number of well-born and well-brought-up children, if he had had any, as he did from producing his rich writings? And if he had had the choice of leaving behind him a deformed and ill-born child or a foolish and inept book, do we think he would not have chosen to incur the first misfortune rather than the other? And not he alone, but any man of like ability?

Suppose Saint Augustine, for example, were offered the choice between burying his writings, from which our religion reaps such great fruit, and burying his children, if he had had any. It would perhaps be impiety in him not to prefer burying his children. And I am not sure that I would not much rather have produced one perfectly formed child from my union with the Muses than from my union with my wife. To this one, such as it is, what I give, I give purely and irrevocably, as one gives to the children of the body. The little good I have done it is no longer mine to dispose of.

It may know plenty of things that I no longer know, and hold from me what I have not retained myself, which I would have to borrow from it, just like a stranger, if I needed it. If I am wiser than it,

20 Lucan (AD 39–65), Roman poet of the Pharsalia, ordered to die after the conspiracy of Piso.

FRENCH

riche que moy. Il est peu d'hommes addonnez à la poësie, qui ne se gratifiassent plus d'estre peres de l'Eneide que du plus beau garçon de Rome: et qui ne souffrissent plus aisément l'vne perte que l'autre. Car selon Aristote, de tous ouuriers le poëte est nommément le plus amoureux de son ouurage.

Il est malaisé à croire, qu'Epaminondas qui se vantoit de laisser pour toute posterité des filles qui feroyent vn iour honneur à leur pere (c'estoyent les deux nobles victoires qu'il auoit gaigné sur les Lacedemoniens) eust volontiers consenty d'eschanger celles-là, aux plus gorgiases de toute la Grece: ou qu'Alexandre et Cæsar ayent iamais souhaité d'estre priuez de la grandeur de leurs glorieux faicts de guerre, pour la commodité d'auoir des enfans et heritiers, quelques parfaicts et accompliz qu'ils peussent estre. Voire ie fay grand doubte que Phidias ou autre excellent statuaire, aymast autant la conseruation et la durée de ses enfans naturels, comme il feroit d'vne image excellente, qu'auec long trauail et estude il auroit parfaite selon l'art.

Et quant à ces passions vitieuses et furieuses, qui ont eschauffé quelque fois les peres à l'amour de leurs filles, ou les meres enuers leurs fils, encore s'en trouue-il de pareilles en cette autre sorte de parenté. Tesmoing ce que lon recite de Pygmalion, qu'ayant basty vne statue de femme de beauté singuliere, il deuint si esperduement espris de l'amour forcené de ce sien ouurage, qu'il falut, qu'en faueur de sa rage les Dieux la luy viuifiassent: *Tentatum mollescit ebur, positóque rigore / Subsidit digitis.*

ENGLISH

it is richer than I. There are few men devoted to poetry who would not be more gratified to be the father of the Aeneid than of the handsomest boy in Rome, and who would not bear the loss of the boy more easily than the loss of the poem. For according to Aristotle, of all craftsmen the poet is the one most especially in love with his work.

Epaminondas boasted that he left as his only posterity daughters who would one day bring honor to their father; these were the two noble victories he had won over the Lacedaemonians. It is hard to believe that he would willingly have agreed to exchange them for the most gorgeous girls in all Greece. It is equally hard to believe that Alexander and Caesar ever wished to be deprived of the greatness of their glorious feats of war for the convenience of having children and heirs, however perfect and accomplished they might be. Indeed, I very much doubt that Phidias, or any other excellent sculptor, cared as much for the preservation and survival of his natural children as he would for an excellent statue that he had perfected by long labor and study, according to his art.[21]

And as for those vicious and frenzied passions that have sometimes inflamed fathers with love for their daughters, or mothers for their sons, similar ones are found in this other kind of parenthood too. Witness what is told of Pygmalion. Having made the statue of a woman of singular beauty, he fell so desperately and madly in love with this work of his that the gods, in favor of his frenzy, had to bring her to life for him: *Touched, the ivory softens, and, its hardness gone, / Yields to his fingers.*[22]

21 The Theban general's victories at Leuctra (371 BC) and Mantinea (362 BC).
22 Ovid, Metamorphoses, X.

II.9 Of the Arms of the Parthians

Des armes des Parthes

Montaigne faults the nobles of his day for arming only at the last moment and compares heavy French armor with ancient practice.

FRENCH

2.9.1 C'EST vne façon vitieuse de la noblesse de nostre temps, et pleine de mollesse, de ne prendre les armes que sur le point d'vne extreme necessité: et s'en descharger aussi tost qu'il y a tant soit peu d'apparence, que le danger soit esloigné. D'où il suruient plusieurs desordres: car chacun criant et courant à ses armes, sur le point de la charge, les vns sont à lacer encore leur cuirasse, que leurs compaignons sont desia rompus. Nos peres donnoient leur salade, leur lance, et leurs gantelets à porter, et n'abandonnoient le reste de leur equippage, tant que la couruée duroit.

Nos trouppes sont à cette heure toutes troublées et difformes, par la confusion du bagage et des valets qui ne peuuent esloigner leurs maistres, à cause de leurs armes. Tite Liue parlant des nostres, *Intolerantissima laboris corpora vix arma humeris gerebant*. Plusieurs nations vont encore et alloient anciennement à la guerre sans se couurir: ou se couuroient d'inutiles defences. *Tegmina queis capitum raptus de subere cortex.* Alexandre le plus hazardeux Capitaine qui fut iamais, s'armoit fort rarement. Et ceux d'entre nous qui les mesprisent n'empirent pour cela de guere leur marché.

S'il se voit quelqu'vn tué par le defaut d'vn harnois, il n'en est guere moindre nombre, que l'empeschement des armes a faict perdre, engagés sous leur pesanteur, ou froissez et rompus, ou par vn contre-coup, ou autrement. Car il semble, à la verité, à voir le poix des nostres et leur espesseur, que nous ne cherchons qu'à nous deffendre, et en sommes plus chargez que couuers. Nous auons assez à faire à en soustenir le faix, entrauez et contraints, comme si nous n'auions à combattre que du choq de nos armes: et comme si nous n'auions pareille obligation à les deffendre, qu'elles ont à nous.

ENGLISH

It is a vicious habit of the nobility of our time, and one full of softness, not to take up arms until the point of extreme necessity, and to lay them aside as soon as there is the slightest sign that the danger has passed. Many disorders follow from this. With everyone shouting and running for his arms just as the charge begins, some are still lacing up their cuirass when their comrades are already routed. Our fathers had their helmet, lance, and gauntlets carried for them, but did not give up the rest of their equipment as long as the expedition lasted.

Our troops are now all disordered and misshapen by the jumble of baggage and of valets who cannot leave their masters because of their arms. Livy says of our people: *Their bodies, utterly unable to endure toil, could scarcely carry their arms on their shoulders.* Several nations still go to war without protection, and did so in ancient times, or protected themselves with useless defenses: *Their helmets were bark stripped from the cork tree.* Alexander, the most daring captain who ever lived, very seldom wore armor. And those of us who scorn it hardly make their bargain any worse.[1]

If one sees someone killed for lack of armor, hardly fewer have been lost through the encumbrance of armor: pinned under its weight, or bruised and broken by a jolt, or in some other way. For truly, judging by the weight and thickness of ours, it seems that we seek only to defend ourselves, and we are more loaded down than covered by it. We have enough to do just to bear its weight, hobbled and constrained, as if we were to fight only by the impact of our armor, and as if we were not as obliged to defend it as it is to defend us.

1 The second quotation is from Virgil, Aeneid, VII.

FRENCH

Tacitus peint plaisamment des gens de guerre de nos anciens Gaulois, ainsin armez pour se maintenir seulement, n'ayans moyen ny d'offencer ny d'estre offencez, ny de se releuer abbatus. Lucullus voyant certains hommes d'armes Medois, qui faisoient front en l'armée de Tigranes, poisamment et malaisément armez, comme dans vne prison de fer, print de là opinion de les deffaire aisément, et par eux commença sa charge et sa victoire. Et à present que nos mousquetaires sont en credit, ie croy qu'on trouuera quelque inuention de nous emmurer pour nous en garentir, et nous faire trainer à la guerre enfermez dans des bastions, comme ceux que les anciens faisoient porter à leurs elephans.

2.9.2 Cette humeur est bien esloignée de celle du ieune Scipion, lequel accusa aigrement ses soldats, de ce qu'ils auoyent semé des chausse-trapes soubs l'eau à l'endroit du fossé, par où ceux d'vne ville qu'il assiegeoit, pouuoient faire des sorties sur luy: disant que ceux qui assailloient, deuoient penser à entreprendre, non pas à craindre. Et craignoit auec raison que cette prouision endormist leur vigilance à se garder. Il dict aussi à vn ieune homme, qui luy faisoit montre de son beau bouclier: Il est vrayement beau, mon fils, mais vn soldat Romain doit auoir plus de fiance en sa main dextre, qu'en la gauche.

2.9.3 Or il n'est que la coustume, qui nous rende insupportable la charge de nos armes. *L'husbergo in dosso haueano, et l'elmo in testa,*
Duo di quelli guerrier d'i quali io canto.
Ne notte o di doppo ch'entraro in questa
Stanza, gl' haueanò mai mesi da canto,
Che facile à portar comme la vesta
Era lor, perchè in vso l'hauean tanto. L'Empereur Caracalla alloit par païs à pied armé de toutes pieces, conduisant son armée.

Les pietons Romains portoient non seulement le morion, l'espée, et l'escu: car quant aux armes, dit Cicero, ils estoient si accoustumez à les auoir sur le dos, qu'elles ne les empeschoient non plus que leurs membres: *arma enim, membra militis esse dicunt*: mais quant et quant encore, ce qu'il leur falloit de viures, pour quinze iours, et certaine quantité de paux pour faire leurs rempars, iusques à soixante liures de poix. Et les soldats de Marius ainsi chargez, marchant en bataille, estoient duits à faire cinq

ENGLISH

Tacitus gives an amusing picture of warriors among our ancient Gauls, armed like this merely to protect themselves, unable either to harm or to be harmed, or to get up again once knocked down. Lucullus saw certain Median men-at-arms forming the front of Tigranes' army, heavily and awkwardly armed, as if in an iron prison. He concluded that he could easily defeat them, and it was with them that he began his charge and his victory. And now that our musketeers are in favor, I expect someone will invent a way to wall us in to protect us from them, and have us dragged to war shut up in bastions, like the ones the ancients had their elephants carry.[2]

This humor is very far from that of the younger Scipio. He sharply reproached his soldiers for having laid caltrops under the water in the part of the moat through which the people of a town he was besieging could make sallies against him. Those who attack, he said, should think about attacking, not about fearing. And he rightly feared that this precaution would lull their vigilance in guarding themselves. He also said to a young man who was showing him his fine shield: "It is truly fine, my son, but a Roman soldier should put more trust in his right hand than in his left."

Now it is only custom that makes the burden of our armor unbearable to us. *Hauberk on back and helmet on head*
Two of the warriors I sing of wore;
Nor night nor day, since they came into this
Chamber, had they once put them aside,
For they found them as easy to wear as clothing,
So long had they been used to them. The Emperor Caracalla went about the country on foot, fully armed, leading his army.[3]

The Roman foot soldiers carried not only helmet, sword, and shield—for as to arms, says Cicero, they were so used to having them on their backs that they hindered them no more than their own limbs: *for they say that arms are a soldier's limbs*. Along with these they also carried as much food as they needed for fifteen days, and a certain number of stakes for building their ramparts, up to sixty pounds in weight. And Marius' soldiers, loaded

2 Lucullus defeated Tigranes, king of Armenia, at Tigranocerta in 69 BC.
3 Ariosto, Orlando Furioso, XII.

FRENCH

lieuës en cinq heures, et six s'il y auoit haste. Leur discipline militaire estoit beaucoup plus rude que la nostre: aussi produisoit elle de bien autres effects.

Le ieune Scipion reformant son armée en Espaigne, ordonna à ses soldats de ne manger que debout, et rien de cuit. Ce traict est merueilleux à ce propos, qu'il fut reproché à vn soldat Lacedemonien, qu'estant à l'expedition d'vne guerre, on l'auoit veu soubs le couuert d'vne maison: ils estoient si durcis à la peine, que c'estoit honte d'estre veu soubs vn autre toict que celuy du ciel, quelque temps qu'il fist. Nous ne menerions guere loing nos gens à ce prix là.

2.9.4 Au demeurant Marcellinus, homme nourry aux guerres Romaines, remerque curieusement la façon que les Parthes auoyent de s'armer, et la remerque d'autant qu'elle estoit esloignée de la Romaine. Ils auoyent, dit-il, des armes tissuës en maniere de petites plumes, qui n'empeschoient pas le mouuement de leur corps: et si estoient si fortes que nos dards reiallissoient venans à les hurter: ce sont les escailles, dequoy nos ancestres auoient fort accoustumé de se seruir. Et en vn autre lieu: Ils auoient, dit-il, leurs cheuaux fors et roides, couuerts de gros cuir, et eux estoient armez de cap à pied, de grosses lames de fer, rengées de tel artifice, qu'à l'endroit des iointures des membres elles prestoient au mouuement.

On eust dict que c'estoient des hommes de fer: car ils auoient des accoustremens de teste si proprement assis, et representans au naturel la forme et parties du visage, qu'il n'y auoit moyen de les assener que par des petits trous ronds, qui respondoient à leurs yeux, leur donnant vn peu de lumiere, et par des fentes, qui estoient à l'endroict des naseaux, par où ils prenoyent assez malaisément haleine, *Flexilis inductis animatur lamina membris,*
Horribilis visu; credas simulacra moueri
Ferrea, cognatôque viros spirare metallo.
Par vestitus equis: ferrata fronte minantur,
Ferratôsque mouent, securi vulneris, armos. Voila vne description, qui retire bien fort à l'equippage d'vn homme d'armes François, à tout ses bardes.

ENGLISH

like this and marching in battle order, were trained to cover five leagues in five hours, and six if there was need for haste. Their military discipline was much harsher than ours, and so it produced very different results.

The younger Scipio, reforming his army in Spain, ordered his soldiers to eat only standing up, and nothing cooked. On this subject, here is a marvelous touch: a Lacedaemonian soldier was reproached because, while on campaign, he had been seen under the shelter of a house. They were so hardened to toil that it was shameful to be seen under any roof but the sky's, whatever the weather. We would not lead our men very far at that price.

Moreover, Marcellinus, a man raised in the Roman wars, takes careful note of the way the Parthians armed themselves, and notes it all the more because it was so different from the Roman way. They had, he says, armor woven in the manner of little feathers, which did not hinder the movement of their bodies; and yet it was so strong that our darts rebounded when they struck it. These are the scales that our ancestors were very much in the habit of using. And in another place he says: They had strong, sturdy horses, covered with thick leather, and they themselves were armed from head to foot with thick plates of iron, arranged with such skill that at the joints of the limbs they yielded to the movement.[4]

You would have said they were men of iron. Their headpieces were so neatly fitted, and reproduced the shape and features of the face so naturally, that there was no way to strike them except through little round holes matching their eyes, which gave them a little light, and through slits at the nostrils, through which they drew breath with some difficulty. *The supple plate takes life from the limbs it covers,*
dreadful to behold; you would think iron statues were moving,
and men breathing in the metal grown onto them.
The horses wear the same: with iron brows they threaten,
and, safe from wounds, they move their iron-clad shoulders. Here is a description that comes very

4 Ammianus Marcellinus (4th century AD), Roman soldier and historian.

FRENCH	ENGLISH
	close to the equipment of a French man-at-arms, with all his horse armor.[5]
Plutarque dit que Demetrius fit faire pour luy, et pour Alcinus, le premier homme de guerre qui fust pres de luy, à chacun vn harnois complet du poids de six vingts liures, là où les communs harnois n'en pesoient que soixante.	Plutarch says that Demetrius had a complete suit of armor made for himself and for Alcinus, the chief soldier about him, each weighing a hundred and twenty pounds, whereas ordinary suits weighed only sixty.[6]

5 Claudian, Against Rufinus.
6 Plutarch's Life of Demetrius names the officer Alcimus.

II.10 Of Books

Des Liures

Montaigne reviews the authors he reads for pleasure and use—poets, Plutarch, Seneca, historians—and judges Cicero and others with candid freedom.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
2.10.1	IE ne fay point de doute, qu'il ne m'aduienne souuent de parler de choses, qui sont mieux traictées chez les maistres du mestier, et plus veritablement. C'est icy purement l'essay de mes facultez naturelles, et nullement des acquises. Et qui me surprendra d'ignorance, il ne fera rien contre moy: car à peine respondroy-ie à autruy de mes discours, qui ne m'en responds point à moy, ny n'en suis satisfaict. Qui sera en cherche de science, si la pesche où elle se loge: il n'est rien dequoy ie face moins de profession.	I have no doubt that I often happen to speak of things that are better and more truthfully treated by the masters of the craft. This is purely a trial of my natural faculties, and not at all of acquired ones. Whoever catches me out in ignorance will score nothing against me. I could hardly answer to others for my reasonings, when I do not answer for them to myself and am not satisfied with them. Whoever is in search of knowledge, let him fish for it where it lives: there is nothing I make less profession of.
	Ce sont icy mes fantasies, par lesquelles ie ne tasche point à donner à connoistre les choses, mais moy: elles me seront à l'aduenture connues vn iour, ou l'ont autresfois esté, selon que la Fortune m'a peu porter sur les lieux, où elles estoient esclaircies. Mais il ne m'en souuient plus. Et si ie suis homme de quelque leçon, ie suis homme de nulle retention. Ainsi ie ne pleuuy aucune certitude, si ce n'est de faire connoistre iusques à quel poinct monte pour cette heure, la connoissance que i'en ay.	These are my notions, and through them I am not trying to make things known, but myself. The things may perhaps become known to me one day, or may have been once, depending on whether Fortune has been able to bring me to the places where they were made clear. But I no longer remember them. And if I am a man of some reading, I am a man of no retention. So I guarantee no certainty, except to make known how far my knowledge of them reaches at this moment.
2.10.2	Qu'on ne s'attende pas aux matieres, mais à la façon que i'y donne. Qu'on voye en ce que i'emprunte, si i'ay sçeu choisir dequoy rehausser ou secourir proprement l'inuention, qui vient tousiours de moy. Car ie fay dire aux autres, non à ma teste, mais à ma suite, ce que ie ne puis si bien dire, par foiblesse de mon langage, ou par foiblesse de mon sens. Ie ne compte pas mes emprunts, ie les poise. Et si ie les eusse voulu faire valoir par nombre, ie m'en fusse chargé deux fois autant. Ils sont touts, ou fort peu s'en faut, de noms si fameux et anciens, qu'ils me semblent se nommer assez sans moy.	Let people pay attention not to the matter but to the shape I give it. Let them see, in what I borrow, whether I have known how to choose something that properly enhances or supports the invention, which always comes from me. For I make others say—not ahead of me but following in my train—what I cannot say so well myself, through the weakness of my language or the weakness of my sense. I do not count my borrowings; I weigh them. Had I wanted them to impress by their number, I would have loaded myself with twice as many. They are all, or very nearly all, from names so famous and ancient that they seem to me to name themselves well enough without me.
	Ez raisons, comparaisons, argumens, si i'en transplante quelcun en mon solage, et confons aux miens, à escient i'en cache l'autheur, pour tenir en bride la temerité de	As for reasons, comparisons and arguments, if I transplant any of them into my own soil and blend them with mine, I deliberately hide the author. I

FRENCH

ces sentences hastiues, qui se iettent sur toute sorte d'escrits: notamment ieunes escrits, d'hommes encore viuants: et en vulgaire, qui reçoit tout le monde à en parler, et qui semble conuaincre la conception et le dessein vulgaire de mesmes. Ie veux qu'ils donnent vne nazarde à Plutarque sur mon nez, et qu'ils s'eschaudent à iniurier Seneque en moy. Il faut musser ma foiblesse souz ces grands credits. I'aimeray quelqu'vn qui me sçache deplumer: ie dy par clairté de iugement, et par la seule distinction de la force et beauté des propos.

Car moy, qui, à faute de memoire, demeure court tous les coups, à les trier, par recognoissance de nation, sçay tresbien connoistre, à mesurer ma portée, que mon terroir n'est aucunement capable d'aucunes fleurs trop riches, que i'y trouue semées, et que tous les fruicts de mon creu ne les sçauroient payer. De cecy suis-ie tenu de respondre, si ie m'empesche moy-mesme, s'il y a de la vanité et vice en mes discours, que ie ne sente point, ou que ie ne soye capable de sentir en me le representant. Car il eschappe souuent des fautes à nos yeux: mais la maladie du iugement consiste à ne les pouuoir apperceuoir, lors qu'vn autre nous les descouure.

La science et la verité peuuent loger chez nous sans iugement, et le iugement y peut aussi estre sans elles: voire la reconnoissance de l'ignorance est l'vn des plus beaux et plus seurs tesmoignages de iugement que ie trouue. Ie n'ay point d'autre sergent de bande, à renger mes pieces, que la Fortune. A mesme que mes resueries se presentent, ie les entasse: tantost elles se pressent en foule, tantost elles se trainent à la file. Ie veux qu'on voye mon pas naturel et ordinaire ainsi detraqué qu'il est. Ie me laisse aller comme ie me trouue. Aussi ne sont ce point icy matieres, qu'il ne soit pas permis d'ignorer, et d'en parler casuellement et temerairement.

2.10.3 Ie souhaiterois auoir plus parfaicte intelligence des choses, mais ie ne la veux pas achepter si cher qu'elle couste. Mon dessein est de passer doucement, et non laborieusement ce qui me reste de vie. Il n'est rien pourquoy ie me vueille rompre la teste: non pas pour la science, de quelque grand prix qu'elle soit.

2.10.4 Ie ne cherche aux liures qu'à m'y donner du plaisir par vn honneste amusement: ou si i'estudie, ie n'y cherche que

ENGLISH

do it to rein in the rashness of those hasty verdicts that pounce on every kind of writing—especially new writings by men still living, and in the vernacular, which lets everybody talk about it and seems to convict the conception and design of being just as common. I want them to flick Plutarch on the nose when they flick mine, and to scald themselves insulting Seneca in me. I have to hide my weakness under these great reputations. I will love anyone who knows how to pluck my borrowed feathers—I mean by clearness of judgment, and solely by telling apart the strength and beauty of the remarks.

For I, who for lack of memory am caught short every time I try to sort them by recognizing where they come from, know very well, measuring my own reach, that my soil is quite incapable of producing certain overly rich flowers that I find sown in it, and that all the fruits of my own growing could never pay for them. This much I am bound to answer for: if I trip myself up; if there is vanity and fault in my reasonings that I do not perceive, or that I am incapable of perceiving when it is pointed out to me. For faults often slip past our eyes; but the sickness of judgment consists in being unable to see them when someone else reveals them to us.

Knowledge and truth can lodge in us without judgment, and judgment can also be there without them; indeed, recognizing one's ignorance is one of the finest and surest testimonies of judgment I know. I have no other drill sergeant to line up my pieces than Fortune. As my daydreams present themselves, I heap them up: sometimes they crowd in all together, sometimes they straggle in single file. I want people to see my natural, ordinary gait, as off-kilter as it is. I let myself go as I find myself. Besides, these are not matters that one is forbidden to be ignorant of, or to speak of casually and rashly.

I would like to have a more perfect understanding of things, but I do not want to buy it at the price it costs. My plan is to spend what remains of my life pleasantly and not laboriously. There is nothing I am willing to rack my brains over—not even knowledge, however great its value.

In books I seek only to give myself pleasure by a decent pastime; or if I study, I seek only the know-

FRENCH

la science, qui traicte de la connoissance de moy-mesmes, et qui m'instruise à bien mourir et à bien viure. *Has meus ad metas sudet oportet equus.*

2.10.5 Les difficultez, si i'en rencontre en lisant, ie n'en ronge pas mes ongles: ie les laisse là, apres leur auoir faict vne charge ou deux. Si ie m'y plantois, ie m'y perdrois, et le temps: car i'ay vn esprit primsautier. Ce que ie ne voy de la premiere charge, ie le voy moins en m'y obstinant. Ie ne fay rien sans gayeté: et la continuation et contention trop ferme esblouït mon iugement, l'attriste, et le lasse. Ma veuë s'y confond, et s'y dissipe. Il faut que ie la retire, et que ie l'y remette à secousses. Tout ainsi que pour iuger du lustre de l'escarlatte, on nous ordonne de passer les yeux pardessus, en la parcourant à diuerses veuës, soudaines reprinses et reiterées.

Si ce liure me fasche, i'en prens vn autre, et ne m'y addonne qu'aux heures, où l'ennuy de rien faire commence à me saisir. Ie ne me prens gueres aux nouueaux, pour ce que les anciens me semblent plus pleins et plus roides: ny aux Grecs, par ce que mon iugement ne sçait pas faire ses besoignes d'vne puerile et apprantisse intelligence.

2.10.6 Entre les liures simplement plaisans, ie trouue des modernes, le Decameron de Boccace, Rabelays, et les baisers de Iean second, s'il les faut loger sous ce tiltre, dignes qu'on s'y amuse. Quant aux Amadis, et telles sortes d'escrits, ils n'ont pas eu le credit d'arrester seulement mon enfance. Ie diray encore cecy, ou hardiment, ou temerairement, que cette vieille ame poisante, ne se laisse plus chatouiller, non seulement à l'Arioste, mais encores au bon Ouide: sa facilité, et ses inuentions, qui m'ont rauy autresfois, à peine m'entretiennent elles à cette heure. Ie dy librement mon aduis de toutes choses, voire et de celles qui surpassent à l'aduenture ma suffisance, et que ie ne tiens aucunement estre de ma iurisdiction.

Ce que i'en opine, c'est aussi pour declarer la mesure de ma veuë, non la mesure des choses. Quand ie me trouue dégousté de l'Axioche de Platon, comme d'vn ouurage sans force, eu esgard à vn tel autheur, mon iugement ne s'en croit pas. Il n'est pas si outrecuidé de s'opposer à l'authorité de tant d'autres fameux iugemens anciens:

ENGLISH

ledge that deals with knowing myself, and that may teach me to die well and to live well. *This is the goal my horse must sweat to reach.*[1]

Difficulties, if I meet any in reading, I do not bite my nails over; I leave them there after making a charge or two at them. If I planted myself in front of them, I would lose myself, and my time too, for my mind works at the first leap. What I do not see at the first charge, I see less by persisting. I do nothing without gaiety; and too steady a persistence and strain dazzles my judgment, saddens it and tires it. My sight grows confused and scattered. I have to withdraw it and bring it back in sudden jerks—just as, to judge the sheen of scarlet cloth, we are told to pass our eyes over it, running over it with various glances, in sudden, repeated takes.

If one book annoys me, I take another; and I give myself to reading only at the hours when the weariness of doing nothing begins to seize me. I hardly ever take up the new ones, because the ancients seem to me fuller and sturdier; nor the Greek ones, because my judgment cannot do its work with a childish, apprentice's understanding.

Among books that are simply entertaining, I find, among the moderns, Boccaccio's Decameron, Rabelais, and the Kisses of Johannes Secundus (if they may be lodged under that heading) worth amusing oneself with. As for the Amadis and writings of that sort, they did not have the credit to hold even my childhood. I will say this too, either boldly or rashly: this heavy old soul of mine no longer lets itself be tickled not only by Ariosto but even by good Ovid. His facility and his inventions, which once ravished me, hardly hold my attention now. I speak my mind freely about all things, even those that perhaps exceed my competence and that I in no way consider to be within my jurisdiction.[2]

What I opine about them is meant to declare the measure of my sight, not the measure of things. When I find myself put off by Plato's Axiochus, as a work without force considering such an author, my judgment does not trust itself. It is not so presumptuous as to set itself against the authority of

1 Propertius, Elegies.
2 Johannes Secundus (1511–1536), Dutch poet of the Latin Basia (Kisses).

FRENCH

qu'il tient ses regens et ses maistres: et auecq lesquels il est plustost content de faillir. Il s'en prend à soy, et se condamne, ou de s'arrester à l'escorce, ne pouuant penetrer iusques au fonds: ou de regarder la chose par quelque faux lustre. Il se contente de se garentir seulement du trouble et du desreglement: quant à sa foiblesse, il la reconnoist, et aduoüe volontiers.

Il pense donner iuste interpretation aux apparences, que sa conception luy presente: mais elles sont imbecilles et imparfaictes. La plus part des fables d'Esope ont plusieurs sens et intelligences: ceux qui les mythologisent, en choisissent quelque visage, qui quadre bien à la fable: mais pour la pluspart, ce n'est que le premier visage et superficiel: il y en a d'autres plus vifs, plus essentiels et internes, ausquels ils n'ont sçeu penetrer: voyla comme i'en fay.

ENGLISH

so many other famous ancient judgments, which it regards as its tutors and masters, and with which it would rather be wrong. It blames itself and condemns itself, either for stopping at the bark, unable to get through to the core, or for looking at the thing in some false light. It is content merely to protect itself from confusion and disorder; as for its weakness, it recognizes it and readily admits it.[3]

It thinks it gives a fair interpretation of the appearances its conception presents to it; but these are feeble and imperfect. Most of Aesop's fables have several senses and meanings. Those who interpret them as allegories pick some aspect that fits the fable well; but for the most part it is only the first, superficial aspect. There are others, more vital, more essential and inward, which they have not managed to penetrate. That is how it goes with me.

THE POETS HE LOVES

Virgil, Lucretius, Catullus and Horace come first; Terence wins over Plautus, Virgil over Ariosto.

FRENCH

2.10.7 Mais pour suyure ma route: il m'a tousiours semblé, qu'en la poësie, Virgile, Lucrece, Catulle, et Horace, tiennent de bien loing le premier rang: et signamment Virgile en ses Georgiques, que i'estime le plus accomply ouurage de la poësie: à comparaison duquel on peut reconnoistre aysément qu'il y a des endroicts de l'Æneide, ausquels l'autheur eust donné encore quelque tour de pigne s'il en eust eu loisir. Et le cinquiesme liure en l'Æneide me semble le plus parfaict. I'ayme aussi Lucain, et le practique volontiers, non tant pour son stile, que pour sa valeur propre, et verité de ses opinions et iugemens.

Quant au bon Terence, la mignardise, et les graces du langage Latin, ie le trouue admirable à representer au vif les mouuemens de l'ame, et la condition de nos mœurs: à toute heure nos actions me reiettent à luy. Ie ne le puis lire si souuent que ie n'y trouue quelque beauté et grace nouuelle. Ceux des temps voisins à Virgile se plaignoient, dequoy aucuns luy comparoient Lucrece. Ie suis d'opinion, que c'est à la verité vne comparaison inegale: mais i'ay bien à faire à me r'asseurer en cette creance, quand ie me treuue attaché à quelque beau lieu de ceux de Lucrece.

ENGLISH

But to keep to my route: it has always seemed to me that in poetry Virgil, Lucretius, Catullus and Horace hold the first rank by a long way—and especially Virgil in his Georgics, which I consider the most accomplished work of poetry. Compared with it, one can easily see that there are places in the Aeneid to which the author would have given a few more strokes of the comb had he had the leisure. And the fifth book of the Aeneid seems to me the most perfect. I also love Lucan and read him readily, not so much for his style as for his own worth and the truth of his opinions and judgments.

As for good Terence, the very delicacy and grace of the Latin language, I find him admirable at portraying to the life the movements of the soul and the condition of our manners; at every turn our actions send me back to him. I can never read him so often that I do not find some new beauty and grace in him. Those who lived close to Virgil's time complained that some people compared Lucretius to him. I am of the opinion that it is indeed an unequal comparison; but I have a hard time holding

3 The Axiochus, a dialogue on death, was attributed to Plato; it is now considered spurious.

FRENCH

ENGLISH

firm in this belief when I find myself caught by some fine passage of Lucretius.

S'ils se piquoient de cette comparaison, que diroient ils de la bestise et stupidité barbaresque, de ceux qui luy comparent à cette heure Arioste: et qu'en diroit Arioste luy-mesme? *O seclum insipiens et infacetum!* I'estime que les anciens auoient encore plus à se plaindre de ceux qui apparioient Plaute à Terence (cestuy-cy sent bien mieux son Gentil-homme) que Lucrece à Virgile. Pour l'estimation et preference de Terence, fait beaucoup, que le pere de l'eloquence Romaine l'a si souuent en la bouche, seul de son reng: et la sentence, que le premier iuge des poëtes Romains donne de son compagnon.

If they were stung by that comparison, what would they say of the barbarous stupidity and dullness of those who now compare Ariosto to him? And what would Ariosto himself say? *O age without sense or wit!* I think the ancients had even more cause to complain of those who paired Plautus with Terence (the latter has much more the air of a gentleman) than of those who paired Lucretius with Virgil. For the esteem and preference given to Terence, it counts for much that the father of Roman eloquence has him so often on his lips, alone of his kind; and so does the verdict that the foremost judge of Roman poets passes on his fellow poet.[4]

2.10.8 Il m'est souuent tombé en fantasie, comme en nostre temps, ceux qui se meslent de faire des comedies, ainsi que les Italiens, qui y sont assez heureux, employent trois ou quatre argumens de celles de Terence, ou de Plaute, pour en faire vne des leurs. Ils entassent en vne seule comedie, cinq ou six contes de Boccace. Ce qui les fait ainsi se charger de matiere, c'est la deffiance qu'ils ont de se pouuoir soustenir de leurs propres graces. Il faut qu'ils trouuent vn corps où s'appuyer: et n'ayans pas du leur assez dequoy nous arrester, ils veulent que le conte nous amuse.

It has often occurred to me how, in our time, those who take to writing comedies (like the Italians, who are quite successful at it) use three or four plots from the plays of Terence or Plautus to make one of their own. They heap five or six of Boccaccio's tales into a single comedy. What makes them load themselves with so much matter is that they do not trust themselves to stand up on their own graces. They have to find a body to lean on; and not having enough of their own to hold us, they want the story to entertain us.

Il en va de mon autheur tout au contraire: les perfections et beautez de sa façon de dire, nous font perdre l'appetit de son subiect. Sa gentillesse et sa mignardise nous retiennent par tout. Il est par tout si plaisant, *Liquidus, puróque simillimus amni,* et nous remplit tant l'ame de ses graces, que nous en oublions celles de sa fable.

With my author it is quite the opposite: the perfections and beauties of his way of speaking make us lose our appetite for his subject. His elegance and charm hold us everywhere. He is so delightful everywhere, *Flowing, and most like a pure stream,* and fills our soul so full of his graces, that we forget those of his plot.[5]

2.10.9 Cette mesme consideration me tire plus auant. Ie voy que les bons et anciens poëtes ont euité l'affectation et la recherche, non seulement des fantastiques eleuations Espagnoles et Petrarchistes, mais des pointes mesmes plus douces et plus retenues, qui sont l'ornement de tous les ouurages poëtiques des siecles suyuans. Si n'y a il bon iuge qui les trouue à dire en ces anciens, et qui n'admire plus sans comparaison, l'egale polissure et cette perpetuelle douceur et beauté fleurissante des epigrammes de Catulle, que tous les esguillons, dequoy Martial esguise la queuë des siens. C'est cette mesme

This same consideration leads me further. I see that the good ancient poets avoided affectation and straining after effect—not only the fantastic flights of the Spanish and the Petrarchists, but even the gentler and more restrained conceits that are the ornament of all the poetic works of the centuries that followed. Yet there is no good judge who misses them in these ancients, or who does not admire, beyond all comparison, the even polish and the perpetual sweetness and flowering beauty of Catullus' epigrams more than all the

4 Catullus. The "father of Roman eloquence" is Cicero; the "foremost judge of Roman poets" is Horace, who judged Plautus severely.
5 Horace, Epistles.

FRENCH

raison que ie disoy tantost, comme Martial de soy, *minus illi ingenio laborandum fuit, in cuius locum materia successerat.*

Ces premiers là, sans s'esmouuoir et sans se picquer se font assez sentir: ils ont dequoy rire par tout, il ne faut pas qu'ils se chatouillent: ceux-cy ont besoing de secours estranger: à mesure qu'ils ont moins d'esprit, il leur faut plus de corps: ils montent à cheual par ce qu'ils ne sont assez forts sur leurs iambes. Tout ainsi qu'en nos bals, ces hommes de vile condition, qui en tiennent escole, pour ne pouuoir representer le port et la decence de nostre noblesse, cherchent à se recommander par des sauts perilleux, et autres mouuemens estranges et basteleresques.

Et les dames ont meilleur marché de leur contenance, aux danses où il y a diuerses descoupeures et agitation de corps, qu'en certaines autres danses de parade, où elles n'ont simplement qu'à marcher vn pas naturel, et representer vn port naïf et leur grace ordinaire. Et comme i'ay veu aussi les badins excellens, vestus en leur à tous les iours, et en vne contenance commune, nous donner tout le plaisir qui se peut tirer de leur art: les apprentifs, qui ne sont de si haute leçon, auoir besoin de s'enfariner le visage, se trauestir, se contrefaire en mouuemens de grimaces sauuages, pour nous apprester à rire. Cette mienne conception se reconnoist mieux qu'en tout autre lieu, en la comparaison de l'Æneide et du Furieux.

Celuy-là on le voit aller à tire d'aisle, d'vn vol haut et ferme, suyuant tousiours sa poincte: cestuy-cy voleter et sauteler de conte en conte, comme de branche en branche, ne se fiant à ses aisles, que pour vne bien courte trauerse: et prendre pied à chasque bout de champ, de peur que l'haleine et la force luy faille, *Excursúsque breues tentat.* Voyla donc quant à cette sorte de subiects, les autheurs qui me plaisent le plus.

ENGLISH

stings with which Martial sharpens the tails of his. It is for the same reason I gave just now, as Martial said of himself: *his wit had less work to do, since the subject had taken its place.*

The former, without getting excited or goading themselves, make themselves felt well enough: they have something to laugh at everywhere, and need not tickle themselves. The latter need outside help: the less wit they have, the more body they need. They get on horseback because they are not strong enough on their own legs. Just so, at our balls, those men of low condition who run dancing schools, unable to reproduce the bearing and decorum of our nobility, try to recommend themselves by daring leaps and other strange, acrobatic movements.

And ladies have an easier time with their deportment in dances full of intricate steps and agitation of the body than in certain other dances of state, where they simply have to walk with a natural step and show a natural bearing and their ordinary grace. And I have also seen excellent clowns, dressed in their everyday clothes and with an ordinary countenance, give us all the pleasure that can be drawn from their art, while the apprentices, not so highly schooled, need to flour their faces, dress up in disguise, and contort themselves into wild grimaces to set us laughing. This notion of mine can be recognized better than anywhere else by comparing the Aeneid with the Orlando Furioso.[6]

The one we see soaring at full wing, in a high, steady flight, always holding its course; the other fluttering and hopping from tale to tale as from branch to branch, trusting its wings only for a very short crossing, and landing at every field's end for fear that its breath and strength might fail: *And it tries short flights.* There, then, as regards this kind of subject, are the authors who please me most.[7]

PLUTARCH AND SENECA

His two favorite moral authors are compared: Plutarch guides us, Seneca pushes us.

FRENCH

2.10.10 Quant à mon autre leçon, qui mesle vn peu plus de fruit au plaisir, par où i'apprens à renger mes opinions et

ENGLISH

As for my other reading, which mixes a little more profit with the pleasure, and from which I learn to

FRENCH

conditions, les liures qui m'y seruent, c'est Plutarque, depuis qu'il est François, et Seneque. Ils ont tous deux cette notable commodité pour mon humeur, que la science que i'y cherche, y est traictée à pieces décousues, qui ne demandent pas l'obligation d'vn long trauail, dequoy ie suis incapable. Ainsi sont les Opuscules de Plutarque et les Epistres de Seneque, qui sont la plus belle partie de leurs escrits, et la plus profitable. Il ne faut pas grande entreprinse pour m'y mettre, et les quitte où il me plaist. Car elles n'ont point de suite et dependance des vnes aux autres.

Ces autheurs se rencontrent en la plus part des opinions vtiles et vrayes: comme aussi leur fortune les fit naistre enuiron mesme siecle: tous deux precepteurs de deux Empereurs Romains: tous deux venus de pays estranger: tous deux riches et puissans. Leur instruction est de la cresme de la philosophie, et presentée d'vne simple façon et pertinente. Plutarque est plus vniforme et constant: Seneque plus ondoyant et diuers. Cettuy-cy se peine, se roidit et se tend pour armer la vertu contre la foiblesse, la crainte, et les vitieux appetis: l'autre semble n'estimer pas tant leur effort, et desdaigner d'en haster son pas et se mettre sur sa garde.

Plutarque a les opinions Platoniques, douces et accommodables à la societé ciuile: l'autre les a Stoïques et Epicuriennes, plus esloignées de l'vsage commun, mais selon moy plus commodes en particulier, et plus fermes. Il paroist en Seneque qu'il preste vn peu à la tyrannie des Empereurs de son temps: car ie tiens pour certain, que c'est d'vn iugement forcé, qu'il condamne la cause de ces genereux meurtriers de Cæsar: Plutarque est libre par tout. Seneque est plein de pointes et saillies, Plutarque de choses. Celuy là vous eschauffe plus, et vous esmeut, cestuy-cy vous contente d'auantage, et vous paye mieux: il nous guide, l'autre nous pousse.

ENGLISH

order my opinions and my conduct, the books that serve me are Plutarch, since he became French, and Seneca. They both have this notable advantage for my temperament: the knowledge I seek in them is treated in disconnected pieces, which do not impose the obligation of long labor, of which I am incapable. Such are Plutarch's Moral Essays and Seneca's Letters, which are the finest and most profitable part of their writings. It takes no great undertaking to get me into them, and I leave off wherever I please, for they have no sequence and do not depend on one another.

These authors agree in most of the useful and true opinions; and their fortune likewise had them born at about the same time. Both were tutors to Roman emperors; both came from foreign lands; both were rich and powerful. Their teaching is the cream of philosophy, presented in a simple and pertinent way. Plutarch is more uniform and constant; Seneca more undulating and diverse. Seneca toils, braces and strains to arm virtue against weakness, fear and vicious appetites; the other seems not to rate their power so highly, and disdains to quicken his pace or put himself on guard against them.

Plutarch's opinions are Platonic, mild and suited to civil society; the other's are Stoic and Epicurean, further removed from common practice, but in my view better suited to private life, and firmer. It shows in Seneca that he yields a little to the tyranny of the emperors of his time; for I hold it certain that it is with a forced judgment that he condemns the cause of those noble-hearted murderers of Caesar. Plutarch is free throughout. Seneca is full of points and sallies, Plutarch of substance. The former warms you more and moves you; the latter satisfies you more and repays you better. He guides us; the other pushes us.

CICERO'S LONG PREAMBLES

Cicero's prefaces and definitions bore him; he wants arguments that strike at once.

FRENCH

2.10.11 Quant à Cicero, les ouurages, qui me peuuent seruir chez luy à mon desseing, ce sont ceux qui traittent de la philosophie, specialement morale. Mais à confesser

ENGLISH

As for Cicero, the works of his that can serve my purpose are those that deal with philosophy, especially moral philosophy. But to confess the truth

7 Virgil, Georgics, describing bees.
6 Orlando Furioso (1516–1532), Ariosto's epic romance.

FRENCH

hardiment la verité (car puis qu'on a franchi les barrieres de l'impudence, il n'y a plus de bride) sa façon d'escrire me semble ennuyeuse: et toute autre pareille façon. Car ses prefaces, definitions, partitions, etymologies, consument la plus part de son ouurage. Ce qu'il y a de vif et de moüelle, est estouffé par ces longueries d'apprets.

Si i'ay employé vne heure à le lire, qui est beaucoup pour moy, et que ie r'amentoiue ce que i'en ay tiré de suc et de substance, la plus part du temps ie n'y treuue que du vent: car il n'est pas encor venu aux argumens, qui seruent à son propos, et aux raisons qui touchent proprement le neud que ie cherche. Pour moy, qui ne demande qu'à deuenir plus sage, non plus sçauant ou eloquent, ces ordonnances logiciennes et Aristoteliques ne sont pas à propos. Ie veux qu'on commence par le dernier poinct: i'entens assez que c'est que mort, et volupté, qu'on ne s'amuse pas à les anatomizer. Ie cherche des raisons bonnes et fermes, d'arriuée, qui m'instruisent à en soustenir l'effort.

Ny les subtilitez grammairiennes, ny l'ingenieuse contexture de parolles et d'argumentations, n'y seruent. Ie veux des discours qui donnent la premiere charge dans le plus fort du doubte: les siens languissent autour du pot. Ils sont bons pour l'escole, pour le barreau, et pour le sermon, où nous auons loisir de sommeiller: et sommes encores vn quart d'heure apres, assez à temps, pour en retrouuer le fil. Il est besoin de parler ainsin aux iuges, qu'on veut gaigner à tort ou à droit, aux enfans, et au vulgaire, à qui il faut tout dire, et voir ce qui portera. Ie ne veux pas qu'on s'employe à me rendre attentif, et qu'on me crie cinquante fois, Or oyez, à la mode de nos heraux.

Les Romains disoyent en leur religion, *Hoc age*: que nous disons en la nostre, *Sursum corda*, ce sont autant de parolles perdues pour moy. I'y viens tout preparé du logis: il ne me faut point d'alechement, ny de saulse: ie mange bien la viande toute crue: et au lieu de m'esguiser l'appetit par ces preparatoires et auant-ieux, on me le lasse et affadit. La licence du temps m'excusera elle de cette sacrilege audace, d'estimer aussi trainans les dialogismes de Platon mesme, estouffans par trop sa matiere? Et de pleindre le temps que met à ces longues interlocutions vaines et preparatoires, vn homme, qui auoit tant de meilleures choses à dire?

ENGLISH

boldly (for once you have crossed the barriers of impudence, there is no more holding back), his way of writing seems tedious to me, and so does every other way like it. His prefaces, definitions, divisions and etymologies use up most of his work. Whatever is lively and marrowy in it is smothered by these long-drawn-out preparations.

If I have spent an hour reading him, which is a lot for me, and I recall what juice and substance I have drawn from it, most of the time I find nothing but wind; for he has not yet come to the arguments that serve his purpose, or to the reasons that really touch the knot I am looking for. For me, who ask only to become wiser, not more learned or eloquent, these logical and Aristotelian arrangements are beside the point. I want a writer to begin with the last point. I understand well enough what death and pleasure are; let him not waste time dissecting them. I look for good, solid reasons from the outset, to teach me how to withstand their assault.

Neither grammatical subtleties nor the ingenious weaving of words and arguments are of any use here. I want reasonings that make their first charge at the strongest point of the doubt; his languish around the edges of the pot. They are good for the school, the bar and the pulpit, where we have leisure to doze off, and are still in good time, a quarter of an hour later, to pick up the thread. That is how one has to speak to judges whom one wants to win over, rightly or wrongly; to children; and to the common people, to whom one must say everything and see what hits home. I do not want anyone to labor to make me attentive, crying out to me fifty times, "Now hear this!" in the manner of our heralds.

The Romans said in their religion, *Attend to this*, as we say in ours, *Lift up your hearts*: these are so many words wasted on me. I come from home fully prepared; I need no enticement and no sauce; I can eat my meat quite raw. And instead of whetting my appetite, these preliminaries and preambles tire it and dull it. Will the license of our times excuse me for this sacrilegious audacity of finding even Plato's dialogues dragging too, smothering his matter far too much? And for lamenting the time that a man who had so many better things to say spends on these long, empty, preparatory exchanges?

FRENCH

Mon ignorance m'excusera mieux, sur ce que ie ne voy rien en la beauté de son langage. Ie demande en general les liures qui vsent des sciences, non ceux qui les dressent. Les deux premiers, et Pline, et leurs semblables, ils n'ont point de *Hoc age*, ils veulent auoir à faire à gens qui s'en soyent aduertis eux mesmes: ou s'ils en ont, c'est vn, *Hoc age*, substantiel et qui a son corps à part.

2.10.12 Ie voy aussi volontiers les Epistres *ad Atticum*, non seulement par ce qu'elles contiennent vne tresample instruction de l'Histoire et affaires de son temps: mais beaucoup plus pour y descouurir ses humeurs priuées. Car i'ay vne singuliere curiosité, comme i'ay dict ailleurs, de connoistre l'ame et les naïfs iugemens de mes autheurs. Il faut bien iuger leur suffisance, mais non pas leurs mœurs, ny eux par cette montre de leurs escris, qu'ils étalent au theatre du monde. I'ay mille fois regretté, que nous ayons perdu le liure que Brutus auoit escrit de la vertu: car il fait bel apprendre la theorique de ceux qui sçauent bien la practique.

Mais d'autant que c'est autre chose le presche, que le prescheur: i'ayme bien autant voir Brutus chez Plutarque, que chez luy-mesme. Ie choisiroy plustost de sçauoir au vray les deuis qu'il tenoit en sa tente, à quelqu'vn de ses priuez amis, la veille d'vne bataille, que les propos qu'il tint le lendemain à son armée: et qu'il faisoit en son cabinet et en sa chambre, que ce qu'il faisoit emmy la place et au Senat.

2.10.13 Quant à Cicero, ie suis du iugement commun, que hors la science, il n'y auoit pas beaucoup d'excellence en son ame: il estoit bon citoyen, d'vne nature debonnaire, comme sont volontiers les hommes gras, et gosseurs, tel qu'il estoit, mais de mollesse et de vanité ambitieuse, il en auoit sans mentir beaucoup. Et si ne sçay comment l'excuser d'auoir estimé sa poësie digne d'estre mise en lumiere. Ce n'est pas grande imperfection, que de mal faire des vers, mais c'est imperfection de n'auoir pas senty combien ils estoyent indignes de la gloire de son nom. Quant à son eloquence, elle est du tout hors de comparaison, ie croy que iamais homme ne l'egalera.

Le ieune Cicero, qui n'a ressemblé son pere que de nom, commandant en Asie, il se trouua vn iour en sa table plusieurs estrangers, et entre autres Cæstius assis au bas bout, comme on se fourre souuent aux tables ouuertes

ENGLISH

My ignorance will excuse me better, since I see nothing in the beauty of his language. In general I ask for books that make use of the sciences, not those that set them up. The first two, and Pliny, and their like, have no *Attend to this*; they want to deal with people who have alerted themselves. Or if they do have one, it is a substantial *Attend to this*, with a body of its own.[8]

I also enjoy reading the letters to Atticus, not only because they contain very ample instruction on the history and affairs of his time, but much more to discover his private temperament in them. For I have a singular curiosity, as I have said elsewhere, to know the soul and the natural judgments of my authors. We must indeed judge their ability, but not their character, nor themselves, by the display of their writings that they put on in the theater of the world. I have regretted a thousand times that we have lost the book Brutus wrote on virtue; for it is a fine thing to learn the theory from those who know the practice well.[9]

But since the sermon is one thing and the preacher another, I like seeing Brutus in Plutarch just as much as in his own work. I would rather know truly what he talked about in his tent with one of his intimate friends on the eve of a battle than the speech he made to his army the next day; and what he did in his study and his bedroom than what he did in the public square and the Senate.

As for Cicero, I share the common judgment that, apart from his learning, there was not much excellence in his soul. He was a good citizen, of a kindly nature, as fat and jesting men like him tend to be; but of softness and ambitious vanity he had, to tell the truth, a great deal. And I do not know how to excuse him for having thought his poetry worth publishing. It is no great imperfection to write bad verse; but it is an imperfection not to have sensed how unworthy his verses were of the glory of his name. As for his eloquence, it is wholly beyond comparison; I believe no man will ever equal it.

Young Cicero, who resembled his father only in name, was commanding in Asia when one day several strangers happened to be at his table, among them Cestius, seated at the lower end, as people

8 The "first two" are Plutarch and Seneca.
9 Cicero's letters to his close friend Titus Pomponius Atticus.

FRENCH

des grands: Cicero s'informa qui il estoit à l'vn de ses gents, qui luy dit son nom: mais comme celuy qui songeoit ailleurs, et qui oublioit ce qu'on luy respondoit, il le luy redemanda encore dépuis deux ou trois fois: le seruiteur pour n'estre plus en peine de luy redire si souuent mesme chose, et pour le luy faire cognoistre par quelque circonstance, C'est, dit-il, ce Cæstius de qui on vous a dict, qu'il ne fait pas grand estat de l'eloquence de vostre pere au prix de la sienne: Cicero s'estant soudain picqué de cela, commanda qu'on empoignast ce pauure Cæstius, et le fit tres-bien fouëter en sa presence: voyla vn mal courtois hoste.

Entre ceux mesmes, qui ont estimé toutes choses contées cette sienne eloquence incomparable, il y en a eu, qui n'ont pas laissé d'y remerquer des fautes. Comme ce grand Brutus son amy, disoit que c'estoit vne eloquence cassée et esrenée, *fractam et elumbem*. Les orateurs voisins de son siecle, reprenoyent aussi en luy, ce curieux soing de certaine longue cadance, au bout de ses clauses, et notoient ces mots, *esse videatur*, qu'il y employe si souuent. Pour moy, i'ayme mieux vne cadance qui tombe plus court, coupée en yambes. Si mesle il par fois bien rudement ses nombres, mais rarement. I'en ay remerqué ce lieu à mes aureilles. *Ego verò me minus diu senem esse mallem, quàm esse senem, antequam essem.*

ENGLISH

often push their way in at the open tables of the great. Cicero asked one of his men who he was, and the man told him his name. But like someone whose mind was elsewhere and who forgot what he was told, he asked again two or three times afterward. The servant, to spare himself the trouble of repeating the same thing so often, and to make him know the man by some circumstance, said: "It is that Cestius who, you were told, does not think much of your father's eloquence compared with his own." Cicero, suddenly stung by this, ordered that poor Cestius to be seized and had him soundly flogged in his presence. There's a discourteous host for you.[10]

Even among those who have judged this eloquence of his incomparable, all things considered, there have been some who did not fail to note faults in it. Thus the great Brutus, his friend, said that it was a broken eloquence, weak in the back: *broken and loinless*. Orators close to his century also criticized in him his elaborate care for a certain long cadence at the end of his periods, and remarked on the words *it would seem to be*, which he uses so often. For my part, I prefer a cadence that falls shorter, cut into iambs. Yet he does sometimes jumble his rhythms quite roughly, though rarely. My ears have noted this passage: *For my part, I would rather be old for a shorter time than be old before my time.*[11]

HISTORIANS

He prefers simple chroniclers or excellent ones, and above all Caesar and Plutarch's lives.

FRENCH

2.10.14 Les historiens sont ma droitte bale: car ils sont plaisans et aysez: et quant et quant l'homme en general, de qui ie cherche la cognoissance, y paroist plus vif et plus entier qu'en nul autre lieu: la varieté et verité de ses conditions internes, en gros et en detail, la diuersité des moyens de son assemblage, et des accidents qui le menacent. Or ceux qui escriuent les vies, d'autant qu'ils s'amusent plus aux conseils qu'aux euenemens: plus à ce qui part du dedans, qu'à ce qui arriue au dehors: ceux là me sont plus propres. Voyla pourquoy en toutes sortes, c'est mon homme que Plutarque. Ie suis bien marry que nous n'ayons vne douzaine de Laërtius, ou qu'il ne soit plus estendu, ou plus entendu.

ENGLISH

Historians are right in my court, for they are pleasant and easy; and at the same time man in general, whom I seek to know, appears in them more alive and more whole than anywhere else: the variety and truth of his inner qualities, in the mass and in detail, the diversity of the ways he is put together, and of the accidents that threaten him. Now those who write lives, since they dwell more on intentions than on events, more on what comes from within than on what happens outside, suit me best. That is why, in every way, Plutarch is my man. I am very sorry that we do not have a

10 Marcus Tullius Cicero the Younger, the orator's son; the story is told by Seneca the Elder.
11 Brutus' phrase is reported by Tacitus, Dialogue on Orators; the last quotation is from Cicero, On Old Age.

FRENCH

ENGLISH

dozen Laertiuses, or that he is not more ample or more able.[12]

Car ie suis pareillement curieux de cognoistre les fortunes et la vie de ces grands precepteurs du monde, comme de cognoistre la diuersité de leurs dogmes et fantasies. En ce genre d'estude des Histoires, il faut feuilleter sans distinction toutes sortes d'autheurs et vieils et nouueaux, et barragouins et François, pour y apprendre les choses, dequoy diuersement ils traictent.

For I am just as curious to know the fortunes and lives of these great teachers of the world as to know the diversity of their doctrines and notions. In this kind of historical study, one must leaf through all sorts of authors without distinction, old and new, in outlandish tongues and in French, to learn the things they treat in their various ways.

2.10.15 Mais Cæsar singulierement me semble meriter qu'on l'estudie, non pour la science de l'Histoire seulement, mais pour luy mesme: tant il a de perfection et d'excellence par dessus tous les autres: quoy que Salluste soit du nombre. Certes ie lis cet autheur auec vn peu plus de reuerence et de respect, qu'on ne lit les humains ouurages: tantost le considerant luy-mesme par ses actions, et le miracle de sa grandeur: tantost la pureté et inimitable polissure de son langage, qui a surpassé non seulement tous les historiens, comme dit Cicero, mais à l'aduenture Cicero mesme.

But Caesar in particular seems to me to deserve study, not only for the knowledge of history but for himself, so far does his perfection and excellence rise above all the others, though Sallust is one of them. Indeed I read this author with a little more reverence and respect than one reads human works: sometimes considering the man himself through his actions and the miracle of his greatness, sometimes the purity and inimitable polish of his language, which surpassed not only all historians, as Cicero says, but perhaps even Cicero himself.

Auec tant de syncerité en ses iugemens, parlant de ses ennemis, que sauf les fausses couleurs, dequoy il veut couurir sa mauuaise cause, et l'ordure de sa pestilente ambition, ie pense qu'en cela seul on y puisse trouuer à redire, qu'il a esté trop espargnant à parler de soy: car tant de grandes choses ne peuuent auoir esté executées par luy, qu'il n'y soit allé beaucoup plus du sien, qu'il n'y en met.

There is such sincerity in his judgments when he speaks of his enemies that, apart from the false colors with which he tries to cover his bad cause and the filth of his pestilent ambition, I think the only fault one can find in him is that he was too sparing in speaking of himself. For so many great things cannot have been carried out by him without his own share in them being much greater than he puts in.

2.10.16 I'ayme les historiens, ou fort simples, ou excellens. Les simples, qui n'ont point dequoy y mesler quelque chose du leur, et qui n'y apportent que le soin, et la diligence de r'amasser tout ce qui vient à leur notice, et d'enregistrer à la bonne foy toutes choses, sans chois et sans triage, nous laissent le iugement entier, pour la cognoissance de la verité. Tel est entre autres pour exemple, le bon Froissard, qui a marché en son entreprise d'vne si franche naïfueté, qu'ayant faict vne faute, il ne craint aucunement de la recognoistre et corriger, en l'endroit, où il en a esté aduerty: et qui nous represente la diuersité mesme des bruits qui couroyent, et les differens rapports qu'on luy faisoit.

I like historians who are either very simple or excellent. The simple ones, who have nothing of their own to mix in, and who bring only the care and diligence to gather everything that comes to their notice and to record everything in good faith, without choosing or sorting, leave our judgment intact for discerning the truth. Such, for example, among others, is good Froissart, who went about his undertaking with such frank naturalness that, having made a mistake, he is not in the least afraid to acknowledge and correct it at the point where he was told of it; and who gives us even the diversity of the rumors that were going around and the different reports that were made to him.[13]

12 Diogenes Laertius (3rd century AD), author of the Lives of the Philosophers.
13 Jean Froissart (c. 1337–c. 1405), chronicler of the Hundred Years' War.

FRENCH

C’est la matiere de l’Histoire nuë et informe: chacun en peut faire son profit autant qu’il a d’entendement. Les bien excellens ont la suffisance de choisir ce qui est digne d’estre sçeu, peuuent trier de deux rapports celuy qui est plus vray-semblable: de la condition des Princes et de leurs humeurs, ils en concluent les conseils, et leur attribuent les paroles conuenables: ils ont raison de prendre l’authorité de regler nostre creance à la leur: mais certes cela n’appartient à gueres de gens.

Ceux d’entre-deux, qui est la plus commune façon, ceux là nous gastent tout: ils veulent nous mascher les morceaux; ils se donnent loy de iuger et par consequent d’incliner l’Histoire à leur fantasie: car depuis que le iugement pend d’vn costé, on ne se peut garder de contourner et tordre la narration à ce biais. Ils entreprennent de choisir les choses dignes d’estre sçeuës, et nous cachent souuent telle parole, telle action priuée, qui nous instruiroit mieux: obmettent pour choses incroyables celles qu’ils n’entendent pas: et peut estre encore telle chose pour ne la sçauoir dire en bon Latin ou François.

Qu’ils estalent hardiment leur eloquence et leur discours: qu’ils iugent à leur poste, mais qu’ils nous laissent aussi dequoy iuger apres eux: et qu’ils n’alterent ny dispensent par leurs racourcimens et par leur choix, rien sur le corps de la matiere: ains qu’ils nous la r’enuoyent pure et entiere en toutes ses dimensions.

2.10.17 Le plus souuent on trie pour cette charge, et notamment en ces siecles icy, des personnes d’entre le vulgaire, pour cette seule consideration de sçauoir bien parler: comme si nous cherchions d’y apprendre la grammaire: et eux ont raison n’ayans esté gagez que pour cela, et n’ayans mis en vente que le babil, de ne se soucier aussi principalement que de cette partie. Ainsin à force de beaux mots ils nous vont patissant vne belle contexture des bruits, qu’ils ramassent és carrefours des villes. Les seules bonnes Histoires sont celles, qui ont esté escrites par ceux mesmes qui commandoient aux affaires, ou qui estoient participans à les conduire, ou au moins qui ont eu la fortune d’en conduire d’autres de mesme sorte.

Telles sont quasi toutes les Grecques et Romaines. Car plusieurs tesmoings oculaires ayans escrit de mesme subiect (comme il aduenoit en ce temps là, que la grandeur et le sçauoir se rencontroient communement)

ENGLISH

That is the raw material of history, bare and unshaped; each person can profit from it as far as his understanding allows. The truly excellent ones have the ability to choose what is worth knowing; they can pick out, of two reports, the more likely one; from the situation and temperament of princes they infer their intentions and attribute fitting words to them. They are right to take on the authority to regulate our belief by theirs; but certainly that belongs to very few people.

Those in between, who are the commonest kind, spoil everything for us. They want to chew our food for us; they give themselves license to judge, and consequently to bend history to their own notion. For once judgment leans to one side, one cannot help turning and twisting the narrative in that direction. They take it upon themselves to choose the things worth knowing, and often hide from us some word, some private action, that would teach us more; they leave out as incredible the things they do not understand, and perhaps some things too because they cannot express them in good Latin or French.

Let them boldly display their eloquence and their reasoning; let them judge as they please; but let them also leave us something to judge after them. And let them neither alter nor rearrange anything in the body of the material by their abridgments and their choices, but hand it on to us pure and whole in all its dimensions.

Most often, and especially in these times of ours, people are chosen for this task from among the common sort, for the sole reason that they know how to speak well—as if what we were looking to learn from it were grammar! And they are right, having been hired only for that and having put nothing up for sale but their chatter, to care mainly about that part. So, by dint of fine words, they knead us a fine pastry out of the rumors they pick up at the town crossroads. The only good histories are those written by the very men who were in command of affairs, or who had a part in conducting them, or who at least had the fortune to conduct others of the same kind.

Such are almost all the Greek and Roman ones. For when several eyewitnesses have written on the same subject (as happened in those times, when greatness and learning commonly went together),

FRENCH	ENGLISH
s'il y a de la faute, elle doit estre merueilleusement legere, et sur vn accident fort doubteux. Que peut on esperer d'vn medecin traictant de la guerre, ou d'vn escholier traictant les desseins des Princes?	if there is any error it must be marvelously slight, and about some very doubtful incident. What can one expect from a doctor writing about war, or a scholar writing about the designs of princes?
Si nous voulons remerquer la religion, que les Romains auoient en cela, il n'en faut que cet exemple: Asinius Pollio trouuoit és histoires mesme de Cæsar quelque mesconte, en quoy il estoit tombé, pour n'auoir peu ietter les yeux en tous les endroits de son armée, et en auoir creu les particuliers, qui luy rapportoient souuent des choses non assez verifiées, ou bien pour n'auoir esté assez curieusement aduerty par ses lieutenans des choses, qu'ils auoient conduites en son absence.	If we want to see how scrupulous the Romans were in this, we need only this example. Asinius Pollio found, even in Caesar's histories, some errors he had fallen into—either because he had not been able to cast his eyes over every part of his army and had believed individuals who often reported to him things not sufficiently verified, or because he had not been informed carefully enough by his lieutenants of the operations they had conducted in his absence.[14]
On peut voir par là, si cette recherche de la verité est delicate, qu'on ne se puisse pas fier d'vn combat à la science de celuy, qui y a commandé; ny aux soldats, de ce qui s'est passé pres d'eux, si à la mode d'vne information iudiciaire, on ne confronte les tesmoins, et reçoit les obiects sur la preuue des ponctilles, de chaque accident. Vrayement la connoissance que nous auons de nos affaires est bien plus lasche. Mais cecy a esté suffisamment traicté par Bodin, et selon ma conception.	You can see from this how delicate a thing this search for truth is, since one cannot trust the knowledge of the man who commanded a battle about that battle, nor the soldiers about what happened near them, unless, as in a judicial inquiry, the witnesses are confronted and objections are admitted on proof of the finest details of each incident. Truly, the knowledge we have of our own affairs is much looser. But this has been treated sufficiently by Bodin, and in line with my own view.[15]

NOTES IN THE BACK OF HIS BOOKS

He copies out the verdicts he wrote on Guicciardini, Commynes and the du Bellay memoirs.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
2.10.18	Pour subuenir vn peu à la trahison de ma memoire, et à son defaut, si extreme, qu'il m'est aduenu plus d'vne fois, de reprendre en main des liures, comme recents, et à moy inconnus, que i'auoy leu soigneusement quelques années au parauant, et barbouillé de mes notes: i'ay pris en coustume dépuis quelque temps, d'adiouster au bout de chasque liure, ie dis de ceux desquels ie ne me veux seruir qu'vne fois, le temps auquel i'ay acheué de le lire, et le iugement que i'en ay retiré en gros: à fin que cela me represente au moins l'air et idée generale que i'auois conceu de l'autheur en le lisant. Ie veux icy transcrire aucunes de ces annotations.	To make up a little for the treachery of my memory and its failing—so extreme that it has happened to me more than once to pick up again, as new and unknown to me, books I had read carefully a few years before and scribbled over with my notes—I have made it my custom for some time now to add at the end of each book (I mean those I intend to use only once) the date when I finished reading it and the judgment I formed of it as a whole, so that this may at least bring back to me the general air and idea I had conceived of the author while reading him. I want to transcribe some of these annotations here.
2.10.19	Voicy ce que ie mis il y a enuiron dix ans en mon Guicciardin: car quelque langue que parlent mes liures, ie	Here is what I wrote about ten years ago in my Guicciardini (for whatever language my books

14 Gaius Asinius Pollio (76 BC–AD 4), Roman statesman and historian; his criticism is reported by Suetonius.
15 Jean Bodin (1530–1596), in his Method for the Easy Understanding of History (1566).

FRENCH

leur parle en la mienne. Il est historiographe diligent, et duquel à mon aduis, autant exactement que de nul autre, on peut apprendre la verité des affaires de son temps: aussi en la pluspart en a-t-il esté acteur luy mesme, et en rang honnorable. Il n'y a aucune apparence que par haine, faueur, ou vanité il ayt déguisé les choses: dequoy font foy les libres iugemens qu'il donne des grands: et notamment de ceux, par lesquels il auoit esté auancé, et employé aux charges, comme du Pape Clement septiesme.

Quant à la partie dequoy il semble se vouloir preualoir le plus, qui sont ses digressions et discours, il y en a de bons et enrichis de beaux traits, mais il s'y est trop pleu. Car pour ne vouloir rien laisser à dire, ayant vn suiect si plain et ample et à peu pres infiny, il en deuient lasche, et sentant vn peu le caquet scholastique.

I'ay aussi remerqué cecy, que de tant d'ames et effects qu'il iuge, de tant de mouuemens et conseils, il n'en rapporte iamais vn seul à la vertu, religion, et conscience: comme si ces parties là estoyent du tout esteintes au monde: et de toutes les actions, pour belles par apparence qu'elles soient d'elles mesmes, il en reiecte la cause à quelque occasion vitieuse, ou à quelque proufit. Il est impossible d'imaginer, que parmy cet infiny nombre d'actions, dequoy il iuge, il n'y en ait eu quelqu'vne produite par la voye de la raison. Nulle corruption peut auoir saisi les hommes si vniuersellement, que quelqu'vn n'eschappe de la contagion.

Cela me fait craindre qu'il y aye vn peu de vice de son goust, et peut estre aduenu, qu'il ait estimé d'autruy selon soy.

2.10.20 En mon Philippe de Comines, il y a cecy: Vous y trouuerez le langage doux et aggreable, d'vne naïfue simplicité, la narration pure, et en laquelle la bonne foy de l'autheur reluit euidemment, exempte de vanité parlant de soy, et d'affection et d'enuie parlant d'autruy: ses discours et enhortemens, accompaignez, plus de bon zele et de verité, que d'aucune exquise suffisance, et tout par tout de l'authorité et grauité, representant son homme de bon lieu, et éleué aux grans affaires.

2.10.21 Sur les Memoires de monsieur du Bellay: C'est toujours plaisir de voir les choses escrites par ceux, qui ont essayé comme il les faut conduire: mais il ne se peut nier qu'il ne se découure evidemment en ces deux Seigneurs icy vn

ENGLISH

speak, I speak to them in mine): He is a diligent historian, from whom, in my opinion, one can learn the truth about the affairs of his time as exactly as from anyone; indeed, in most of them he was himself an actor, and in an honorable rank. There is no sign that he disguised things out of hatred, favor or vanity. The free judgments he passes on the great bear witness to this, notably on those who had advanced him and employed him in office, such as Pope Clement VII.

As for the part he seems to want to pride himself on most, namely his digressions and reflections, there are good ones, enriched with fine touches; but he took too much pleasure in them. For in not wanting to leave anything unsaid, with a subject so full and ample and almost infinite, he becomes slack and smacks a little of scholastic chatter.

I have also noticed this: of all the souls and deeds he judges, of all the motives and intentions, he never attributes a single one to virtue, religion or conscience, as if those qualities were entirely extinct in the world. And for every action, however fine it may appear in itself, he throws the cause back on some vicious motive or some profit. It is impossible to imagine that among the infinite number of actions he judges there was not at least one produced by way of reason. No corruption can have seized men so universally that someone does not escape the contagion.

This makes me fear that there was some flaw in his own taste, and that he may have judged others by himself.

In my Philippe de Commynes there is this: You will find here a gentle and pleasant language, of natural simplicity; a pure narrative, in which the author's good faith shines out clearly, free of vanity when he speaks of himself and of partiality and envy when he speaks of others; his reflections and exhortations marked more by good zeal and truth than by any exquisite ability; and, throughout, authority and gravity, showing him to be a man of good family, brought up in great affairs.[16]

On the Memoirs of Monsieur du Bellay: It is always a pleasure to see things written by those who have tried out how they should be managed. But it cannot be denied that these two lords show a great

16 Philippe de Commynes (c. 1447–1511), counselor of Louis XI and author of Memoirs.

FRENCH

grand dechet de la franchise et liberté d'escrire, qui reluit és anciens de leur sorte: comme au Sire de Iouinuille domestique de S. Loys, Eginard chancelier de Charlemaigne, et de plus fresche memoire en Philippe de Comines. C'est icy plustost vn plaidoyer pour le Roy François, contre l'Empereur Charles cinquiesme, qu'vne Histoire.

Ie ne veux pas croire, qu'ils ayent rien changé, quant au gros du faict, mais de contourner le iugement des euenemens souuent contre raison, à nostre auantage, et d'obmettre tout ce qu'il y a de chatouilleux en la vie de leur maistre, ils en font mestier: tesmoing les reculemens de Messieurs de Montmorency et de Brion, qui y sont oubliez, voire le seul nom de Madame d'Estampes, ne s'y trouue point. On peut couurir les actions secrettes, mais de taire ce que tout le monde sçait, et les choses qui ont tiré des effects publiques, et de telle consequence, c'est vn defaut inexcusable. Somme pour auoir l'entiere connoissance du Roy François, et des choses aduenuës de son temps, qu'on s'addresse ailleurs, si on m'en croit.

Ce qu'on peut faire icy de profit, c'est par la deduction particuliere des batailles et exploits de guerre, où ces Gentils-hommes se sont trouuez: quelques paroles et actions priuées d'aucuns Princes de leur temps, et les pratiques et negociations conduites par le Seigneur de Langeay, où il y a tout plein de choses dignes d'estre sceues, et des discours non vulgaires.

ENGLISH

falling-off from the frankness and freedom of writing that shine in the older writers of their kind—such as the Sire de Joinville, of the household of Saint Louis; Einhard, chancellor of Charlemagne; and, more recently, Philippe de Commynes. This is a plea for King Francis against the Emperor Charles V rather than a history.[17]

I am unwilling to believe that they changed anything in the main facts; but they make a practice of twisting the judgment of events in our favor, often against reason, and of omitting everything ticklish in their master's life. Witness the disgraces of Messieurs de Montmorency and de Brion, which are left out; indeed, the very name of Madame d'Étampes is nowhere to be found. Secret actions may be covered up; but to keep silent about what everyone knows, and about things that have had public effects of such consequence, is an inexcusable fault. In short, if you want a full knowledge of King Francis and of what happened in his time, look elsewhere, if you take my advice.[18]

Whatever profit can be had here lies in the detailed account of the battles and feats of arms in which these gentlemen took part; in some private words and actions of certain princes of their time; and in the dealings and negotiations conducted by the Seigneur de Langey, which contain plenty of things worth knowing, and reflections out of the ordinary.

17 The Memoirs (1569) were by the brothers Martin and Guillaume du Bellay; Einhard wrote a life of Charlemagne.
18 Anne de Montmorency and Philippe Chabot, seigneur de Brion, both fell from royal favor; Madame d'Étampes was the mistress of Francis I.

II.11 Of Cruelty

De la cruauté

Distinguishing struggling virtue from easy natural goodness, Montaigne declares his horror of cruelty, even toward animals, as the extreme of all vices.

FRENCH

ENGLISH

2.11.1 IL me semble que la vertu est chose autre, et plus noble, que les inclinations à la bonté, qui naissent en nous. Les ames reglées d'elles mesmes et bien nées, elles suyuent mesme train, et representent en leurs actions, mesme visage que les vertueuses. Mais la vertu sonne ie ne sçay quoy de plus grand et de plus actif, que de se laisser par vne heureuse complexion, doucement et paisiblement conduire à la suite de la raison.

It seems to me that virtue is something different from, and nobler than, the inclinations to goodness that are born in us. Souls that are well regulated of themselves and well born follow the same course, and show the same face in their actions, as virtuous ones. But virtue has the ring of something greater and more active than letting oneself, through a happy disposition, be led gently and peacefully in the train of reason.

Celuy qui d'vne douceur et facilité naturelle, mespriseroit les offences receuës, feroit chose tresbelle et digne de loüange: mais celuy qui picqué et outré iusques au vif d'vne offence, s'armeroit des armes de la raison contre ce furieux appetit de vengeance, et apres vn grand conflict, s'en rendroit en fin maistre, feroit sans doubte beaucoup plus. Celuy-là feroit bien, et cestuy-cy vertueusement: l'vne action se pourroit dire bonté, l'autre vertu. Car il semble que le nom de la vertu presuppose de la difficulté et du contraste, et qu'elle ne peut s'exercer sans partie. C'est à l'auenture pourquoy nous nommons Dieu bon, fort, et liberal, et iuste, mais nous ne le nommons pas vertueux. Ses operations sont toutes naïfues et sans effort.

A man who, out of natural gentleness and easiness, made light of the injuries done him would do a very fine thing, worthy of praise. But a man who, stung and outraged to the quick by an injury, armed himself with the arms of reason against this furious appetite for vengeance, and after a great struggle finally mastered it, would without doubt do much more. The first would be acting well, the second virtuously; the one action might be called goodness, the other virtue. For it seems that the very name of virtue presupposes difficulty and struggle, and that it cannot be exercised without an opponent. That is perhaps why we call God good, mighty, generous and just, but we do not call him virtuous. His workings are all natural and effortless.

2.11.2 Des philosophes non seulement Stoiciens, mais encore Epicuriens (et cette enchere ie l'emprunte de l'opinion commune, qui est fauce, quoy que die ce subtil rencontre d'Arcesilaüs, à celuy qui luy reprochoit, que beaucoup de gents passoient de son eschole en l'Epicurienne, et iamais au rebours: Ie croy bien. Des coqs il se fait des chappons assez, mais des chappons il ne s'en fait iamais des coqs. Car à la verité en fermeté et rigueur d'opinions et de preceptes, la secte Epicurienne ne cede aucunement à la Stoique.

Some philosophers—not only Stoics but even Epicureans (and this "even" I borrow from common opinion, which is false, whatever may be said for that witty retort of Arcesilaus to the man who reproached him that many people went over from his school to the Epicurean, and never the other way round: "I can well believe it. Plenty of capons are made out of cocks, but no cock was ever made out of a capon." For in truth, in firmness and rigor of opinions and precepts, the Epicurean sect yields nothing to the Stoic.

Et vn Stoicien reconnoissant meilleure foy, que ces disputateurs, qui pour combattre Epicurus, et se donner

And a certain Stoic, showing better faith than those debaters who, to combat Epicurus and give

FRENCH

beau ieu, luy font dire ce à quoy il ne pensa iamais, contournans ses paroles à gauche, argumentans par la loy grammairienne, autre sens de sa façon de parler, et autre creance, que celle qu'ils sçauent qu'il auoit en l'ame, et en ses mœurs, dit qu'il a laissé d'estre Epicurien, pour cette consideration entre autres, qu'il trouue leur route trop hautaine et inaccessible: *et ij qui* φιληδονοι *vocantur, sunt* φιλοχαλοι *et* φιλοδιχαιοι, *omnésque virtutes et colunt, et retinent*).

Des philosophes Stoiciens et Epicuriens, dis-ie, il y en a plusieurs qui ont iugé, que ce n'estoit pas assez d'auoir l'ame en bonne assiette, bien reglée et bien disposée à la vertu: ce n'estoit pas assez d'auoir nos resolutions et nos discours, au dessus de tous les efforts de Fortune: mais qu'il falloit encore rechercher les occasions d'en venir à la preuue: ils veulent quester de la douleur, de la necessité, et du mespris, pour les combattre, et pour tenir leur ame en haleine: *multum sibi adijcit virtus lacessita*.

2.11.3 C'est l'vne des raisons, pourquoy Epaminondas, qui estoit encore d'vne tierce secte, refuse des richesses que la Fortune luy met en main, par vne voye tres-legitime: pour auoir, dit-il, à s'escrimer contre la pauureté, en laquelle extreme il se maintint tousiours. Socrates s'essayoit, ce me semble, encor plus rudement, conseruant pour son exercice, la malignité de sa femme, qui est vn essay à fer esmoulu.

Metellus ayant seul de tous les Senateurs Romains entrepris par l'effort de sa vertu, de soustenir la violence de Saturninus tribun du peuple à Rome, qui vouloit à toute force faire passer vne loy iniuste, en faueur de la commune: et ayant encouru par là, les peines capitales que Saturninus auoit establies contre les refusans, entretenoit ceux, qui en cette extremité, le conduisoient en la place de tels propos: Que c'estoit chose trop facile et trop lasche que de mal faire; et que de faire bien, où il n'y eust point de danger, c'estoit chose vulgaire: mais de faire bien, où il y eust danger, c'estoit le propre office d'vn homme de vertu.

ENGLISH

themselves an easy game, make him say what he never thought, twisting his words the wrong way and arguing by the rules of grammar for another meaning in his way of speaking, and another belief, than the one they know he had in his soul and in his conduct—this Stoic says that he gave up being an Epicurean for this reason among others: that he found their road too lofty and inaccessible. *And those who are called* lovers of pleasure *are in fact* lovers of honor *and* lovers of justice, *and they cultivate and practice all the virtues*).[1]

Of these Stoic and Epicurean philosophers, I say, there are many who have judged that it was not enough to have the soul well settled, well ordered and well disposed to virtue; it was not enough to have our resolutions and our reasoning above all the assaults of Fortune; we must also seek out occasions to put them to the proof. They want to go looking for pain, need and contempt, in order to fight them and keep their soul in training: *virtue gains much when it is challenged*.[2]

This is one of the reasons why Epaminondas, who belonged to yet a third sect, refuses riches that Fortune puts into his hands by a perfectly legitimate means: in order, he says, to have poverty to fence with; and he always kept himself in extreme poverty. Socrates tested himself, it seems to me, still more harshly, keeping his wife's ill temper for his exercise—which is a trial with sharpened blades.[3]

Metellus, alone of all the Roman senators, undertook by the strength of his virtue to withstand the violence of Saturninus, tribune of the people at Rome, who was determined at all costs to pass an unjust law in favor of the common people. Having thereby incurred the capital penalties that Saturninus had established against those who refused, he talked in this way to those who, in this extremity, were leading him to the public square: that it was too easy and too cowardly a thing to do wrong; that to do right where there was no danger was a common thing; but that to do right where there was danger was the proper duty of a man of virtue.[4]

1 Cicero, Letters to Friends.
2 Seneca, Letters.
3 Epaminondas was a follower of the Pythagoreans. Socrates' wife was Xanthippe, proverbial for her bad temper.
4 Quintus Caecilius Metellus Numidicus refused to swear to Saturninus's agrarian law in 100 BC and went into exile.

FRENCH	ENGLISH
Ces paroles de Metellus nous representent bien clairement ce que ie vouloy verifier, que la vertu refuse la facilité pour compagne; et que cette aisée, douce, et panchante voie, par où se conduisent les pas reglez d'vne bonne inclination de nature, n'est pas celle de la vraye vertu. Elle demande vn chemin aspre et espineux, elle veut auoir ou des difficultez estrangeres à luicter, comme celle de Metellus, par le moyen desquelles Fortune se plaist à luy rompre la roideur de sa course: ou des difficultez internes, que luy apportent les appetits desordonnez et imperfections de nostre condition.	These words of Metellus show us very clearly what I wanted to establish: that virtue refuses ease as a companion, and that the easy, gentle, downhill path along which the well-regulated steps of a good natural inclination are guided is not the path of true virtue. Virtue demands a rough and thorny road. It wants to have either external difficulties to wrestle with, like those of Metellus, by means of which Fortune delights in breaking the momentum of its course, or internal difficulties, brought to it by the disordered appetites and imperfections of our condition.

SOCRATES AND CATO

The greatest souls act well without struggle, which seems to unsettle the claim that virtue needs difficulty.

FRENCH	ENGLISH
2.11.4 Ie suis venu iusques icy bien à mon aise: mais au bout de ce discours, il me tombe en fantasie que l'ame de Socrates, qui est la plus parfaicte qui soit venuë à ma cognoissance, seroit à mon compte vne ame de peu de recommendation. Car ie ne puis conceuoir en ce personnage aucun effort de vitieuse concupiscence. Au train de sa vertu, ie n'y puis imaginer aucune difficulté ny aucune contrainte: ie cognoy sa raison si puissante et si maistresse chez luy, qu'elle n'eust iamais donné moyen à vn appetit vitieux, seulement de naistre. A vne vertu si esleuée que la sienne, ie ne puis rien mettre en teste.	I have come this far quite at my ease. But at the end of this reasoning it pops into my head that the soul of Socrates, which is the most perfect that has come to my knowledge, would by my reckoning be a soul of little merit. For I cannot conceive in that man any stirring of vicious desire. In the course of his virtue I can imagine no difficulty and no constraint: I know his reason to have been so powerful and so much the mistress in him that it would never have given a vicious appetite the means even to be born. Against a virtue as lofty as his I can set up no opponent.
Il me semble la voir marcher d'vn victorieux pas et triomphant, en pompe et à son aise, sans empeschement, ne destourbier. Si la vertu ne peut luire que par le combat des appetits contraires, dirons nous donq qu'elle ne se puisse passer de l'assistance du vice, et qu'elle luy doiue cela, d'en estre mise en credit et en honneur? Que deuiendroit aussi cette braue et genereuse volupté Epicurienne, qui fait estat de nourrir mollement en son giron, et y faire follatrer la vertu; luy donnant pour ses iouets, la honte, les fieures, la pauureté, la mort, et les gehennes?	I seem to see it marching with a victorious and triumphant step, in state and at its ease, without hindrance or disturbance. If virtue can shine only through combat with contrary appetites, shall we say, then, that it cannot do without the help of vice, and that it owes vice this much—that vice brings it credit and honor? And what, too, would become of that brave and noble Epicurean pleasure, which claims to nurse virtue tenderly in its lap and let it frolic there, giving it for toys shame, fevers, poverty, death and tortures?
Si ie presuppose que la vertu parfaite se cognoist à combattre et porter patiemment la douleur, à soustenir les efforts de la goutte, sans s'esbranler de son assiette: si ie luy donne pour son obiect necessaire l'aspreté et la difficulté, que deuiendra la vertu qui sera montée à tel poinct, que de non seulement mespriser la douleur, mais de s'en esiouyr; et de se faire chatouiller aux pointes d'vne forte colique, comme est celle que les Epicuriens ont establie, et de laquelle plusieurs d'entre eux nous ont	If I assume that perfect virtue is known by its fighting and patiently bearing pain, by withstanding the onslaughts of gout without being shaken from its seat; if I give it harshness and difficulty as its necessary object—what will become of the virtue that has risen so high as not only to despise pain but to rejoice in it, and to be tickled by the stabs of a severe colic? Such is the virtue the Epi-

FRENCH

laissé par leurs actions, des preuues tres-certaines? Comme ont bien d'autres, que ie trouue auoir surpassé par effect les regles mesmes de leur discipline. Tesmoing le ieune Caton.

2.11.5 Quand ie le voy mourir et se deschirer les entrailles, ie ne me puis contenter, de croire simplement, qu'il eust lors son ame exempte totalement de trouble et d'effroy: ie ne puis croire, qu'il se maintint seulement en cette desmarche, que les regles de la secte Stoique luy ordonnoient, rassise, sans esmotion et impassible: il y auoit, ce me semble, en la vertu de cet homme, trop de gaillardise et de verdeur, pour s'en arrester là. Ie croy sans doubte qu'il sentit du plaisir et de la volupté, en vne si noble action, et qu'il s'y aggrea plus qu'en autre de celles de sa vie.

Sic abijt è vita, vt causam moriendi nactum se esse gauderet. Ie le croy si auant, que i'entre en doubte s'il eust voulu que l'occasion d'vn si bel exploict luy fust ostée. Et si la bonté qui luy faisoit embrasser les commoditez publiques plus que les siennes, ne me tenoit en bride, ie tomberois aisément en cette opinion, qu'il sçauoit bon gré à la Fortune d'auoir mis sa vertu à vne si belle espreuue, et d'auoir fauorisé ce brigand à fouler aux pieds l'ancienne liberté de sa patrie.

Il me semble lire en cette action, ie ne sçay quelle esiouyssance de son ame, et vne esmotion de plaisir extraordinaire, et d'vne volupté virile, lors qu'elle consideroit la noblesse et haulteur de son entreprise: *Deliberata morte ferocior.* Non pas aiguisée par quelque esperance de gloire, comme les iugements populaires et effeminez d'aucuns hommes ont iugé: car cette consideration est trop basse, pour toucher vn cœur si genereux, si haultain et si roide, mais pour la beauté de la chose mesme en soy: laquelle il voyoit bien plus clair, et en sa perfection, luy qui en manioyt les ressorts, que nous ne pouuons faire.

La Philosophie m'a faict plaisir de iuger, qu'vne si belle action eust esté indecemment logée en toute autre vie qu'en celle de Caton: et qu'à la sienne seule il appartenoit de finir ainsi. Pourtant ordonna-il selon raison et à son fils et aux Senateurs qui l'accompagnoyent, de prouuoir autrement à leur faict. *Catoni, quum incredibilem natura tribuisset grauitatem, eámque ipse perpetua constantia*

ENGLISH

cureans have established, and many of them have left us very certain proofs of it by their actions. So have many others, who I find surpassed in deed the very rules of their own discipline. Witness the younger Cato.

When I see him dying and tearing out his own entrails, I cannot be content simply to believe that his soul was then wholly free of turmoil and fear. I cannot believe that he merely held himself in the bearing that the rules of the Stoic sect prescribed for him—composed, without emotion and impassive. There was, it seems to me, too much gaiety and vigor in this man's virtue for it to stop there. I believe without doubt that he felt pleasure and delight in so noble an act, and that he took more satisfaction in it than in any other act of his life.

So he departed this life, rejoicing that he had found a reason to die. I believe this so far that I wonder whether he would have wanted the occasion for so fine an exploit to be taken from him. And if the goodness that made him embrace the public interest more than his own did not hold me in check, I would easily fall into this opinion: that he was grateful to Fortune for having put his virtue to so fine a test, and for having helped that brigand trample underfoot the ancient liberty of his country.[5]

I seem to read in this act some indescribable rejoicing of his soul, an emotion of extraordinary pleasure and of manly delight, as it contemplated the nobility and loftiness of its undertaking: *Fiercer for having resolved on death.* It was not spurred by any hope of glory, as the common and spineless judgments of some men have supposed—for that consideration is too base to touch a heart so noble, so lofty and so unbending—but by the beauty of the thing itself, which he, who handled its springs, saw far more clearly and in its perfection than we can.[6]

Philosophy has given me the pleasure of judging that so fine an action would have been unbecomingly lodged in any other life than Cato's, and that it belonged to his alone to end in this way. That is why he rightly ordered both his son and the senators who were with him to provide for their affairs

5 Cicero, Tusculan Disputations. The "brigand" is Julius Caesar.
6 Horace, Odes (of Cleopatra).

FRENCH

roborauisset, sempérque in proposito consilio permansisset, moriendum potius, quàm tyranni vultus aspiciendus erat. Toute mort doit estre de mesmes sa vie. Nous ne deuenons pas autres pour mourir. I'interprete tousiours la mort par la vie. Et si on m'en recite quelqu'vne forte par apparence, attachée à vne vie foible: ie tiens qu'ell' est produitte de cause foible et sortable à sa vie.

2.11.6 L'aisance donc de cette mort, et cette facilité qu'il auoit acquise par la force de son ame, dirons nous qu'elle doiue rabattre quelque chose du lustre de sa vertu? Et qui de ceux qui ont la ceruelle tant soit peu teinte de la vraye Philosophie, peut se contenter d'imaginer Socrates, seulement franc de crainte et de passion, en l'accident de sa prison, de ses fers, et de sa condemnation? Et qui ne recognoist en luy, non seulement de la fermeté et de la constance, c'estoit son assiette ordinaire que celle-là, mais encore ie ne sçay quel contentement nouueau, et vne allegresse enioüée en ses propos et façons dernieres?

A ce tressaillir, du plaisir qu'il sent à gratter sa iambe, apres que les fers en furent hors: accuse-il pas vne pareille douceur et ioye en son ame, pour estre desenforgée des incommodités passées, et à mesme d'entrer en cognoissance des choses aduenir? Caton me pardonnera, s'il luy plaist; sa mort est plus tragique, et plus tendue, mais cette-cy est encore, ie ne sçay comment, plus belle. Aristippus à ceux qui la plaignoyent, Les Dieux m'en enuoyent vne telle, fit-il. On voit aux ames de ces deux personnages, et de leurs imitateurs (car de semblables, ie fay grand doubte qu'il y en ait eu) vne si parfaicte habitude à la vertu, qu'elle leur est passée en complexion.

Ce n'est plus vertu penible, ny des ordonnances de la raison, pour lesquelles maintenir il faille que leur ame se roidisse: c'est l'essence mesme de leur ame, c'est son train naturel et ordinaire. Ils l'ont renduë telle, par vn long exercice des preceptes de la Philosophie, ayans rencontré vne belle et riche nature. Les passions vitieuses, qui naissent en nous, ne trouuent plus par où faire entrée en eux. La force et roideur de leur ame, estouffe et esteint les concupiscences, aussi tost qu'elles commencent à s'esbranler.

ENGLISH

in some other way. *Since nature had given Cato an incredible gravity, which he himself had strengthened by unfailing constancy, and since he had always held firm to his purpose, he had to die rather than look upon the face of a tyrant.* Every death must be of a piece with its life. We do not become different in order to die. I always interpret the death by the life. And if I am told of some death that seems strong, attached to a weak life, I hold that it was produced by a weak cause, in keeping with that life.

Shall we say, then, that the ease of this death, and the facility he had acquired by the strength of his soul, must take something away from the luster of his virtue? And who among those whose brains are even slightly tinged with true philosophy can be content to imagine Socrates as merely free from fear and passion in the misfortune of his imprisonment, his chains and his condemnation? And who does not recognize in him not only firmness and constancy—that was his ordinary state—but also some new contentment, and a playful cheerfulness in his last words and ways?

In that thrill of pleasure he feels at scratching his leg after the irons were taken off, does he not reveal a like sweetness and joy in his soul at being unfettered from past discomforts and on the point of entering into the knowledge of things to come? Cato will forgive me, if he pleases: his death is more tragic and more strained, but this one is still, I know not how, more beautiful. Aristippus said to those who were lamenting it: "May the gods send me one like it." In the souls of these two men and of their imitators (for I very much doubt that there have been any like them) one sees so perfect a habit of virtue that it has become their very constitution.[7]

It is no longer a laborious virtue, nor the ordinances of reason, which their soul must stiffen itself to maintain: it is the very essence of their soul, its natural and ordinary gait. They made it so by long practice of the precepts of philosophy, having come upon a fine and rich nature. The vicious passions that arise in us no longer find any way into them. The strength and firmness of their

7 Socrates' last day is told in Plato's Phaedo.

FRENCH

ENGLISH

soul stifles and extinguishes desires as soon as they begin to stir.

2.11.7 Or qu'il ne soit plus beau, par vne haulte et diuine resolution, d'empescher la naissance des tentations; et de s'estre formé à la vertu, de maniere que les semences mesmes des vices en soient desracinées: que d'empescher à viue force leur progrez; et s'estant laissé surprendre aux esmotions premieres des passions, s'armer et se bander pour arrester leur course, et les vaincre: et que ce second effect ne soit encore plus beau, que d'estre simplement garny d'vne nature facile et debonnaire, et desgoustée par soy mesme de la desbauche et du vice, ie ne pense point qu'il y ait doubte.

Now I do not think there is any doubt that it is finer, by a lofty and divine resolution, to prevent the birth of temptations, and to have so shaped oneself to virtue that the very seeds of the vices are uprooted, than to check their progress by main force—and, having let oneself be caught by the first stirrings of the passions, to arm and brace oneself to halt their course and overcome them. Nor is there any doubt that this second achievement is finer still than simply to be endowed with an easy and good-natured disposition, of itself averse to debauchery and vice.

Car cette tierce et derniere façon, il semble bien qu'elle rende vn homme innocent, mais non pas vertueux: exempt de mal faire, mais non assez apte à bien faire. Ioint que cette condition est si voisine à l'imperfection et à la foiblesse, que ie ne sçay pas bien comment en demesler les confins et les distinguer. Les noms mesmes de bonté et d'innocence, sont à cette cause aucunement noms de mespris.

For this third and last way does seem to make a man innocent, but not virtuous: free from doing wrong, but not apt enough to do right. Besides, this condition is so close to imperfection and weakness that I do not really know how to sort out their boundaries and tell them apart. That is why the very names of goodness and innocence are, to some extent, terms of contempt.

2.11.8 Ie voy que plusieurs vertus, comme la chasteté, sobrieté, et temperance, peuuent arriuer à nous, par deffaillance corporelle. La fermeté aux dangers, si fermeté il la faut appeller, le mespris de la mort, la patience aux infortunes, peut venir et se treuue souuent aux hommes, par faute de bien iuger de tels accidens, et ne les conceuoir tels qu'ils sont. La faute d'apprehension et la bestise, contrefont ainsi par fois les effects vertueux. Comme i'ay veu souuent aduenir, qu'on a loué des hommes, de ce, dequoy ils meritoyent du blasme.

I see that several virtues, such as chastity, sobriety and temperance, can come to us through bodily failing. Firmness in danger (if firmness it must be called), contempt of death, patience in misfortune, can come to men, and are often found in them, from a failure to judge such events rightly and to conceive them as they are. Lack of apprehension and stupidity thus sometimes counterfeit virtuous deeds. So I have often seen men praised for what deserved blame.

Vn Seigneur Italien tenoit vne fois ce propos en ma presence, au des-auantage de sa nation: Que la subtilité des Italiens et la viuacité de leurs conceptions estoit si grande, qu'ils preuoyoient les dangers et accidens qui leur pouuoyent aduenir, de si loing, qu'il ne falloit pas trouuer estrange, si on les voyoit souuent à la guerre prouuoir à leur seurté, voire auant que d'auoir recognu le peril: que nous et les Espagnols, qui n'estions pas si fins, allions plus outre; et qu'il nous falloit faire voir à l'œil et toucher à la main, le danger auant que de nous en effrayer; et que lors aussi nous n'auions plus de tenue: mais que les Allemans et les Souysses, plus grossiers et plus lourds, n'auoyent le sens de se rauiser, à peine lors mesmes qu'ils estoyent accablez soubs les coups.

An Italian lord once said this in my presence, to the disadvantage of his own nation: that the subtlety of the Italians and the quickness of their minds were so great that they foresaw the dangers and mishaps that might befall them from so far off that it should not seem strange if in war they were often seen providing for their safety even before they had perceived the peril; that we and the Spaniards, who were not so sharp, went further, and had to be made to see the danger with our own eyes and touch it with our hands before we took fright, and that even then we could no longer stand firm; but that the Germans and the Swiss, coarser and duller, hardly had the sense to think better of it even when they were already being crushed under the blows.

FRENCH	ENGLISH
Ce n'estoit à l'aduenture que pour rire. Si est-il bien vray qu'au mestier de la guerre, les apprentis se iettent bien souuent aux hazards, d'autre inconsideration qu'ils ne font apres y auoir esté eschauldez. *Haud ignarus, quantùm noua gloria in armis, / Et prædulce decus, primo certamine, possit.* Voyla pourquoy quand on iuge d'vne action particuliere, il faut considerer plusieurs circonstances, et l'homme tout entier qui l'a produicte, auant la baptizer.	Perhaps it was only in jest. Still, it is quite true that in the profession of war beginners very often throw themselves into hazards with a heedlessness quite different from what they show after they have been burned. *Not unaware how much fresh glory in arms / And the sweet honor of a first battle can do.* That is why, when we judge a particular action, we must consider many circumstances, and the whole man who produced it, before we christen it.[8]

AN INNOCENCE OWED TO LUCK

Montaigne credits his own good conduct to birth and temperament rather than to effort.

FRENCH	ENGLISH
2.11.9 Pour dire vn mot de moy-mesme: I'ay veu quelque fois mes amis appeller prudence en moy, ce qui estoit fortune; et estimer aduantage de courage et de patience, ce qui estoit aduantage de iugement et opinion; et m'attribuer vn tiltre pour autre; tantost à mon gain, tantost à ma perte. Au demeurant, il s'en faut tant que ie sois arriué à ce premier et plus parfaict degré d'excellence, où de la vertu il se faict vne habitude; que du second mesme, ie n'en ay faict guere de preuue. Ie ne me suis mis en grand effort, pour brider les desirs dequoy ie me suis trouué pressé. Ma vertu, c'est vne vertu, ou innocence, pour mieux dire, accidentale et fortuite.	To say a word about myself: I have sometimes seen my friends call prudence in me what was luck, and count as an advantage of courage and patience what was an advantage of judgment and opinion, and give me one title in place of another, sometimes to my gain, sometimes to my loss. For the rest, I am so far from having reached that first and most perfect degree of excellence, where virtue becomes a habit, that even of the second I have given scarcely any proof. I have not put myself to great effort to curb the desires that pressed upon me. My virtue is a virtue—or rather, to put it better, an innocence—that is accidental and fortuitous.
Si ie fusse nay d'vne complexion plus desreglée, ie crains qu'il fust allé piteusement de mon faict: car ie n'ay essayé guere de fermeté en mon ame, pour soustenir des passions, si elles eussent esté tant soit peu vehementes. Ie ne sçay point nourrir des querelles, et du debat chez moy.	If I had been born with a more unruly constitution, I fear it would have gone badly for me; for I have scarcely tested any firmness in my soul for withstanding passions, had they been even slightly violent. I do not know how to nurse quarrels and conflict within me.
2.11.10 Ainsi, ie ne me puis dire nul grand-mercy, dequoy ie me trouue exempt de plusieurs vices: *Si vitiis mediocribus, et mea paucis* *Mendosa est natura, alioqui recta, velut si* *Egregio inspersos reprehendas corpore nœuos.* Ie le doy plus à ma fortune qu'à ma raison.	So I can give myself no great thanks for being free of many vices: *If my nature is flawed by a few middling faults,* *But otherwise sound, as if you were to find fault* *With moles scattered over a handsome body.* I owe this more to my fortune than to my reason.
Elle m'a faict naistre d'vne race fameuse en preud'hommie, et d'vn tres-bon pere: ie ne sçay s'il a escoulé en moy partie de ses humeurs, ou bien si les exemples domestiques, et la bonne institution de mon enfance, y ont insensiblement aydé; ou si ie suis	Fortune caused me to be born of a family famous for integrity, and of a very good father. I do not know whether he passed on to me some part of his temperament, or whether the examples at home and the good upbringing of my childhood imper-

8 Virgil, Aeneid.

FRENCH

autrement ainsi nay, *Seu Libra, seu me Scorpius adspicit*
Formidolosus, pars violentior
Natalis horæ, seu tyrannus
Hesperiæ Capricornus vndæ. Mais tant y a que la pluspart des vices ie les ay de moy mesmes en horreur. La responce d'Antisthenes à celuy, qui luy demandoit le meilleur apprentissage: Desapprendre le mal: semble s'arrester à cette image.

Ie les ay, dis-ie, en horreur, d'vne opinion si naturelle et si mienne, que ce mesme instinct et impression, que i'en ay apporté de la nourrice, ie l'ay conserué, sans qu'aucunes occasions me l'ayent sçeu faire alterer. Voire non pas mes discours propres, qui pour s'estre desbandez en aucunes choses de la route commune, me licentieroyent aisément à des actions, que cette naturelle inclination me fait haïr. Ie diray vn monstre: mais ie le diray pourtant. Ie trouue par là en plusieurs choses plus d'arrest et de regle en mes mœurs qu'en mon opinion: et ma concupiscence moins desbauchée que ma raison.

Aristippus establit des opinions si hardies en faueur de la volupté et des richesses, qu'il mit en rumeur toute la philosophie à l'encontre de luy. Mais quant à ses mœurs, Dionysius le tyran luy ayant presenté trois belles garses, afin qu'il en fist le chois: il respondit, qu'il les choisissoit toutes trois, et qu'il auoit mal prins à Paris d'en preferer vne à ses compaignes. Mais les ayant conduittes à son logis, il les renuoya, sans en taster. Son vallet se trouuant surchargé en chemin de l'argent qu'il portoit apres luy: il luy ordonna qu'il en versast et iettast là, ce qui luy faschoit. Et Epicurus, duquel les dogmes sont irreligieux et delicats, se porta en sa vie tres-deuotieusement et laborieusement.

Il escrit à vn sien amy, qu'il ne vit que de pain bis et d'eaue; le prie de luy enuoyer vu peu de formage, pour quand il voudra faire quelque somptueux repas. Seroit-il vray, que pour estre bon tout à faict, il nous le faille estre par occulte, naturelle et vniuerselle proprieté, sans loy, sans raison, sans exemple?

2.11.11 Les desbordemens, ausquels ie me suis trouué engagé, ne sont pas Dieu mercy des pires. Ie les ay bien condamnez

ENGLISH

ceptibly helped, or whether I was simply born this way, *Whether Libra looks on me, or Scorpio,*
Dread and more violent part
Of my natal hour, or Capricorn, tyrant
Of the western wave. But at any rate most vices I hold in horror of my own accord. The answer of Antisthenes to the man who asked him what was the best apprenticeship—"To unlearn evil"—seems to rest on this picture.[9]

I hold them in horror, I say, by a judgment so natural and so much my own that I have kept the same instinct and impression I brought away from my nurse, and no occasion has ever been able to alter it—not even my own reasonings, which, having broken away from the common road in some matters, would readily license me to actions that this natural inclination makes me hate. I will say something monstrous, but I will say it all the same: in many things I find more steadiness and rule in my conduct than in my opinions, and my desire less debauched than my reason.

Aristippus set out opinions so bold in favor of pleasure and riches that he set all philosophy in an uproar against him. But as for his conduct: when Dionysius the tyrant presented him with three beautiful girls so that he might take his pick, he replied that he picked all three, and that Paris had come to grief for preferring one over her companions. But having brought them to his lodging, he sent them away without tasting them. When his servant found himself overloaded on the road by the money he was carrying behind him, he ordered him to pour out and throw away, then and there, whatever was too much for him. And Epicurus, whose doctrines are irreligious and pleasure-loving, conducted himself in his life very devoutly and laboriously.[10]

He writes to a friend that he lives on nothing but brown bread and water, and asks him to send a little cheese for when he wants to have a sumptuous meal. Could it be true that, to be wholly good, we must be so by some hidden, natural and universal property, without law, without reason, without example?

The excesses I have found myself involved in are not, thank God, of the worst. I have duly con-

9 Antisthenes (c. 445–365 BC), a pupil of Socrates, was regarded as the forerunner of the Cynics.

FRENCH

chez moy, selon qu'ils le valent: car mon iugement ne s'est pas trouué infecté par eux. Au rebours, ie les accuse plus rigoureusement en moy, qu'en vn autre. Mais c'est tout: car au demeurant i'y apporte trop peu de resistance, et me laisse trop aisément pancher à l'autre part de la balance, sauf pour les regler, et empescher du meslange d'autres vices, lesquels s'entretiennent et s'entre-enchainent pour la plus part les vns aux autres, qui ne s'en prend garde. Les miens, ie les ay retranchez et contrains les plus seuls, et les plus simples que i'ay peu: *nec vltra / Errorem foueo.*

ENGLISH

demned them in myself, as they deserve, for my judgment has not been infected by them. On the contrary, I accuse them more strictly in myself than in another. But that is all. For otherwise I put up too little resistance, and let myself lean too easily to the other side of the scale—except that I keep them in order and prevent them from mixing with other vices, which for the most part hold together and are chained one to another, if one does not take care. My own I have cut back and confined, as solitary and as simple as I could: *nor do I indulge / My error further.*[11]

2.11.12 Car quant à l'opinion des Stoiciens, qui disent, le sage œuurer quand il œuure par toutes les vertus ensemble, quoy qu'il y en ait vne plus apparente selon la nature de l'action: (et à cela leur pourroit seruir aucunement la similitude du corps humain; car l'action de la colere ne se peut exercer, que toutes les humeurs ne nous y aydent, quoy que la colere predomine) si de là ils veulent tirer pareille consequence; que quand le fautier faut, il faut par tous les vices ensemble, ie ne les en croy pas ainsi simplement; ou ie ne les entend pas: car ie sens par effect le contraire. Ce sont subtilitez aiguës, insubstantielles, ausquelles la Philosophie s'arreste par fois.

For as to the opinion of the Stoics, who say that the wise man, when he acts, acts by all the virtues together, though one is more apparent according to the nature of the action (and here the analogy of the human body might serve them somewhat, for the action of anger cannot be carried out without all the humors helping us, though choler predominates): if from this they want to draw a similar conclusion, that when the wrongdoer does wrong he does wrong by all the vices together, I do not take their word for it so simply—or else I do not understand them, for I feel the contrary in practice. These are sharp, insubstantial subtleties, on which philosophy sometimes dwells.

Ie suy quelques vices: mais i'en fuy d'autres, autant que sçauroit faire vn sainct. Aussi desaduoüent les Peripateticiens, cette connexité et couture indissoluble: et tient Aristote, qu'vn homme prudent et iuste, peut estre et intemperant et incontinant. Socrates aduoüoit à ceux qui recognoissoient en sa physionomie quelque inclination au vice, que c'estoit à la verité sa propension naturelle, mais qu'il l'auoit corrigée par discipline. Et les familiers du philosophe Stilpo disoient, qu'estant nay subject au vin et aux femmes, il s'estoit rendu par estude tresabstinent de l'vn et de l'autre.

I follow some vices, but I flee others as much as any saint could. The Peripatetics, too, disown this connection and indissoluble seam; and Aristotle holds that a man may be prudent and just and yet intemperate and incontinent. Socrates admitted to those who detected in his physiognomy some inclination to vice that this was indeed his natural propensity, but that he had corrected it by discipline. And the intimates of the philosopher Stilpo said that, though born prone to wine and women, he had made himself, by study, very abstinent in both.

HATING CRUELTY

He cannot bear to see suffering, condemns torture in justice, and recounts the cruelties of the civil wars.

FRENCH

2.11.13 Ce que i'ay de bien, ie l'ay au rebours, par le sort de ma naissance: ie ne le tiens ny de loy ny de precepte ou autre apprentissage. L'innocence qui est en moy, est vne

ENGLISH

What good I have, I have, on the contrary, by the luck of my birth; I do not hold it from law or pre-

10 Paris's choice of Aphrodite over Hera and Athena led to the Trojan War.
11 Juvenal, Satires.

FRENCH

innocence niaise; peu de vigueur, et point d'art. Ie hay entre autres vices, cruellement la cruauté, et par nature et par iugement, comme l'extreme de tous les vices. Mais c'est iusques à telle mollesse, que ie ne voy pas esgorger vn poulet sans desplaisir, et ois impatiemment gemir vn lieure sous les dents de mes chiens: quoy que ce soit vn plaisir violent que la chasse.

Ceux qui ont à combattre la volupté, vsent volontiers de cet argument, pour montrer qu'elle est toute vitieuse et des-raisonnable, que lors qu'elle est en son plus grand effort, elle nous maistrise de façon, que la raison n'y peut auoir accez: et alleguent l'experience que nous en sentons en l'accointance des femmes, *Cùm iam præsagit gaudia corpus, / Atque in eo est Venus, vt muliebria conserat arua.* où il leur semble que le plaisir nous transporte si fort hors de nous, que nostre discours ne sçauroit lors faire son office tout perclus et raui en la volupté.

2.11.14 Ie sçay qu'il en peut aller autrement; et qu'on arriuera par fois, si on veut, à reietter l'ame sur ce mesme instant, à autres pensemens: mais il la faut tendre et roidir d'aguet. Ie sçay qu'on peut gourmander l'effort de ce plaisir, et m'y cognoy bien, et n'ay point trouué Venus si imperieuse Deesse, que plusieurs et plus reformez que moy, la tesmoignent.

Ie ne prens pour miracle, comme faict la Royne de Nauarre, en l'vn des comptes de son Heptameron, qui est vn gentil liure pour son estoffe, ny pour chose d'extreme difficulté, de passer des nuicts entieres, en toute commodité et liberté, auec vne maistresse de long temps desirée, maintenant la foy qu'on luy aura engagée de se contenter des baisers et simples attouchemens.

Ie croy que l'exemple du plaisir de la chasse y seroit plus propre: comme il y a moins de plaisir, il y a plus de rauissement, et de surprinse, par où nostre raison estonnée perd ce loisir de se preparer à l'encontre: lors qu'apres vne longue queste, la beste vient en sursaut à se presenter, en lieu où à l'aduenture, nous l'esperions le moins. Cette secousse, et l'ardeur de ces huées, nous frappe, si qu'il seroit malaisé à ceux qui ayment cette sorte de petite chasse, de retirer sur ce point la pensée ailleurs. Et les poëtes font Diane victorieuse du brandon et des flesches de Cupidon. *Quis non malarum, quas amor curas habet, / Hæc inter obliuiscitur?*

ENGLISH

cept or any other apprenticeship. The innocence that is in me is a simple-minded innocence: little vigor and no skill. Among other vices, I cruelly hate cruelty, both by nature and by judgment, as the extreme of all vices. But this goes so far, and makes me so soft, that I cannot see a chicken's throat cut without distress, and cannot bear to hear a hare squeal in the teeth of my dogs—though hunting is a violent pleasure.

Those who have to combat pleasure readily use this argument to show that it is wholly vicious and unreasonable: that when it is at its height it masters us so completely that reason can have no access to it. And they cite the experience we have of it in intercourse with women, *When the body already foretastes its joys, / And Venus is about to sow the woman's fields,* where it seems to them that pleasure carries us so far out of ourselves that our reason, all paralyzed and ravished in pleasure, could not then do its office.[12]

I know it can go otherwise, and that one can sometimes manage, if one wants, to throw the soul back onto other thoughts at that very moment; but one must brace and stiffen it deliberately. I know that one can master the force of this pleasure—I know myself well in this—and I have not found Venus so imperious a goddess as many people, and more strait-laced than I, testify.

I do not take it for a miracle, as the Queen of Navarre does in one of the tales of her Heptameron (a fine book for its matter), nor for a thing of extreme difficulty, to spend whole nights, in all convenience and freedom, with a long-desired mistress, keeping the promise one has given her to be content with kisses and simple caresses.

I think the example of the pleasure of hunting would be more fitting here. There is less pleasure in it, but more rapture and surprise, by which our reason, stunned, loses the leisure to prepare itself against it—when, after a long search, the animal suddenly springs into view, in a place where perhaps we least expected it. That shock, and the ardor of the hallooing, strike us so that it would be hard for those who love this sort of little hunt to turn their thoughts elsewhere at that moment. And the poets make Diana victorious over Cupid's

12 Lucretius, On the Nature of Things.

FRENCH

ENGLISH

torch and arrows. *Who, amid these pursuits, does not forget / The wretched cares that love brings?*

2.11.15 Pour reuenir à mon propos, ie me compassionne fort tendrement des afflictions d'autruy, et pleurerois aisément par compagnie, si pour occasion que ce soit, ie sçauois pleurer. Il n'est rien qui tente mes larmes que les larmes: non vrayes seulement, mais comment que ce soit, ou feintes, ou peintes. Les morts ie ne les plains guere, et les enuierois plustost; mais ie plains bien fort les mourans. Les *[peuples du Nouveau Monde]* ne m'offensent pas tant, de rostir et manger les corps des trespassez, que ceux qui les tourmentent et persecutent viuans. Les executions mesme de la iustice, pour raisonnables qu'elles soient, ie ne les puis voir d'vne veuë ferme.

To return to my subject: I feel very tender compassion for the afflictions of others, and would readily weep for company, if I knew how to weep for any occasion whatever. Nothing tempts my tears but tears—not only real ones, but any kind at all, feigned or painted. The dead I scarcely pity, and would rather envy; but I pity the dying very much. The peoples of the New World do not offend me so much by roasting and eating the bodies of the dead as those do who torment and persecute them alive. Even the executions of justice, however reasonable they may be, I cannot watch with a steady eye.

Quelqu'vn ayant à tesmoigner la clemence de Iulius Cæsar: Il estoit, dit-il, doux en ses vengeances: ayant forcé les pyrates de se rendre à luy, qui l'auoient auparauant pris prisonnier et mis à rançon; d'autant qu'il les auoit menassez de les faire mettre en croix, il les y condamna; mais ce fut apres les auoir faict estrangler. Philomon son secretaire, qui l'auoit voulu empoisonner, il ne le punit pas plus aigrement que d'vne mort simple. Sans dire qui est cet autheur Latin, qui ose alleguer pour tesmoignage de clemence, de seulement tuer ceux, desquels on a esté offencé, il est aisé à deuiner qu'il est frappé des vilains et horribles exemples de cruauté, que les tyrans Romains mirent en vsage.

Someone, wishing to testify to the clemency of Julius Caesar, says: "He was mild in his revenges. Having forced the pirates who had earlier taken him prisoner and held him for ransom to surrender to him, since he had threatened to have them crucified, he condemned them to it—but only after having them strangled. His secretary Philemon, who had tried to poison him, he punished no more harshly than with a simple death." Without saying who this Latin author is who dares to cite as evidence of clemency merely killing those who have offended us, it is easy to guess that he was struck by the vile and horrible examples of cruelty that the Roman tyrants put into practice.[13]

2.11.16 Quant à moy, en la iustice mesme, tout ce qui est au delà de la mort simple, me semble pure cruauté. Et notamment à nous, qui deurions auoir respect d'en enuoyer les ames en bon estat; ce qui ne se peut, les ayant agitées et desesperées par tourmens insupportables. Ces iours passés, vn soldat prisonnier, ayant apperceu d'vne tour où il estoit, que le peuple s'assembloit en la place, et que des charpantiers y dressoient leurs ouurages, creut que c'estoit pour luy: et entré en la resolution de se tuer, ne trouua qui l'y peust secourir, qu'vn vieux clou de charrette, rouillé, que la Fortune luy offrit.

As for me, even in justice, anything beyond simple death seems to me pure cruelty—especially for us, who ought to take care to send souls off in a good state, which cannot be done once they have been agitated and driven to despair by unbearable torments. Not long ago a soldier who was a prisoner noticed from a tower where he was held that people were gathering in the square and that carpenters were putting up their structures there, and believed it was for him. Having resolved to kill himself, he found nothing to help him do it but an old rusty cart nail that Fortune offered him.

Dequoy il se donna premierement deux grands coups autour de la gorge: mais voyant que ce auoit esté sans effect: bien tost apres, il s'en donna vn tiers, dans le ventre, où il laissa le clou fiché. Le premier de ses gardes, qui entra où il estoit, le trouua en cet estat, viuant

With it he first gave himself two great blows around the throat; but seeing that they had had no effect, soon afterward he gave himself a third, in the belly, where he left the nail stuck. The first of his guards to come in found him in this state, still

13 The author is Suetonius, Life of Julius Caesar.

FRENCH

encores: mais couché et tout affoibly de ses coups. Pour emploier le temps auant qu'il deffaillist, on se hasta de luy prononcer sa sentence. Laquelle ouïe, et qu'il n'estoit condamné qu'à auoir la teste tranchée, il sembla reprendre vn nouueau courage: accepta du vin, qu'il auoit refusé: remercia ses iuges de la douceur inesperée de leur condemnation.

Qu'il auoit prins party, d'appeller la mort, pour la crainte d'vne mort plus aspre et insupportable: ayant conceu opinion par les apprests qu'il auoit veu faire en la place, qu'on le vousist tourmenter de quelque horrible supplice: et sembla estre deliuré de la mort, pour l'auoir changée.

2.11.17 Ie conseillerois que ces exemples de rigueur, par le moyen desquels on veut tenir le peuple en office, s'exerçassent contre les corps des criminels. Car de les voir priuer de sepulture, de les voir bouillir, et mettre à quartiers, cela toucheroit quasi autant le vulgaire, que les peines, qu'on fait souffrir aux viuans; quoy que par effect, ce soit peu ou rien, comme Dieu dit, *Qui corpus occidunt, et postea non habent quod faciant*. Et les poëtes font singulierement valoir l'horreur de cette peinture, et au dessus de la mort, Heu!

reliquias semiassi regis, denudatis ossibus, / Per terram sanie delibutas fœdè diuexarier. Ie me rencontray vn iour à Rome, sur le point qu'on deffaisoit Catena, vn voleur insigne: on l'estrangla sans aucune emotion de l'assistance, mais quand on vint à le mettre à quartiers, le bourreau ne donnoit coup, que le peuple ne suiuist d'vne voix pleintiue, et d'vne exclamation, comme si chacun eust presté son sentiment à cette charongne. Il faut exercer ces inhumains excez contre l'escorce, non contre le vif.

Ainsin amollit, en cas aucunement pareil, Artaxerxes, l'aspreté des loix anciennes de Perse; ordonnant que les Seigneurs qui auoyent failly en leur estat, au lieu qu'on les souloit foüetter, fussent despouillés, et leurs vestemens foüettez pour eux; et au lieu qu'on leur souloit arracher les cheueux, qu'on leur ostast leur hault chappeau seulement. Les Ægyptiens si deuotieux, estimoyent bien satisfaire à la iustice diuine, luy

ENGLISH

alive, but lying down and much weakened by his blows. To make use of the time before he expired, they hastened to pronounce his sentence. When he heard it, and that he was condemned only to have his head cut off, he seemed to take fresh courage. He accepted some wine, which he had refused, and thanked his judges for the unexpected mildness of their sentence.

He said that he had decided to call on death for fear of a harsher and more unbearable death, having formed the opinion, from the preparations he had seen being made in the square, that they meant to torment him with some horrible torture. And he seemed to have been delivered from death by having exchanged it.

I would advise that these examples of severity, by which one seeks to keep the people in line, be carried out on the bodies of criminals. For to see them deprived of burial, to see them boiled and quartered, would strike the common people almost as much as the punishments inflicted on the living, though in fact it amounts to little or nothing, as God says: *Who kill the body, and after that have nothing more that they can do*. And the poets make singularly much of the horror of this picture, as something beyond death: Alas![14]

that the remains of a half-burned king, his bones laid bare, / Should be foully dragged across the earth, smeared with gore. I happened to be in Rome one day just when they were executing Catena, a notorious robber. They strangled him without any emotion from the onlookers; but when they came to quarter him, the executioner gave no blow without the people following it with a plaintive cry and exclamation, as if each one had lent his own feelings to that carcass. These inhuman excesses should be practiced on the bark, not on the living wood.[15]

In the same way, in a somewhat similar case, Artaxerxes softened the harshness of the ancient laws of Persia. He ordered that lords who had failed in their office, instead of being whipped as was customary, should be stripped and their clothes whipped in their place; and that instead of having their hair torn out as was customary, they

14 Luke 12:4.
15 Ennius, quoted by Cicero. Montaigne saw Catena's execution in January 1581, during his journey to Italy.

FRENCH

sacrifians des pourceaux en figure, et representez. Inuention hardie, de vouloir payer en peinture et en ombrage Dieu, substance si essentielle.

ENGLISH

should only have their tall hats taken off. The Egyptians, so devout, thought they gave full satisfaction to divine justice by sacrificing pigs to it in effigy and in images. A bold invention, to try to pay God, so essential a substance, in paint and shadow.[16]

2.11.18 Ie vy en vne saison en laquelle nous abondons en exemples incroyables de ce vice, par la licence de noz guerres ciuiles: et ne voit on rien aux histoires anciennes, de plus extreme,que ce que nous en essayons tous les iours. Mais cela ne m'y a nullement appriuoisé. A peine me pouuoy-ie persuader, auant que ie l'eusse veu, qu'il se fust trouué des ames si farouches, qui pour le seul plaisir du meurtre, le voulussent commettre; hacher et destrancher les membres d'autruy; aiguiser leur esprit à inuenter des tourmens inusitez, et des morts nouuelles, sans inimitié, sans proufit, et pour cette seule fin, de iouir du plaisant spectacle, des gestes, et mouuemens pitoyables, des gemissemens, et voix lamentables, d'vn homme mourant en angoisse.

Car voyla l'extreme poinct, où la cruauté puisse atteindre. *Vt homo hominem, non iratus, non timens, tantum spectaturus occidat.*

I live in a time when we abound in incredible examples of this vice, through the license of our civil wars; and one sees nothing in ancient histories more extreme than what we experience every day. But this has not at all made me used to it. I could hardly persuade myself, before I had seen it, that there were souls so fierce that they would commit murder for the sheer pleasure of it: hack and lop off other people's limbs, sharpen their wits to invent unaccustomed torments and new deaths, without enmity, without profit, and for the sole purpose of enjoying the pleasant spectacle of the pitiful gestures and movements, the groans and lamentable cries, of a man dying in anguish.

For that is the furthest point cruelty can reach. *That man should kill man, not in anger, not in fear, but only to watch.*

KINDNESS TO ANIMALS

Our cruelty to beasts leads to cruelty to men; we owe some kindness even to animals and trees.

FRENCH

2.11.19 De moy, ie n'ay pas sçeu voir seulement sans desplaisir, poursuiure et tuer vne beste innocente, qui est sans deffence, et de qui nous ne receuons aucune offence. Et comme il aduient communement que le cerf se sentant hors d'haleine et de force, n'ayant plus autre remede, se reiette et rend à nous mesmes qui le poursuiuons, nous demandant mercy par ses larmes, *quæstuque cruentus, / Atque imploranti similis,* ce m'a tousiours semblé vn spectacle tres-deplaisant. Ie ne prens guere beste en vie, à qui ie ne redonne les champs. Pythagoras les achetoit des pescheurs et des oyseleurs, pour en faire autant.

Primóque à cæde ferarum / Incaluisse puto maculatum sanguine ferrum. Les naturels sanguinaires à l'endroit des bestes, tesmoignent vne propension naturelle à la cruauté. Apres qu'on se fut appriuoisé à Rome aux spectacles des meurtres des animaux, on vint aux

ENGLISH

For my part, I have never been able even to watch without distress an innocent animal being pursued and killed, which is defenseless and from which we receive no offense. And when, as commonly happens, the stag, feeling himself out of breath and strength and with no other remedy left, turns back and surrenders to us, his very pursuers, begging us for mercy with his tears, *bleeding, with his moans, / And like one imploring,* that has always seemed to me a most unpleasant spectacle. I hardly ever take an animal alive without giving it back to the fields. Pythagoras used to buy them from fishermen and fowlers to do the same.

And it was with the slaughter of wild beasts, I think, / That steel first grew warm, stained with blood. Natures that are bloodthirsty toward animals show a natural propensity to cruelty. After people at Rome had grown used to spectacles of the

16 The story of Artaxerxes is told by Plutarch.

FRENCH

hommes et aux gladiateurs. Nature a, ce crains-ie, elle mesme attaché à l'homme quelque instinct à l'inhumanité. Nul ne prent son esbat à voir des bestes s'entreiouer et caresser; et nul ne faut de le prendre à les voir s'entredeschirer et desmembrer. Et afin qu'on ne se moque de cette sympathie que i'ay auec elles, la theologie mesme nous ordonne quelque faueur en leur endroit.

Et considerant, qu'vn mesme maistre nous a logez en ce palais pour son seruice, et qu'elles sont, comme nous, de sa famille; elle a raison de nous enjoindre quelque respect et affection enuers elles.

2.11.20 Pythagoras emprunta la metempsychose, des Ægyptiens, mais depuis elle a esté receuë par plusieurs nations, et notamment par nos Druides: *Morte carent animæ; sempérque priore relicta*
Sede, nouis domibus viuunt, habitántque receptæ. La religion de noz anciens Gaulois, portoit que les ames estans eternelles, ne cessoyent de se remuer et changer de place d'vn corps à vn autre: meslant en outre à cette fantasie, quelque consideration de la iustice diuine. Car selon les desportemens de l'ame, pendant qu'elle auoit esté chez Alexandre, ils disoient que Dieu luy ordonnoit vn autre corps à habiter, plus ou moins penible, et rapportant à sa condition: Muta ferarum
Cogit vincla pati: truculentos ingerit vrsis,
Prædonésque lupis, fallaces vulpibus addit.

/ Atque vbi per varios annos, per mille figuras
Egit, Lethæo purgatos flumine, tandem
Rursus ad humanæ reuocat primordia formæ. *Si elle auoit esté vaillante, la logeoient au corps d'vn lyon; si voluptueuse, en celuy d'vn pourceau; si lasche, en celuy d'vn cerf ou d'vn lieure; si malitieuse, en celuy d'vn renard; ainsi du reste; iusques à ce que purifiée par ce chastiement, elle reprenoit le corps de quelque autre homme;* Ipse ego, nam memini, Troiani tempore belli,
Panthoïdes Euphorbus eram.

ENGLISH

slaughter of animals, they went on to men and gladiators. Nature herself, I fear, has attached to man some instinct for inhumanity. No one takes any amusement in watching animals play together and caress each other, and no one fails to take it in watching them tear each other apart and dismember each other. And lest anyone mock this sympathy I have with them, theology itself enjoins on us some kindness toward them.[17]

And considering that one and the same master has lodged us in this palace for his service, and that they, like us, are of his household, it has good reason to enjoin on us some respect and affection toward them.

Pythagoras borrowed metempsychosis from the Egyptians, but since then it has been accepted by many nations, and notably by our Druids: *Souls are free from death; ever leaving their former*
Dwelling, they live in new homes, and dwell where they are received. The religion of our ancient Gauls held that souls, being eternal, never ceased moving and changing place from one body to another; and to this notion they added some consideration of divine justice. For according to the soul's conduct while it had been, say, in Alexander, they said God assigned it another body to live in, more or less painful, and suited to its condition: The mute bonds of beasts
He forces them to bear; he thrusts the ferocious into bears,
Robbers into wolves, adds the deceitful to foxes.[18]

/ And when through many years, through a thousand shapes,
He has driven them on, purged at last in the river of Lethe,
He calls them back again to the first beginnings of human form. *If it had been valiant, they lodged it in the body of a lion; if voluptuous, in that of a pig; if cowardly, in that of a stag or a hare; if cunning, in that of a fox; and so on with the rest, until, purified by this chastisement, it took on the body of some other man again.* I myself—for I remember it—in the time of the Trojan War
Was Euphorbus, son of Panthous.[19]

17 Ovid, Metamorphoses.
18 Metempsychosis is the transmigration of souls. The second quotation is from Claudian, Against Rufinus.
19 Pythagoras claimed to have been the Trojan warrior Euphorbus in an earlier life.

FRENCH

2.11.21 Quant à ce cousinage là d'entre nous et les bestes, ie n'en fay pas grande recepte: ny de ce aussi que plusieurs nations, et notamment des plus anciennes et plus nobles, ont non seulement receu des bestes à leur société et compagnie, mais leur ont donné vn rang bien loing au dessus d'eux; les estimans tantost familieres, et fauories de leurs Dieux, et les ayans en respect et reuerence plus qu'humaine; et d'autres ne recognoissans autre Dieu, ny autre diuinité qu'elles.

Belluæ à barbaris propter beneficium consecratæ: Crocodilon adorat
Pars hæc, illa pauet saturam serpentibus ibin,
Effigies sacri hic nitet aurea cercopitheci;
hic piscem fluminis, illic
Oppida tota canem venerantur. Et l'interpretation mesme que Plutarque donne à cet erreur, qui est tresbien prise, leur est encores honorable. Car il dit, que ce n'estoit le chat, ou le bœuf, pour exemple, que les Ægyptiens adoroyent; mais qu'ils adoroyent en ces bestes là, quelque image des facultez diuines. En cette-cy la patience et l'vtilité: en cette-là, la viuacité, ou comme noz voisins les Bourguignons auec toute l'Allemaigne, l'impatience de se voir enfermez: par où ils representoyent la liberté, qu'ils aymoient et adoroient au delà de toute autre faculté diuine, et ainsi des autres.

Mais quand ie rencontre parmy les opinions plus moderées, les discours qui essayent à montrer la prochaine ressemblance de nous aux animaux: et combien ils ont de part à nos plus grands priuileges; et auec combien de vray-semblance on nous les apparie; certes i'en rabats beaucoup de nostre presomption, et me demets volontiers de cette royauté imaginaire, qu'on nous donne sur les autres creatures.

2.11.22 Quand tout cela en seroit à dire, si y a-il vn certain respect, qui nous attache, et vn general deuoir d'humanité, non aux bestes seulement, qui ont vie et sentiment, mais aux arbres mesmes et aux plantes. Nous deuons la iustice aux hommes, et la grace et la benignité aux autres creatures, qui en peuuent estre capables. Il y a quelque commerce entre elles et nous, et quelque obligation mutuelle. Ie ne crains point à dire la tendresse de ma nature si puerile, que ie ne puis pas bien refuser à mon chien la feste, qu'il m'offre hors de saison, ou qu'il me demande.

ENGLISH

As for that kinship between us and the animals, I do not set much store by it; nor by the fact that many nations, and notably some of the most ancient and noble, have not only received animals into their society and company but given them a rank far above themselves—some regarding them as familiars and favorites of their gods and holding them in more than human respect and reverence, and others recognizing no other god or divinity than them.

Animals consecrated by the barbarians for the benefits they conferred: *This part*
Worships the crocodile, that one dreads the ibis gorged with serpents;
Here gleams the golden image of a sacred long-tailed monkey;
here they revere a river fish, there
Whole towns worship a dog. And the very interpretation Plutarch gives of this error, which is very well taken, is still honorable to them. For he says that it was not the cat or the ox, for example, that the Egyptians worshiped, but that they worshiped in those animals some image of the divine faculties: in this one patience and usefulness; in that one liveliness, or—like our neighbors the Burgundians, together with all Germany—impatience at being shut in, by which they represented liberty, which they loved and worshiped beyond every other divine faculty; and so with the others.

But when I come across, among the more moderate opinions, the arguments that try to show how closely we resemble the animals, how large a share they have in our greatest privileges, and how plausibly they are matched with us, I certainly abate much of our presumption, and willingly resign that imaginary kingship over the other creatures that we are given.

Even if all that were set aside, there is still a certain respect that binds us, and a general duty of humanity, not only to animals, which have life and feeling, but even to trees and plants. We owe justice to men, and grace and kindness to the other creatures that may be capable of them. There is some dealing between them and us, and some mutual obligation. I am not afraid to admit that my nature is so childishly tender that I cannot well refuse my dog the fuss he offers me, or asks of me, out of season.

FRENCH

Les Turcs ont des aumosnes et des hospitaux pour les bestes: les Romains auoient vn soing public de la nourriture des oyes, par la vigilance desquelles leur Capitole auoit esté sauué: les Atheniens ordonnerent que les mules et mulets, qui auoyent seruy au bastiment du temple appellé Hecatompedon, fussent libres, et qu'on les laissast paistre par tout sans empeschement. Les Agrigentins auoyent en vsage commun, d'enterrer serieusement les bestes, qu'ils auoient eu cheres: comme les cheuaux de quelque rare merite, les chiens et les oyseaux vtiles: ou mesme qui auoyent seruy de passe-temps à leurs enfans.

Et la magnificence, qui leur estoit ordinaire en toutes autres choses, paroissoit aussi singulierement, à la sumptuosité et nombre des monuments esleuez à cette fin: qui ont duré en parade, plusieurs siecles depuis. Les Ægyptiens enterroyent les loups, les ours, les crocodiles, les chiens, et les chats, en lieux sacrés: embausmoyent leurs corps, et portoyent le deuil à leurs trespas. Cimon fit vne sepulture honorable aux iuments, auec lesquelles il auoit gaigné par trois fois le prix de la course aux ieux Olympiques. L'ancien Xanthippus fit enterrer son chien sur vn chef, en la coste de la mer, qui en a depuis retenu le nom.

Et Plutarque faisoit, dit-il, conscience, de vendre et enuoyer à la boucherie, pour vn leger profit, vn bœuf qui l'auoit long temps seruy.

ENGLISH

The Turks have alms and hospitals for animals. The Romans took public care of feeding the geese by whose vigilance their Capitol had been saved. The Athenians ordered that the she-mules and mules that had served in building the temple called Hecatompedon should be free, and allowed to graze anywhere without hindrance. The Agrigentines had a common custom of solemnly burying the animals they had held dear, such as horses of rare merit, useful dogs and birds, or even those that had served as playthings for their children.[20]

And the magnificence that was usual with them in all other things appeared singularly in this too, in the sumptuousness and number of the monuments raised for this purpose, which remained on display for several centuries afterward. The Egyptians buried wolves, bears, crocodiles, dogs and cats in sacred places, embalmed their bodies and went into mourning at their deaths. Cimon gave an honorable burial to the mares with which he had three times won the prize for the race at the Olympic Games. The elder Xanthippus had his dog buried on a headland by the sea, which has kept its name ever since.[21]

And Plutarch, he says, had scruples about selling an ox that had served him a long time and sending it to the butcher for a slight profit.

20 The geese of Juno's temple gave the alarm when the Gauls attacked the Capitol in 390 BC. The Hecatompedon is the Parthenon.
21 Cimon was the father of Miltiades, the victor of Marathon. Xanthippus, father of Pericles, buried the dog that had swum after his ship to Salamis.

II.12 Apology for Raymond Sebond

Apologie de Raimond de Sebonde

Defending Sebond's natural theology, Montaigne dismantles human reason's pretensions, comparing us unfavorably with animals and ending in skeptical doubt and faith.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
2.12.1	C'EST à la verité vne tres-vtile et grande partie que la science: ceux qui la mesprisent tesmoignent assez leur bestise: mais ie n'estime pas pourtant sa valeur iusques à cette mesure extreme qu'aucuns luy attribuent. Comme Herillus le philosophe, qui logeoit en elle le souuerain bien, et tenoit qu'il fust en elle de nous rendre sages et contens: ce que ie ne croy pas: ny ce que d'autres ont dict, que la science est mere de toute vertu, et que tout vice est produit par l'ignorance. Si cela est vray, il est subiect à vne longue interpretation.	In truth, knowledge is a very useful and important accomplishment; those who despise it show their stupidity plainly enough. But I do not, for all that, value it to the extreme degree that some attribute to it—like Herillus the philosopher, who placed the sovereign good in it and held that it was in its power to make us wise and content, which I do not believe; nor do I believe what others have said, that knowledge is the mother of all virtue, and that all vice is produced by ignorance. If that is true, it needs a long interpretation.[1]

TRANSLATING SEBOND

His father's learned guests gave him Sebond's Natural Theology, which Montaigne translated at his request.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
2.12.2	Ma maison a esté dés long temps ouuerte aux gens de sçauoir, et en est fort cogneuë; car mon pere qui l'a commandée cinquante ans, et plus, eschauffé de cette ardeur nouuelle, dequoy le Roy François premier embrassa les lettres et les mit en credit, rechercha auec grand soin et despence l'accointance des hommes doctes, les receuant chez luy, comme personnes sainctes, et ayans quelque particuliere inspiration de sagesse diuine, recueillant leurs sentences, et leurs discours comme des oracles, et auec d'autant plus de reuerence, et de religion, qu'il auoit moins de loy d'en iuger: car il n'auoit aucune cognoissance des lettres, non plus que ses predecesseurs. Moy ie les ayme bien, mais ie ne les adore pas.	My house has long been open to learned men, and is well known for it. For my father, who ruled it for fifty years and more, was fired with that new ardor with which King Francis I embraced letters and brought them into favor. He sought the acquaintance of learned men with great care and expense, receiving them in his home like holy persons who had some special inspiration of divine wisdom, collecting their sayings and discourses like oracles —and with all the more reverence and religious awe as he was less qualified to judge them, for he had no knowledge of letters, any more than his forebears. As for me, I like them well enough, but I do not worship them.
2.12.3	Entre autres, Pierre Bunel, homme de grande reputation de sçauoir en son temps, ayant arresté quelques iours à Montaigne en la compagnie de mon pere, auec d'autres hommes de sa sorte, luy fit present au desloger d'vn liure qui s'intitule *Theologia naturalis; siue Liber creaturarum, magistri Raimondi de Sebonde*.	Among others, Pierre Bunel, a man of great reputation for learning in his day, having stayed some days at Montaigne in my father's company, with other men of his kind, made him a present on leaving of a book entitled Natural Theology, or Book of Creatures, by Master Raymond Sebond.[2]

1 Herillus of Carthage (3rd century BC) was a pupil of Zeno, the founder of Stoicism.

FRENCH

Et par ce que la langue Italienne et Espagnolle estoient familieres à mon pere, et que ce liure est basty d'vn Espagnol barragouiné en terminaisons Latines, il esperoit qu'auec bien peu d'ayde, il en pourroit faire son profit, et le luy recommanda, comme liure tres-vtile et propre à la saison, en laquelle il le luy donna: ce fut lors que les nouuelletez de Luther commençoient d'entrer en credit, et esbranler en beaucoup de lieux nostre ancienne creance. En quoy il auoit vn tresbon aduis; preuoyant bien par discours de raison, que ce commencement de maladie declineroit aisément en vn execrable atheisme.

Car le vulgaire n'ayant pas la faculté de iuger des choses par elles mesmes, se laissant emporter à la Fortune et aux apparences, apres qu'on luy a mis en main la hardiesse de mespriser et contreroller les opinions qu'il auoit euës en extreme reuerence, comme sont celles où il va de son salut, et qu'on a mis aucuns articles de sa religion en doubte et à la balance, il iette tantost apres aisément en pareille incertitude toutes les autres pieces de sa creance, qui n'auoient pas chez luy plus d'authorité ny de fondement, que celles qu'on luy a esbranlées: et secoue comme vn ioug tyrannique toutes les impressions, qu'il auoit receues par l'authorité des loix, ou reuerence de l'ancien vsage, *Nam cupidè conculcatur nimis antè metutum;* entreprenant deslors en auant, de ne receuoir rien, à quoy il n'ait interposé son decret, et presté particulier consentement.

2.12.4 Or quelques iours auant sa mort, mon pere ayant de fortune rencontré ce liure soubs vn tas d'autres papiers abandonnez, me commanda de le luy mettre en François. Il faict bon traduire les autheurs, comme celuy-là, où il n'y a guere que la matiere à representer: mais ceux qui ont donné beaucoup à la grace, et à l'elegance du langage, ils sont dangereux à entreprendre, nommément pour les rapporter à vn idiome plus foible.

C'estoit vne occupation bien estrange et nouuelle pour moy: mais estant de fortune pour lors de loisir, et ne pouuant rien refuser au commandement du meilleur pere qui fut onques, i'en vins à bout, comme ie peuz: à

ENGLISH

And because the Italian and Spanish languages were familiar to my father, and this book is built of a Spanish jargon with Latin endings, he hoped that with very little help he could profit from it, and recommended it to him as a very useful book, suited to the time when he gave it to him. This was when Luther's novelties were beginning to gain credit and to shake our ancient belief in many places. In this he showed very good judgment, clearly foreseeing by rational reasoning that this incipient disease would easily degenerate into execrable atheism.

For the common people do not have the ability to judge things in themselves, and let themselves be carried away by chance and appearances. Once they have been given the boldness to despise and criticize the opinions they had held in extreme reverence, such as those on which their salvation depends, and once some articles of their religion have been put in doubt and in the balance, they soon easily throw all the other parts of their belief into similar uncertainty, for these had no more authority or foundation for them than the ones that have been shaken. And they shake off like a tyrannical yoke all the impressions they had received from the authority of the laws or from reverence for ancient custom, *For what was too much feared before is eagerly trampled underfoot;* resolving from then on to accept nothing to which they have not applied their own decree and given their particular consent.[3]

Now, a few days before his death, my father, having by chance come across this book under a heap of other discarded papers, ordered me to put it into French for him. It is good to translate authors like that one, where there is little but the matter to render; but those who have given much to grace and elegance of language are dangerous to undertake, especially when bringing them into a weaker idiom.[4]

It was a very strange and new occupation for me; but happening to have leisure at the time, and being unable to refuse anything to the command of the best father there ever was, I got through it as best I could. He took singular pleasure in it, and

2 Pierre Bunel (1499–1546) was a humanist from Toulouse. Raymond Sebond (d. 1436), a Catalan, taught theology at Toulouse.
3 Lucretius, On the Nature of Things.
4 Montaigne's father died in June 1568; the translation of Sebond appeared in Paris in 1569.

FRENCH

quoy il print vn singulier plaisir, et donna charge qu'on le fist imprimer: ce qui fut executé apres sa mort.

2.12.5 Ie trouuay belles les imaginations de cet autheur, la contexture de son ouurage bien suyuie; et son dessein plein de pieté. Par ce que beaucoup de gens s'amusent à le lire, et notamment les dames, à qui nous deuons plus de seruice, ie me suis trouué souuent à mesme de les secourir, pour descharger leur liure de deux principales obiections qu'on luy faict. Sa fin est hardie et courageuse, car il entreprend par raisons humaines et naturelles, establir et verifier contre les atheistes tous les articles de la religion Chrestienne.

En quoy, à dire la verité, ie le trouue si ferme et si heureux, que ie ne pense point qu'il soit possible de mieux faire en cet argument là; et croy que nul ne l'a esgalé. Cet ouurage me semblant trop riche et trop beau, pour vn autheur, duquel le nom soit si peu cogneu, et duquel tout ce que nous sçauons, c'est qu'il estoit Espagnol, faisant profession de medecine à Thoulouse, il y a enuiron deux cens ans; ie m'enquis autrefois à Adrianus Turnebus, qui sçauoit toutes choses, que ce pouuoit estre de ce liure: il me respondit, qu'il pensoit que ce fust quelque quinte essence tirée de S.

Thomas d'Aquin: car de vray cet esprit là, plein d'vne erudition infinie et d'vne subtilité admirable, estoit seul capable de telles imaginations. Tant y a que quiconque en soit l'autheur et inuenteur, et ce n'est pas raison d'oster sans plus grande occasion à Sebonde ce tiltre, c'estoit vn tres-suffisant homme, et ayant plusieurs belles parties.

ENGLISH

gave orders for it to be printed—which was done after his death.

I found this author's ideas fine, the structure of his work well sustained, and his purpose full of piety. Many people enjoy reading it, especially the ladies, to whom we owe more service, so I have often found myself in a position to help them by clearing their book of the two main objections made against it. His aim is bold and courageous, for he undertakes to establish and prove all the articles of the Christian religion against the atheists by human and natural reasons.

In this, to tell the truth, I find him so firm and so successful that I do not think it possible to do better on that subject, and I believe no one has equaled him. This work seemed to me too rich and too fine for an author whose name is so little known. All we know of him is that he was a Spaniard who practiced medicine at Toulouse some two hundred years ago. So I once asked Adrianus Turnebus, who knew everything, what this book might be. He answered that he thought it was some quintessence drawn from Saint

Thomas Aquinas. In truth that mind, full of boundless learning and admirable subtlety, was the only one capable of such ideas. Be that as it may, whoever its author and inventor may be, he was a very able man with many fine qualities. And it is not right to take that title away from Sebond without stronger reason.

THE FIRST OBJECTION: FAITH AND REASON

Faith alone grasps divine truth, but reason may still serve it, as Christians fail to show by their lives.

FRENCH

2.12.6 La premiere reprehension qu'on fait de son ouurage; c'est que les Chrestiens se font tort de vouloir appuyer leur creance, par des raisons humaines, qui ne se conçoit que par foy, et par vne inspiration particuliere de la grace diuine. En cette obiection, il semble qu'il y ait quelque zele de pieté: et à cette cause nous faut-il auec autant plus de douceur et de respect essayer de satisfaire à ceux qui la mettent en auant. Ce seroit mieux la charge d'vn homme versé en la theologie, que de moy, qui n'y sçay rien.

Toutefois ie iuge ainsi, qu'à vne chose si diuine et si haultaine, et surpassant de si loing l'humaine intelligence, comme est cette verité, de laquelle il a pleu à

ENGLISH

The first criticism made of his work is that Christians do themselves wrong in trying to support their belief with human reasons, since it is conceived only by faith and by a particular inspiration of divine grace. There seems to be some pious zeal in this objection, and for that reason we must try all the more gently and respectfully to satisfy those who put it forward. This task would suit a man versed in theology better than me, for I know nothing of it.

Nevertheless, this is my judgment. This truth, with which God in his goodness has been pleased to enlighten us, is so divine and so lofty, and sur-

FRENCH

la bonté de Dieu nous esclairer, il est bien besoin qu'il nous preste encore son secours, d'vne faueur extraordinaire et priuilegiée, pour la pouuoir conceuoir et loger en nous: et ne croy pas que les moyens purement humains en soyent aucunement capables. Et s'ils l'estoient, tant d'ames rares et excellentes, et si abondamment garnies de forces naturelles és siecles anciens, n'eussent pas failly par leur discours, d'arriuer à cette cognoissance.

2.12.7 C'est la foy seule qui embrasse viuement et certainement les hauts mysteres de nostre religion. Mais ce n'est pas à dire, que ce soit vne tresbelle et treslouable entreprinse, d'accommoder encore au seruice de nostre foy, les vtils naturels et humains, que Dieu nous a donnez. Il ne faust pas doubter que ce ne soit l'vsage le plus honorable, que nous leur sçaurions donner: et qu'il n'est occupation ny dessein plus digne d'vn homme Chrestien, que de viser par tous ses estudes et pensemens à embellir, estendre et amplifier la verité de sa creance.

Nous ne nous contentons point de seruir Dieu d'esprit et d'ame: nous luy deuons encore, et rendons vne reuerence corporelle: nous appliquons noz membres mesmes, et noz mouuements et les choses externes à l'honorer. Il en faut faire de mesme, et accompaigner nostre foy de toute la raison qui est en nous: mais tousiours auec cette reseruation, de n'estimer pas que ce soit de nous qu'elle despende, ny que nos efforts et arguments puissent atteindre à vne si supernaturelle et diuine science.

2.12.8 Si elle n'entre chez nous par vne infusion extraordinaire: si elle y entre non seulement par discours, mais encore par moyens humains, elle n'y est pas en sa dignité ny en sa splendeur. Et certes ie crain pourtant que nous ne la iouyssions que par cette voye.

Si nous tenions à Dieu par l'entremise d'vne foy viue: si nous tenions à Dieu par luy, non par nous: si nous auions vn pied et vn fondement diuin, les occasions humaines n'auroient pas le pouuoir de nous esbranler, comme elles ont: nostre fort ne seroit pas pour se rendre à vne si foible batterie: l'amour de la nouuelleté, la contraincte des Princes, la bonne fortune d'vn party, le changement temeraire et fortuite de nos opinions, n'auroient pas la force de secouër et alterer nostre croyance: nous ne la lairrions pas troubler à la mercy d'un nouuel argument, et à la persuasion, non pas de toute la rhetorique qui fut onques: nous soustiendrions ces flots d'vne fermeté inflexible et immobile: *Illisos fluctus rupes vt vasta refundit,*

ENGLISH

passes human understanding by so far, that he must surely lend us his help as well, by an extraordinary and privileged favor, if we are to conceive it and lodge it within us. I do not believe that purely human means are in any way capable of it. If they were, so many rare and excellent souls in ancient times, so richly furnished with natural powers, would not have failed to reach this knowledge by their reasoning.

It is faith alone that embraces the high mysteries of our religion vividly and surely. But that is not to say that it is not a very fine and very praiseworthy undertaking to adapt the natural and human tools God has given us to the service of our faith as well. There is no doubt that this is the most honorable use we could put them to. No occupation or design is more worthy of a Christian than to aim, through all his studies and thoughts, at embellishing, extending and amplifying the truth of his belief.

We are not content to serve God with mind and soul. We owe him bodily reverence as well, and we render it: we apply even our limbs, our movements and external things to honoring him. We must do the same here and accompany our faith with all the reason that is in us. But we must always keep this reservation: we must not think that faith depends on us, or that our efforts and arguments can attain to so supernatural and divine a knowledge.

If it does not enter into us by an extraordinary infusion, if it enters not only by reasoning but also by human means, then it is not there in its dignity or its splendor. And yet I certainly fear that this is the only way we enjoy it.

If we held to God through a living faith, if we held to God through him and not through ourselves, if we had a divine footing and foundation, human occurrences would not have the power to shake us as they do. Our fortress would not be likely to surrender to so weak a battery. Love of novelty, the compulsion of princes, the good fortune of one party, the rash and accidental changes in our opinions would not have the strength to shake and alter our belief. We would not let it be troubled at the mercy of a new argument, or by persuasion, no, not even by all the rhetoric there ever was. We would withstand these waves with an unbending and immovable firmness: *As a vast rock throws back*

FRENCH

Et varias circùm latrantes dissipat vndas
Mole sua.

2.12.9 Si ce rayon de la diuinité nous touchoit aucunement, il y paroistroit par tout: non seulement nos parolles, mais encore nos operations en porteroient la lueur et le lustre. Tout ce qui partiroit de nous, on le verroit illuminé de cette noble clarté. Nous deurions auoir honte, qu'és sectes humaines il ne fut iamais partisan, quelque difficulté et estrangeté que maintinst sa doctrine, qui n'y conformast aucunement ses deportemens et sa vie: et vne si diuine et celeste institution ne marque les Chrestiens que par la langue. Voulez vous voir cela? comparez nos mœurs à vn Mahometan, à vn Payen, vous demeurez tousiours au dessoubs.

Là où au regard de l'auantage de nostre religion, nous deurions luire en excellence, d'vne extreme et incomparable distance: et deuroit on dire, sont ils si iustes, si charitables, si bons? ils sont donq Chrestiens. Toutes autres apparences sont communes à toutes religions: esperance, confiance, euenemens, ceremonies, penitence, martyres. La merque peculiere de nostre verité deuroit estre nostre vertu, comme elle est aussi la plus celeste merque, et la plus difficile: et que c'est la plus digne production de la verité. Pourtant eut raison nostre bon S.

Loys, quand ce Roy Tartare, qui s'estoit faict Chrestien, desseignoit de venir à Lyon, baiser les pieds au Pape, et y recognoistre la sanctimonie qu'il esperoit trouuer en nos mœurs, de l'en destourner instamment, de peur qu'au contraire, nostre desbordée façon de viure ne le dégoustast d'vne si saincte creance. Combien que depuis il aduint tout diuersement, à cet autre, lequel estant allé à Rome pour mesme effect, y voyant la dissolution des prelats, et peuple de ce temps là, s'establit d'autant plus fort en nostre religion, considerant combien elle deuoit auoir de force et de diuinité, à maintenir sa dignité et sa splendeur, parmy tant de corruption, et en mains si vicieuses.

2.12.10 Si nous auions vne seule goutte de foy, nous remuerions les montaignes de leur place, dict la saincte parole: nos actions qui seroient guidées et accompaignées de la diuinité, ne seroient pas simplement humaines, elles auroient quelque chose de miraculeux, comme nostre

ENGLISH

the waves that dash against it,
And scatters the various billows barking all around it
By its sheer mass.[5]

If this ray of divinity touched us at all, it would show everywhere. Our words and our deeds alike would bear its gleam and luster, and everything that came from us would be seen lit by this noble brightness. We ought to be ashamed of this. Among human sects there has never been a follower who did not to some extent conform his conduct and his life to his doctrine, however difficult and strange it was. Yet so divine and heavenly a teaching marks Christians out only by their tongues. Do you want to see this? Compare our morals with a Muslim's or a pagan's: you always come off worse.

Given the superiority of our religion, we ought instead to shine in excellence by an extreme and incomparable distance. People ought to say: "Are they so just, so charitable, so good? Then they are Christians." All other outward signs are common to all religions: hope, trust, events, ceremonies, penance, martyrdoms. The distinctive mark of our truth ought to be our virtue, for it is also the most heavenly mark and the most difficult, and the worthiest product of truth. So our good Saint

Louis was right to act as he did. That Tartar king who had become a Christian was planning to come to Lyons to kiss the Pope's feet and to see there the holiness he hoped to find in our ways. Louis earnestly urged him not to come, for fear that our dissolute way of life would instead put him off so holy a belief. Yet things later turned out quite otherwise for another man, who went to Rome for the same purpose. Seeing the dissoluteness of the prelates and people of that time, he became all the more firmly settled in our religion. He reasoned that it must have great strength and divinity to keep its dignity and splendor amid so much corruption and in such vicious hands.[6]

If we had a single drop of faith, Holy Writ says, we would move mountains from their place. Our actions, guided and accompanied by divinity, would not be merely human; they would have something

5 Verses of uncertain authorship, echoing Virgil's image of a rock standing firm against the sea (Aeneid VII).
6 Louis IX of France (reigned 1226–1270). The visitor to Rome recalls the Jew Abraham in Boccaccio's Decameron (I.2).

FRENCH

croyance. *Breuis est institutio vitæ honestæ beatæque, si credas.* Les vns font accroire au monde, qu'ils croyent ce qu'ils ne croyent pas. Les autres en plus grand nombre, se le font accroire à eux mesmes, ne sçachants pas penetrer que c'est que croire.

2.12.11 Nous trouuons estrange si aux guerres, qui pressent à cette heure nostre Estat, nous voyons flotter les euenements et diuersifier d'vne maniere commune et ordinaire: c'est que nous n'y apportons rien que le nostre. La iustice, qui est en l'vn des partis, elle n'y est que pour ornement et couuerture: elle y est bien alleguée, mais elle n'y est ny receuë, ny logée, ny espousée: elle y est comme en la bouche de l'aduocat, non comme dans le cœur et affection de la partie. Dieu doit son secours extraordinaire à la foy et à la religion, non pas à nos passions. Les hommes y sont conducteurs, et s'y seruent de la religion: ce deuroit estre tout le contraire.

Sentez, si ce n'est par noz mains que nous la menons: à tirer comme de cire tant de figures contraires, d'vne regle si droitte et si ferme. Quand s'est il veu mieux qu'en France en noz iours? Ceux qui l'ont prinse à gauche, ceux qui l'ont prinse à droitte, ceux qui en disent le noir, ceux qui en disent le blanc, l'employent si pareillement à leurs violentes et ambitieuses entreprinses, s'y conduisent d'vn progrez si conforme en desbordement et iniustice, qu'ils rendent doubteuse et malaisée à croire la diuersité qu'ils pretendent de leurs opinions en chose de laquelle depend la conduitte et loy de nostre vie. Peut on veoir partir de mesme eschole et discipline des mœurs plus vnies, plus vnes?

2.12.12 Voyez l'horrible impudence dequoy nous pelotons les raisons diuines: et combien irreligieusement nous les auons et reiettées et reprinses selon que la Fortune nous a changé de place en ces orages publiques. Cette proposition si solenne: S'il est permis au subiect de se rebeller et armer contre son Prince pour la defense de la religion: souuienne vous en quelles bouches cette année passée l'affirmatiue d'icelle estoit l'arc-boutant d'vn parti: la negatiue, de quel autre parti c'estoit l'arc-boutant. Et oyez à present de quel quartier vient la voix et instruction de l'vne et de l'autre: et si les armes bruyent moins pour cette cause que pour celle là.

Et nous bruslons les gents, qui disent, qu'il faut faire souffrir à la verité le ioug de nostre besoing: et de

ENGLISH

miraculous about them, like our belief. *The training for an honorable and happy life is short, if you believe.* Some make the world believe that they believe what they do not believe. Others, a greater number, make themselves believe it, for they cannot fathom what it is to believe.[7]

In the wars now pressing on our state, we find it strange to see events fluctuate and vary in a common and ordinary way. That is because we bring nothing to them but what is our own. Justice, which is on one of the sides, is there only as ornament and cover. It is indeed invoked, but it is not received, or lodged, or wedded there. It is there as it is in the lawyer's mouth, not as it is in the heart and affection of his client. God owes his extraordinary help to faith and religion, not to our passions. Here men are the leaders, and they make use of religion. It ought to be quite the opposite.

Feel whether it is not our own hands that steer religion, as we draw so many contrary shapes from so straight and firm a rule, as if from wax. When has this been seen more clearly than in France in our day? Some have taken it to the left and some to the right, some call it black and some call it white. Yet they all use it so alike for their violent and ambitious enterprises, and follow so similar a course of excess and injustice, that the difference of opinion they claim seems doubtful and hard to believe, on a matter on which the conduct and law of our life depends. Could you see morals more alike, more one and the same, coming from the same school and discipline?

See the horrible impudence with which we bat divine reasons back and forth like a ball. See how irreligiously we have both rejected them and taken them up again, as Fortune has shifted our place in these public storms. Take that solemn proposition: whether it is lawful for a subject to rebel and take up arms against his prince in defense of religion. Remember in whose mouths, last year, the affirmative was the buttress of one party, and which other party had the negative for its buttress. And hear now which quarter the voice and teaching of each comes from, and whether arms make less noise for this cause than for that.[8]

And we burn people who say that truth must be made to bear the yoke of our needs. How much

FRENCH

combien faict la France pis que de le dire? Confessons la verité, qui trieroit de l'armée mesme legitime, ceux qui y marchent par le seul zele d'vne affection religieuse, et encore ceux qui regardent seulement la protection des loix de leur pays, ou seruice du Prince, il n'en sçauroit bastir vne compagnie de gens-darmes complete. D'où vient cela, qu'il s'en trouue si peu, qui ayent maintenu mesme volonté et mesme progrez en nos mouuemens publiques, et que nous les voyons tantost n'aller que le pas, tantost y courir à bride aualée?

et mesmes hommes, tantost gaster nos affaires par leur violence et aspreté, tantost par leur froideur, mollesse et pesanteur; si ce n'est qu'ils y sont poussez par des considerations particulieres et casuelles, selon la diuersité desquelles ils se remuent?

2.12.13 Ie voy cela euidemment, que nous ne prestons volontiers à la deuotion que les offices, qui flattent noz passions. Il n'est point d'hostilité excellente comme la Chrestienne. Nostre zele fait merueilles, quand il va secondant nostre pente vers la haine, la cruauté, l'ambition, l'auarice, la detraction, la rebellion. A contre-poil, vers la bonté, la benignité, la temperance, si, comme par miracle, quelque rare complexion ne l'y porte, il ne va ny de pied, ny d'aile. Nostre religion est faicte pour extirper les vices: elle les couure, les nourrit, les incite. Il ne faut point faire barbe de foarre à Dieu, comme on dict.

Si nous le croyions, ie ne dy pas par foy, mais d'vne simple croyance: voire, et ie le dis à nostre grande confusion, si nous le croyions et cognoissions comme vne autre histoire, comme l'vn de nos compaignons, nous l'aimerions au dessus de toutes autres choses, pour l'infinie bonté et beauté qui reluit en luy: au moins marcheroit il en mesme reng de nostre affection, que les richesses, les plaisirs, la gloire et nos amis. Le meilleur de nous ne craind point de l'outrager, comme il craind d'outrager son voisin, son parent, son maistre.

Est-il si simple entendement, lequel ayant d'vn costé l'obiect d'vn de nos vicieux plaisirs, et de l'autre en pareille cognoissance et persuasion, l'estat d'vne gloire immortelle, entrast, en bigue de l'vn pour l'autre? Et si nous y renonçons souuent de pur mespris: car quelle

ENGLISH

worse does France do than say it? Let us confess the truth. Suppose someone sifted out from the army, even the lawful one, those who march in it solely out of religious zeal, and also those who look only to the protection of their country's laws or the service of their prince. He could not make up one complete company of men-at-arms from them. How is it that so few have kept the same will and the same pace in our public upheavals? Why do we see them now merely walking, now riding at full gallop?

and the same men now spoiling our affairs by their violence and harshness, now by their coldness, softness and sluggishness? It can only be that they are driven by private and chance considerations, and they move according to how these vary.

I see this plainly: we willingly lend devotion only those services that flatter our passions. There is no hostility so excellent as Christian hostility. Our zeal works wonders when it seconds our leaning toward hatred, cruelty, ambition, avarice, slander, rebellion. Against the grain, toward goodness, kindness and temperance, it will neither walk nor fly, unless by some miracle a rare temperament carries it there. Our religion is made to root out vices; instead it covers them, nourishes them, incites them. We must not try to fob God off with a straw beard, as the saying goes.[9]

Suppose we believed in him, I do not say by faith, but with a simple belief. Indeed, and I say it to our great shame, suppose we believed in him and knew him as we do any other history, or one of our companions. Then we would love him above all other things, for the infinite goodness and beauty that shine in him. At the very least he would hold the same rank in our affection as riches, pleasures, glory and our friends. The best of us is not afraid of outraging him as he is afraid of outraging his neighbor, his kinsman or his master.

Is any mind so simple that it would trade one for the other, with the object of one of our vicious pleasures on one side, and on the other the state of immortal glory, known and believed with equal conviction? And yet we often renounce that glory

8 After the Protestant Henry of Navarre became heir to the throne in 1584, the Catholic League adopted the right of resistance the Huguenots had earlier defended, and the Huguenots abandoned it.
7 Quintilian, Institutes of Oratory XII.
9 A proverbial expression: to mock someone, or to try to fool him with a sham.

FRENCH

enuie nous attire au blasphemer, sinon à l'aduenture l'enuie mesme de l'offense? Le philosophe Antisthenes, comme on l'initioit aux mysteres d'Orpheus, le prestre luy disant, que ceux qui se voüoyent à cette religion, auoyent à receuoir apres leur mort des biens eternels et parfaicts: Pourquoy si tu le crois ne meurs tu donc toy mesmes? luy fit-il.

Diogenes plus brusquement selon sa mode, et plus loing de nostre propos, au prestre qui le preschoit de mesme, de se faire de son ordre, pour paruenir aux biens de l'autre monde: Veux tu pas que ie croye qu'Agesilaüs et Epaminondas, si grands hommes, seront miserables, et que toy qui n'es qu'vn veau, et qui ne fais rien qui vaille; seras bien heureux, par ce que tu és prestre?

Ces grandes promesses de la beatitude eternelle si nous les receuions de pareille authorité qu'vn discours philosophique, nous n'aurions pas la mort en telle horreur que nous auons: *Non iam se moriens dissolui conquereretur,*
Sed magis ire foras, vestémque relinquere, vt anguis,
Gauderet, prælonga senex aut cornua ceruus. Ie veux estre dissoult, dirions nous, et estre aueques Iesus-Christ. La force du discours de Platon de l'immortalité de l'ame, poussa bien aucuns de ses disciples à la mort, pour iouïr plus promptement des esperances qu'il leur donnoit.

ENGLISH

out of pure contempt. For what desire draws us to blaspheme, unless perhaps the very desire to offend? The philosopher Antisthenes was being initiated into the mysteries of Orpheus. The priest told him that those who devoted themselves to this religion were to receive eternal and perfect goods after their death. "If you believe that," Antisthenes said to him, "why don't you die yourself?"

Diogenes, more bluntly as was his way, and further from our point, spoke to a priest who was likewise urging him to join his order so as to attain the goods of the other world: "Do you want me to believe that Agesilaus and Epaminondas, such great men, will be wretched, while you, who are nothing but a calf and do nothing worthwhile, will be blessed because you are a priest?"

If we accepted these great promises of eternal bliss on the same authority as a philosophical argument, we would not hold death in such horror as we do: *The dying man would no longer complain of being dissolved,*
But would rather rejoice to go out and leave his garment behind, as a snake does,
Or an old stag its overlong antlers. "I desire to be dissolved," we would say, "and to be with Jesus Christ." The force of Plato's reasoning on the immortality of the soul did indeed drive some of his disciples to their death, so that they might enjoy sooner the hopes he gave them.[10]

A RELIGION RECEIVED LIKE ANY OTHER

We hold our religion by custom and country, as others hold theirs.

FRENCH

2.12.14 Tout cela c'est vn signe tres-euident que nous ne receuons nostre religion qu'à nostre façon et par nos mains, et non autrement que comme les autres religions se reçoiuent. Nous nous sommes rencontrez au pays, où elle estoit en vsage, ou nous regardons son ancienneté, ou l'authorité des hommes qui l'ont maintenuë, ou craignons les menaces qu'elle attache aux mescreans, ou suyuons ses promesses. Ces considerations là doiuent estre employées à nostre creance, mais comme subsidiaires: ce sont liaisons humaines. Vne autre region, d'autres tesmoings, pareilles promesses et menasses, nous pourroyent imprimer par mesme voye vne creance

ENGLISH

All this is a very clear sign that we receive our religion only in our own way and by our own hands, no differently from the way other religions are received. Either we happened to be in the country where it was practiced, or we respect its antiquity or the authority of the men who have upheld it. Or we fear the threats it holds over unbelievers, or we follow its promises. Those considerations should be applied to our belief, but only as auxiliaries; they are human ties. Another region, other witnesses, similar promises and threats could imprint a contrary belief on us in the same way. We

10 Saint Paul, Philippians 1:23. Ancient writers tell of Cleombrotus, who killed himself after reading Plato's Phaedo.

FRENCH

contraire. Nous sommes Chrestiens à mesme tiltre que nous sommes ou Perigordins ou Alemans.

2.12.15 Et ce que dit Plato, qu'il est peu d'hommes si fermes en l'atheïsme, qu'vn danger pressant ne ramene à la recognoissance de la diuine puissance: ce rolle ne touche point vn vray Chrestien. C'est à faire aux religions mortelles et humaines, d'estre receuës par vne humaine conduite. Quelle foy doit ce estre, que la lascheté et la foiblesse de cœur plantent en nous et establissent? Plaisante foy, qui ne croid ce qu'elle croid, que pour n'auoir le courage de le descroire. Vne vitieuse passion, comme celle de l'inconstance et de l'estonnement, peut elle faire en nostre ame aucune production reglée?

Ils establissent, dit-il, par la raison de leur iugement, que ce qui se recite des enfers, et des peines futures est feint, mais l'occasion de l'experimenter s'offrant lors que la vieillesse ou les maladies les approchent de leur mort: la terreur d'icelle les remplit d'vne nouuelle creance, par l'horreur de leur condition à venir. Et par ce que telles impressions rendent les courages craintifs, il defend en ses Loix toute instruction de telles menaces, et la persuasion que des Dieux il puisse venir à l'homme aucun mal, sinon pour son plus grand bien quand il y eschoit, et pour vn medecinal effect.

Ils recitent de Bion, qu'infect des atheïsmes de Theodorus, il auoit esté long temps se moquant des hommes religieux: mais la mort le surprenant, qu'il se rendit aux plus extremes superstitions: comme si les Dieux s'ostoyent et se remettoyent selon l'affaire de Bion. Platon, et ces exemples, veulent conclurre, que nous sommes ramenez à la creance de Dieu, ou par raison, ou par force.

L'atheïsme estant vne proposition, comme desnaturée et monstrueuse, difficile aussi, et malaisée d'establir en l'esprit humain, pour insolent et desreglé qu'il puisse estre: il s'en est veu assez, par vanité et par fierté de conceuoir des opinions non vulgaires, et reformatrices du monde, en affecter la profession par contenance: qui, s'ils sont assez fols, ne sont pas assez forts, pour l'auoir plantée en leur conscience. Pourtant ils ne lairront de ioindre leurs mains vers le ciel, si vous leur attachez vn bon coup d'espée en la poitrine: et quand la crainte ou la maladie aura abatu et appesanti cette licentieuse ferueur d'humeur volage, ils ne lairront pas de se reuenir, et se laisser tout discretement manier aux creances et exemples publiques.

ENGLISH

are Christians by the same title as we are Perigordians or Germans.

Plato says that few men are so firm in atheism that a pressing danger will not bring them back to acknowledging divine power. That role does not concern a true Christian. It is for mortal and human religions to be received by human means. What sort of faith must it be that cowardice and faintness of heart plant and establish in us? A fine faith, which believes what it believes only because it lacks the courage to disbelieve it! Can a vicious passion, such as inconstancy or terror, produce anything well ordered in our soul?

Such men, he says, establish by the reasoning of their judgment that what is told of hell and future punishments is invented. But the chance to test it comes when old age or illness brings them near death. Then the terror of death fills them with a new belief, through horror of their condition to come. Because such impressions make hearts fearful, he forbids in his Laws all teaching of such threats. He also forbids the belief that any harm can come to man from the gods, except for his greater good when it befalls him, and as a kind of medicine.

They tell of Bion that he was infected with the atheisms of Theodorus and had long mocked religious men. But when death overtook him, he surrendered to the most extreme superstitions, as if the gods withdrew and returned according to Bion's business. Plato and these examples mean to conclude that we are brought back to belief in God either by reason or by force.

Atheism is a proposition that is, as it were, unnatural and monstrous, and also difficult and hard to establish in the human mind, however insolent and unruly that mind may be. Yet plenty of men have been seen to profess it for show. They do it out of vanity, and from pride in conceiving opinions that are not common and would reform the world. Foolish enough they may be, but they are not strong enough to have planted it in their conscience. So they will not fail to clasp their hands toward heaven if you deal them a good sword-thrust in the chest. And once fear or sickness has crushed and weighed down the licentious fervor of their fickle temperament, they will not fail to

FRENCH

ENGLISH

come back. They will very discreetly let themselves be guided by public beliefs and examples.

Autre chose est, vn dogme serieusement digeré, autre chose ces impressions superficielles: lesquelles nées de la desbauche d'vn esprit desmanché, vont nageant temerairement et incertainement en la fantasie. Hommes bien miserables et esceruellez, qui taschent d'estre pires qu'ils ne peuuent!

A seriously digested doctrine is one thing; these superficial impressions are another. They are born of the debauchery of an unhinged mind and go floating rashly and uncertainly in the imagination. Truly wretched and brainless men, who try to be worse than they can!

2.12.16 L'erreur du paganisme, et l'ignorance de nostre saincte verité, laissa tomber cette grande ame: mais grande d'humaine grandeur seulement, encores en cet autre voisin abus, que les enfans et les vieillars se trouuent plus susceptibles de religion, comme si elle naissoit et tiroit son credit de nostre imbecillité. Le neud qui deuroit attacher nostre iugement et nostre volonté, qui deuroit estreindre nostre ame et ioindre à nostre Createur, ce deuroit estre vn neud prenant ses repliz et ses forces, non pas de noz considerations, de noz raisons et passions, mais d'vne estreinte diuine et supernaturelle, n'ayant qu'vne forme, vn visage, et vn lustre, qui est l'authorité de Dieu et sa grace.

The error of paganism and ignorance of our holy truth let that great soul fall into this other, neighboring error as well. He was great, but with human greatness only. The error is that children and old men are more susceptible to religion, as if religion were born of our weakness and drew its credit from it. The knot that should bind our judgment and our will, that should clasp our soul and join it to our Creator, ought to take its folds and its strength not from our considerations, our reasons and passions. It ought to take them from a divine and supernatural grip, which has only one form, one face and one luster: the authority of God and his grace.

Or nostre cœur et nostre ame estant regie et commandée par la foy, c'est raison qu'elle tire au seruice de son dessein toutes nos autres pieces selon leur portée. Aussi n'est-il pas croyable, que toute cette machine n'ait quelques merques empreintes de la main de ce grand architecte, et qu'il n'y ait quelque image és choses du monde raportant aucunement à l'ouurier, qui les a basties et formées. Il a laissé en ces hauts ouurages le charactere de sa diuinité, et ne tient qu'à nostre imbecillité, que nous ne le puissions descouurir. C'est ce qu'il nous dit luy-mesme, que ses operations inuisibles, il nous les manifeste par les visibles.

Now since our heart and our soul are ruled and commanded by faith, it is right that faith should draw all our other parts into the service of its purpose, according to their capacity. Nor is it credible that this whole machine should not bear some marks imprinted by the hand of that great architect. There must be some image in the things of the world that corresponds in some way to the workman who built and formed them. He has left the stamp of his divinity in these lofty works, and only our weakness keeps us from discovering it. He tells us so himself: he makes his invisible operations manifest to us through the visible ones.

Sebonde s'est trauaillé à ce digne estude, et nous montre comment il n'est piece du monde, qui desmente son facteur. Ce seroit faire tort à la bonté diuine, si l'vniuers ne consentoit à nostre creance. Le ciel, la terre, les elemens, nostre corps et nostre ame, toutes choses y conspirent: il n'est que de trouuer le moyen de s'en seruir: elles nous instruisent, si nous sommes capables d'entendre. Car ce monde est vn temple tressainct, dedans lequel l'homme est introduict, pour y contempler des statues, non ouurées de mortelle main, mais celles que la diuine pensée a faict sensibles, le soleil, les estoilles, les eaux et la terre, pour nous representer les intelligibles.

Sebond labored at this worthy study and shows us that no part of the world belies its maker. It would wrong divine goodness if the universe did not agree with our belief. The sky, the earth, the elements, our body and our soul all conspire to it; we have only to find the way to use them. They teach us, if we are capable of understanding. For this world is a most holy temple into which man is brought to contemplate statues. These are not wrought by mortal hand. They are the ones that divine thought has made perceptible to the senses, the sun, the stars, the waters and the earth, to represent the intelligible ones to us.

FRENCH

Les choses inuisibles de Dieu, dit Sainct Paul, apparoissent par la creation du monde, considerant sa sapience eternelle, et sa diuinité par ses œuures. *Atque adeo faciem cœli non inuidet orbi*
Ipse Deus, vultúsque suos corpúsque recludit
Semper voluendo; séque ipsum inculcat et offert,
Vt bene cognosci possit, doceátque videndo
Qualis eat, doceátque suas attendere leges.

2.12.17 Or nos raisons et nos discours humains c'est comme la matiere lourde et sterile: la grace de Dieu en est la forme: c'est elle qui y donne la façon et le prix. Tout ainsi que les actions vertueuses de Socrates et de Caton demeurent vaines et inutiles pour n'auoir eu leur fin, et n'auoir regardé l'amour et obeyssance du vray createur de toutes choses, et pour auoir ignoré Dieu: ainsin est-il de nos imaginations et discours: ils ont quelque corps, mais vne masse informe, sans façon et sans iour, si la foy et grace de Dieu n'y sont ioinctes.

La foy venant à teindre et illustrer les argumens de Sebonde, elle les rend fermes et solides: ils sont capables de seruir d'acheminement, et de premiere guyde à vn apprentif, pour le mettre à la voye de cette cognoissance: ils le façonnent aucunement et rendent capable de la grace de Dieu, par le moyen de laquelle se parfournit et se parfaict apres nostre creance. Ie sçay vn homme d'authorité nourry aux lettres, qui m'a confessé auoir esté ramené des erreurs de la mescreance par l'entremise des argumens de Sebonde.

Et quand on les despouïllera de cet ornement, et du secours et approbation de la foy, et qu'on les prendra pour fantasies pures humaines, pour en combatre ceux qui sont precipitez aux espouuantables et horribles tenebres de l'irreligion, ils se trouueront encores lors, aussi solides et autant fermes, que nuls autres de mesme condition qu'on leur puisse opposer. De façon que nous serons sur les termes de dire à nos parties, *Si melius quid habes, accerse; vel imperium fer.* Qu'ils souffrent la force de nos preuues, ou qu'ils nous en facent voir ailleurs, et sur quelque autre subiect, de mieux tissuës, et mieux estoffées.

ENGLISH

The invisible things of God, says Saint Paul, are made plain by the creation of the world, for his eternal wisdom and his divinity are seen in his works. *And so God himself does not begrudge the world the sight of heaven's face;*
He reveals his features and his body
By ever turning it; he impresses and offers himself,
So that he may be well known, and teach by being seen
How he moves, and teach us to heed his laws.[11]

Now our reasons and our human reasonings are like heavy, barren matter. The grace of God is their form; it is grace that gives them shape and value. The virtuous actions of Socrates and Cato remain vain and useless because they did not have their proper end. They did not look to the love and obedience of the true creator of all things, and they did not know God. It is just the same with our ideas and reasonings. They have a sort of body, but it is a shapeless mass, without form and without light, unless the faith and grace of God are joined to them.

When faith comes to tinge and illuminate Sebond's arguments, it makes them firm and solid. They can then serve an apprentice as a first step and a first guide, setting him on the road to this knowledge. They shape him somewhat and make him receptive to the grace of God, through which our belief is afterward completed and perfected. I know a man of authority, brought up in letters, who confessed to me that Sebond's arguments had brought him back from the errors of unbelief.

Now suppose they are stripped of this ornament and of the help and approval of faith, and taken as purely human notions, to fight those who have plunged into the frightful and horrible darkness of irreligion. Even then they will be found as solid and as firm as any others of the same kind that can be set against them. So we shall be in a position to say to our opponents: *If you have anything better, bring it out; or else submit.* Let them either accept the force of our proofs, or show us others that are better woven and of better stuff, elsewhere and on some other subject.[12]

11 Romans 1:20. The verses are from Manilius, Astronomica IV.
12 Horace, Epistles I.5.

THE SECOND OBJECTION: WEAK ARGUMENTS

Against those who call Sebond's reasons weak, Montaigne sets out to humble human reason itself.

FRENCH	ENGLISH
Ie me suis sans y penser à demy desia engagé dans la seconde obiection, à laquelle i'auois proposé de respondre pour Sebonde.	Without meaning to, I have already half engaged in the second objection, which I had set out to answer on Sebond's behalf.
2.12.18 Aucuns disent que ses argumens sont foibles et ineptes à verifier ce qu'il veut, et entreprennent de les choquer aysément. Il faut secouër ceux cy vn peu plus rudement: car ils sont plus dangereux et plus malitieux que les premiers. On couche volontiers les dicts d'autruy à la faueur des opinions qu'on a preiugées en soy. A vn atheïste tous escrits tirent à l'atheïsme. Il infecte de son propre venin la matiere innocente. Ceux cy ont quelque preoccupation de iugement qui leur rend le goust fade aux raisons de Sebonde.	Some say that his arguments are weak and unfit to prove what he intends, and they set out to knock them down easily. These people must be shaken a little more roughly, for they are more dangerous and more malicious than the first. People readily bend what others say to fit the opinions they have already formed. To an atheist, all writings lean toward atheism; he infects innocent matter with his own venom. These people have some prejudice in their judgment that dulls their palate for Sebond's reasons.
Au demeurant il leur semble qu'on leur donne beau ieu, de les mettre en liberté de combattre nostre religion par les armes pures humaines, laquelle ils n'oseroyent attaquer en sa majesté pleine d'authorité et de commandement. Le moyen que ie prens pour rabatre cette frenesie, et qui me semble le plus propre, c'est de froisser et fouler aux pieds l'orgueil, et l'humaine fierté: leur faire sentir l'inanité, la vanité, et deneantise de l'homme: leur arracher des poingts, les chetiues armes de leur raison: leur faire baisser la teste et mordre la terre, soubs l'authorité et reuerence de la majesté diuine.	Moreover, they think they are being dealt a winning hand when they are left free to fight our religion with purely human weapons. They would not dare attack it in its majesty, full of authority and command. The means I take to beat down this frenzy, and the one that seems to me most fitting, is to crush human pride and arrogance and trample it underfoot. I will make them feel the inanity, the vanity and the nothingness of man. I will wrench the puny weapons of their reason from their fists, and make them bow their heads and bite the dust under the authority and reverence of the divine majesty.
C'est à elle seule qu'appartient la science et la sapience: elle seule qui peut estimer de soy quelque chose, et à qui nous desrobons ce que nous nous contons, et ce que nous nous prisons. Ου γαρ εα φρονεεν ὁ Θεος μεγα αλλον η ἑαυτον. Abbattons ce cuider, premier fondement de la tyrannie du maling esprit. *Deus superbis resistit: humilibus autem dat gratiam.* L'intelligence est en touts les Dieux, dit Platon, et point ou peu aux hommes.	To that majesty alone belong knowledge and wisdom. It alone can value itself as something, and from it we steal whatever we reckon ourselves to be and whatever we prize in ourselves. *For God allows no one but himself to think proud thoughts.* Let us beat down this conceit, the first foundation of the tyranny of the evil spirit. *God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble.* Intelligence is in all the gods, says Plato, and in men little or none.[13]
Or c'est cependant beaucoup de consolation à l'homme Chrestien, de voir nos vtils mortels et caduques, si proprement assortis à nostre foy saincte et diuine: que lors qu'on les employe aux suiects de leur nature mortels et caduques, ils n'y soient pas appropriez plus vniement, ny auec plus de force.	Yet it is a great consolation for a Christian to see our mortal and perishable tools so fittingly matched to our holy and divine faith. When they are applied to subjects that are mortal and perishable by nature, they are no more uniformly or more forcefully suited to them.

13 The Greek is from Herodotus VII.10; the Latin from 1 Peter 5:5.

FRENCH	ENGLISH
2.12.19 Voyons donq si l'homme a en sa puissance d'autres raisons plus fortes que celles de Sebonde: voire s'il est en luy d'arriuer à aucune certitude par argument et par discours. Car sainct Augustin plaidant contre ces gents icy, a occasion de reprocher leur iniustice, en ce qu'ils tiennent les parties de nostre creance fauces, que nostre raison faut à establir. Et pour montrer qu'assez de choses peuuent estre et auoir esté, desquelles nostre discours ne sçauroit fonder la nature et les causes: il leur met en auant certaines experiences cognuës et indubitables, ausquelles l'homme confesse rien ne veoir. Et cela faict il, comme toutes autres choses, d'vne curieuse et ingenieuse recherche.	Let us see, then, whether man has in his power other reasons stronger than Sebond's, and indeed whether it is in him to reach any certainty by argument and reasoning. Saint Augustine, pleading against these people, has occasion to reproach them for their injustice. They hold to be false those parts of our belief that our reason fails to establish. To show that many things can exist and have existed whose nature and causes our reasoning could not establish, he puts before them certain known and indubitable experiences in which man confesses he sees nothing. He does this, like everything else, with careful and ingenious research.[14]
Il faut plus faire, et leur apprendre, que pour conuaincre la foiblesse de leur raison, il n'est besoing d'aller triant des rares exemples: et qu'elle est si manque et si aueugle, qu'il n'y a nulle si claire facilité, qui luy soit assez claire: que l'aizé et le malaisé luy sont vn: que tous subiects egalement, et la nature en general desaduouë sa iurisdiction et entremise.	We must do more. We must teach them that there is no need to go picking out rare examples to convict their reason of weakness. Reason is so defective and so blind that nothing is so clear and easy as to be clear enough for it. The easy and the difficult are all one to it. All subjects equally, and nature in general, disown its jurisdiction and its meddling.
2.12.20 Que nous presche la verité, quand elle nous presche de fuir la mondaine philosophie: quand elle nous inculque si souuent, que nostre sagesse n'est que folie deuant Dieu: que de toutes les vanitez la plus vaine c'est l'homme: que l'homme qui presume de son sçauoir, ne sçait pas encore que c'est que sçauoir: et que l'homme, qui n'est rien, s'il pense estre quelque chose, se seduit soy-mesmes, et se trompe? Ces sentences du sainct Esprit expriment si clairement et si viuement ce que ie veux maintenir, qu'il ne me faudroit aucune autre preuue contre des gens qui se rendroient auec toute submission et obeyssance à son authorité.	What does truth preach to us when it preaches that we should flee worldly philosophy, when it so often drives home to us that our wisdom is but folly before God, that of all vanities the vainest is man, that the man who presumes on his knowledge does not yet know what knowing is, and that man, who is nothing, deceives and misleads himself if he thinks he is something? These sentences of the Holy Spirit express so clearly and vividly what I want to maintain that I would need no other proof against people who would surrender to his authority with all submission and obedience.[15]
Mais ceux cy veulent estre fouëtez à leurs propres despens, et ne veulent souffrir qu'on combatte leur raison que par elle mesme.	But these people want to be whipped at their own expense, and will not allow their reason to be fought except by reason itself.

MAN WITHOUT GRACE

Stripped of divine help, man claims mastery of a universe he cannot even understand.

FRENCH	ENGLISH
2.12.21 Considerons donq pour cette heure, l'homme seul, sans secours estranger, armé seulement de ses armes, et despourueu de la grace et cognoissance diuine, qui est	Let us consider, then, for the present, man alone, without outside help, armed only with his own weapons. Let us take him stripped of divine grace

14 Saint Augustine, The City of God XXI.
15 Colossians 2:8; 1 Corinthians 3:19 and 8:2; Galatians 6:3.

FRENCH

tout son honneur, sa force, et le fondement de son estre. Voyons combien il a de tenuë en ce bel equipage. Qu'il me face entendre par l'effort de son discours, sur quels fondemens il a basty ces grands auantages, qu'il pense auoir sur les autres creatures. Qui luy a persuadé que ce branle admirable de la voute celeste, la lumiere eternelle de ces flambeaux roulans si fierement sur sa teste, les mouuemens espouuentables de cette mer infinie, soyent establis et se continuent tant de siecles, pour sa commodité et pour son seruice?

Est-il possible de rien imaginer si ridicule, que cette miserable et chetiue creature, qui n'est pas seulement maistresse de soy, exposée aux offences de toutes choses, se die maistresse et emperiere de l'vniuers? duquel il n'est pas en sa puissance de cognoistre la moindre partie, tant s'en faut de la commander. Et ce priuilege qu'il s'attribuë d'estre seul en ce grand bastiment, qui ayt la suffisance d'en recognoistre la beauté et les pieces, seul qui en puisse rendre graces à l'architecte, et tenir conte de la recepte et mise du monde: qui luy a seelé ce priuilege? qu'il nous montre lettres de cette belle et grande charge. Ont elles esté ottroyées en faueur des sages seulement? Elles ne touchent guere de gents.

Les fols et les meschants sont-ils dignes de faueur si extraordinaire? et estants la pire piece du monde, d'estre preferez à tout le reste? en croirons nous cestuy-là; *Quorum igitur causa quis dixerit effectum esse mundum? Eorum scilicet animantium, quæ ratione vtuntur; hi sunt dij et homines, quibus profectò nihil est melius*. Nous n'aurons iamais assez bafoüé l'impudence de cet accouplage. Mais pauuret qu'a il en soy digne d'vn tel auantage?

2.12.22 A considerer cette vie incorruptible des corps celestes, leur beauté, leur grandeur, leur agitation continuée d'vne si iuste regle: *Cùm suscipimus magni cœlestia mundi*
Templa super, stellisque micantibus Æthæra fixum,
Et venit in mentem Lunæ Solisque viarum: à considerer la domination et puissance que ces corps là ont, non seulement sur nos vies et conditions de nostre fortune, *Facta etenim et vitas hominum suspendit ab astris:* mais sur nos inclinations mesmes, nos discours, nos volontez: qu'ils regissent, poussent et agitent à la mercy de leurs

ENGLISH

and knowledge, which are his whole honor, his strength and the foundation of his being. Let us see how well he holds his ground in this fine array. Let him make me understand, by the effort of his reasoning, on what foundations he has built those great advantages he thinks he has over the other creatures. Who has persuaded him that the admirable motion of the heavenly vault was established for his convenience and service? Or the eternal light of those torches rolling so proudly over his head, or the terrifying movements of that infinite sea? Who told him that they continue through so many centuries for his sake?

Is it possible to imagine anything so ridiculous? This miserable and puny creature is not even master of himself and is exposed to injury from all things. Yet he calls himself master and emperor of the universe, when it is not in his power to know the smallest part of it, much less to command it. Then there is the privilege he claims, of being the only one in this great edifice able to recognize its beauty and its parts. He alone can give thanks to the architect and keep the accounts of the world's receipts and expenses. Who sealed this privilege for him? Let him show us his letters patent for this fine and great office. Were they granted to the wise alone? That covers very few people.

Are fools and the wicked worthy of so extraordinary a favor? Being the worst part of the world, do they deserve to be preferred to all the rest? Shall we believe the man who says: *For whose sake, then, shall we say the world was made? For the sake of those living beings that use reason. These are gods and men, and surely nothing is better than they.* We shall never mock enough the impudence of this pairing. But the poor wretch, what has he in himself worthy of such an advantage?[16]

Consider the incorruptible life of the heavenly bodies, their beauty, their size, their motion kept up by so exact a rule: *When we look up at the heavenly temples of the great universe*
Above us, and the ether set with glittering stars,
And the courses of the moon and sun come to mind.
Consider the dominion and power those bodies have, not only over our lives and the conditions of our fortune, *For he makes the deeds and lives of men*

16 Cicero, On the Nature of the Gods II, where the speaker is the Stoic Balbus.

FRENCH

influances, selon que nostre raison nous l'apprend et le trouue: *Speculatáque longè*
Deprendit tacitis dominantia legibus astra,
Et totum alterna mundum ratione moueri,
Fatorúmque vices certis discernere signis: à voir que non vn homme seul, non vn Roy, mais les monarchies, les empires, et tout ce bas monde se meut au branle des moindres mouuements celestes:

Quantàque quàm parui faciant discrimina motus:
Tantum est hoc regnum, quod regibus imperat ipsis! si nostre vertu, nos vices, nostre suffisance et science, et ce mesme discours que nous faisons de la force des astres, et cette comparaison d'eux à nous, elle vient, comme iuge nostre raison, par leur moyen et de leur faueur: *Furit alter amore,*
Et pontum tranare potest et vertere Troiam,
Alterius sors est scribendis legibus apta;
Ecce patrem nati perimunt, natósque parentes,
Mutuáque armati coeunt in vulnera fratres;
Non nostrum hoc bellum est, coguntur tanta mouere,
Inque suas ferri pœnas, lacerandáque membra,
Hoc quoque fatale est sic ipsum expendere fatum. nous tenons de la distribution du ciel cette part de raison que nous auons, comment nous pourra elle esgaler à luy?

comment soubs-mettre à nostre science son essence et ses conditions?

2.12.23 Tout ce que nous voyons en ces corps là, nous estonne; *quæ molitio, quæ ferramenta, qui vectes, quæ machinæ, qui ministri tanti operis fuerunt?* pourquoy les priuons nous et d'ame, et de vie, et de discours? y auons nous reconnu quelque stupidité immobile et insensible, nous qui n'auons aucun commerce auec eux que d'obeïssance? Dirons nous, que nous n'auons veu en nulle autre creature, qu'en l'homme, l'vsage d'vne ame raisonnable? Et quoy? Auons nous veu quelque chose semblable au soleil? Laisse-il d'estre, par ce que nous n'auons rien veu de semblable? et ses mouuements d'estre, par ce qu'il n'en est point de pareils? Si ce que nous n'auons pas veu, n'est pas, nostre science est merueilleusement raccourcie.

ENGLISH

hang on the stars, but over our very inclinations, our reasonings, our wills. They govern, drive and stir these at the mercy of their influences, as our reason teaches and finds: *Observing from afar, it perceives*
That the stars rule by silent laws,
That the whole world moves in alternating cycles,
And that the turns of the fates are discerned by sure signs. See how not one man alone, not one king, but monarchies, empires and all this world below move to the swing of the slightest heavenly motions:

And how great are the changes so small a movement makes:
So great is this kingdom that rules over kings themselves! Our virtue, our vices, our ability and knowledge, even this very reasoning we make about the power of the stars and this comparison between them and us, all come, as our reason judges, through their means and by their favor: *One man is mad with love,*
And can swim across the sea and overthrow Troy;
Another's lot is fitted for the writing of laws;
See, sons kill fathers, and fathers kill sons,
And brothers take up arms and clash to wound each other.
This war is not ours; they are forced to stir up such turmoil,
And to be carried to their own punishment and the tearing of their limbs;
This too is fated: thus to weigh fate itself. If we hold this share of reason that we have by heaven's distribution, how can it make us equal to heaven?

How can it subject heaven's essence and conditions to our knowledge?

Everything we see in those bodies astounds us. *What labor, what iron tools, what levers, what machines, what workmen were there for so great a work?* Why do we deprive them of soul, of life and of reasoning? Have we found some immobile and insensible stupidity in them, we who have no dealings with them except to obey? Shall we say that we have seen the use of a rational soul in no creature but man? So what? Have we seen anything like the sun? Does it cease to exist because we have seen nothing like it? Do its movements cease to exist because there are no others like

FRENCH

ENGLISH

them? If what we have not seen does not exist, our knowledge is wonderfully shrunk.

Quæ sunt tantæ animi angustiæ? Sont ce pas des songes de l'humaine vanité, de faire de la lune vne terre celeste? y deuiner des montaignes, des vallées, comme Anaxagoras? y planter des habitations et demeures humaines, et y dresser des colonies pour nostre commodité, comme faict Platon et Plutarque? et de nostre terre en faire vn astre esclairant et lumineux? *Inter cætera mortalitatis incommoda, et hoc est, caligo mentium: nec tantùm necessitas errandi, sed errorum amor. Corruptibile corpus aggrauat animam, et deprimit terrena inhabitatio sensum multa cogitantem.*

What great narrowness of mind is this? Are they not dreams of human vanity, to make the moon a heavenly earth? To imagine mountains and valleys there, like Anaxagoras? To set up human habitations and dwellings there and found colonies for our convenience, as Plato and Plutarch do? Or to make our earth a bright and shining star? *Among the other drawbacks of our mortal state is this darkness of minds: not only the necessity of erring, but the love of errors. The corruptible body weighs down the soul, and the earthly dwelling presses down the mind that ponders many things.*[17]

PRESUMPTION, OUR NATURAL MALADY

Man sets himself above the animals without knowing their minds.

FRENCH

ENGLISH

2.12.24 La presomption est nostre maladie naturelle et originelle. La plus calamiteuse et fragile de toutes les creatures c'est l'homme, et quant et quant, la plus orgueilleuse. Elle se sent et se void logée icy parmy la bourbe et le fient du monde, attachée et cloüée à la pire, plus morte et croupie partie de l'vniuers, au dernier estage du logis, et le plus esloigné de la voute celeste, auec les animaux de la pire condition des trois: et se va plantant par imagination au dessus du cercle de la lune, et ramenant le ciel soubs ses pieds.

Presumption is our natural and original malady. The most calamitous and frail of all creatures is man, and at the same time the proudest. He feels and sees himself lodged here amid the mud and dung of the world. He is fastened and nailed to the worst, deadest and most stagnant part of the universe, on the lowest story of the house and the farthest from the vault of heaven, with the animals of the worst of the three conditions. And yet in imagination he sets himself up above the circle of the moon and brings the sky under his feet.[18]

2.12.25 C'est par la vanité de cette mesme imagination qu'il s'egale à Dieu, qu'il s'attribue les conditions diuines, qu'il se trie soy-mesme et separe de la presse des autres creatures, taille les parts aux animaux ses confreres et compagnons, et leur distribue telle portion de facultez et de forces, que bon luy semble. Comment cognoist il par l'effort de son intelligence, les branles internes et secrets des animaux? par quelle comparaison d'eux à nous conclud il la bestise qu'il leur attribue? Quand ie me iouë à ma chatte, qui sçait, si elle passe son temps de moy plus que ie ne fay d'elle? Nous nous entretenons de singerie reciproques. Si i'ay mon heure de commencer ou de refuser, aussi à elle la sienne.

It is by the vanity of this same imagination that he makes himself God's equal and attributes divine qualities to himself. He picks himself out and separates himself from the crowd of other creatures. He carves out the shares of the animals, his brothers and companions, and hands them whatever portion of faculties and powers he sees fit. How does he know, by the effort of his intelligence, the inner and secret stirrings of animals? By what comparison between them and us does he conclude that they are as stupid as he says? When I play with my cat, who knows whether she is not passing her time with me more than I am with her? We entertain each other with reciprocal mon-

17 The first sentence is from Seneca, On Anger II; the second from the Book of Wisdom (9:15), as quoted by Saint Augustine.
18 The three kinds of animals are those of the air, the water and the land.

FRENCH

ENGLISH

Platon en sa peinture de l'aage doré sous Saturne, compte entre les principaux aduantages de l'homme de lors, la communication qu'il auoit auec les bestes, desquelles s'enquerant et s'instruisant, il sçauoit les vrayes qualitez, et differences de chacune d'icelles: par où il acqueroit vne tres parfaicte intelligence et prudence; et en conduisoit de bien loing plus heureusement sa vie, que nous ne sçaurions faire. Nous faut il meilleure preuue à iuger l'impudence humaine sur le faict des bestes? Ce grand autheur a opiné qu'en la plus part de la forme corporelle, que Nature leur a donné, elle a regardé seulement l'vsage des prognostications, qu'on en tiroit en son temps.

key tricks. If I have my moment to begin or to refuse, so has she.

In his picture of the golden age under Saturn, Plato counts among the chief advantages of the men of that time their communication with the beasts. By inquiring of them and learning from them, a man knew the true qualities and differences of each kind. In this way he acquired a very perfect understanding and prudence, and conducted his life far more happily than we could. Do we need better proof of human impudence where beasts are concerned? That great author held that in most of the bodily form Nature gave them, she considered only the prognostications people drew from them in his time.[19]

HOW ANIMALS COMMUNICATE

Beasts understand one another and us; our hands and gestures are a speech as rich as words.

FRENCH

ENGLISH

2.12.26 Ce defaut qui empesche la communication d'entre elles et nous, pourquoy n'est il aussi bien à nous qu'à elles? C'est à deuiner à qui est la faute de ne nous entendre point: car nous ne les entendons non plus qu'elles nous. Par cette mesme raison elles nous peuuent estimer bestes, comme nous les estimons. Ce n'est pas grand merueille, si nous ne les entendons pas, aussi ne faisons nous les Basques et les Troglodytes. Toutesfois aucuns se sont vantez de les entendre, comme Appollonius Thyaneus, Melampus, Tiresias, Thales et autres. Et puis qu'il est ainsi, comme disent les cosmographes, qu'il y a des nations qui reçoyuent vn chien pour leur Roy, il faut bien qu'ils donnent certaine interpretation à sa voix et mouuements.

Il nous faut remerquer la parité qui est entre nous. Nous auons quelque moyenne intelligence de leurs sens, aussi ont les bestes des nostres, enuiron à mesme mesure. Elles nous flattent, nous menassent, et nous requierent: et nous elles. Au demeurant nous decouurons bien euidemment, qu'entre elles il y a vne pleine et entiere communication, et qu'elles s'entr'entendent, non seulement celles de mesme espece, mais aussi d'especes diuerses: *Et mutæ pecudes, et denique secla ferarum*
Dissimiles suerunt voces variásque ciuere
Cùm metus aut dolor est, aut cùm iam gaudia gliscunt. En

This defect that hinders communication between them and us, why is it not as much ours as theirs? It is anyone's guess whose fault it is that we do not understand each other, for we understand them no more than they understand us. By the same reasoning they may consider us beasts, as we consider them. It is no great wonder if we do not understand them; we do not understand the Basques and the Troglodytes either. Yet some have boasted of understanding them, like Apollonius of Tyana, Melampus, Tiresias, Thales and others. And the cosmographers say there are nations that accept a dog as their king. If so, they must surely give some interpretation to its voice and movements.[20]

We must notice the parity between us. We have a middling understanding of what they mean, and the beasts have about the same understanding of what we mean. They fawn on us, threaten us and beg of us, and we do the same to them. Besides, we can see quite plainly that among themselves they have full and complete communication. They understand each other, not only those of the same species but also those of different species: *And mute cattle, and even the races of wild beasts*
Utter different and varied cries

19 Plato, Statesman, the myth of the age of Cronos (the Roman Saturn). The prognostications are omens drawn from animals.
20 The Troglodytes were a cave-dwelling people of Africa described by ancient geographers. Apollonius of Tyana was a sage of the 1st century AD; Melampus and Tiresias were legendary seers.

FRENCH

certain abboyer du chien le cheual cognoist qu'il y a de la colere: de certaine autre sienne voix, il ne s'effraye point.

ENGLISH

When they feel fear or pain, or when joy swells in them. From a certain kind of barking, the horse knows the dog is angry; at a certain other sound from it, the horse is not frightened.

2.12.27 Aux bestes mesmes qui n'ont pas de voix, par la societé d'offices, que nous voyons entre elles, nous argumentons aisément quelque autre moyen de communication: leurs mouuemens discourent et traictent. *Non alia longè ratione atque ipsa videtur*
Protrahere ad gestum pueros infantia linguæ. Pourquoy non, tout aussi bien que nos muets disputent, argumentent, et content des histoires par signes? I'en ay veu de si souples et formez à cela, qu'à la verité, il ne leur manquoit rien à la perfection de se sçauoir faire entendre. Les amoureux se courroussent, se reconcilient, se prient, se remercient, s'assignent, et disent en fin toutes choses des yeux. *E'l silentio ancor suole*
Hauer prieghi e parole.

Even with beasts that have no voice, the services we see them render each other let us easily infer some other means of communication. Their movements reason and negotiate. *In much the same way, it seems, the very inability to speak*
Drives children to gesture. Why not? Those among us who cannot speak argue, debate and tell stories by signs. I have seen some so supple and practiced at it that in truth they lacked nothing of perfection in making themselves understood. Lovers grow angry, make up, plead, thank, make appointments, and in short say everything with their eyes. *And silence too can*
Hold prayers and words.[21]

2.12.28 Quoy des mains? nous requerons, nous promettons, appellons, congedions, menaçons, prions, supplions, nions, refusons, interrogeons, admirons, nombrons, confessons, repentons, craignons, vergoignons, doubtons, instruisons, commandons, incitons, encourageons, iurons, tesmoignons, accusons, condamnons, absoluons, iniurions, mesprisons, deffions, despittons, flattons, applaudissons, benissons, humilions, moquons, reconcilions, recommandons, exaltons, festoyons, resiouïssons, complaignons, attristons, desconfortons, desesperons, estonnons, escrions, taisons: et quoy non? d'vne variation et multiplication à l'enuy de la langue. De la teste nous conuions, renuoyons, aduoüons, desaduoüons, desmentons, bienueignons, honorons, venerons, dedaignons, demandons, esconduisons, egayons, lamentons, caressons, tansons, soubsmettons, brauons, enhortons, menaçons, asseurons, enquerons. Quoy des sourcils? Quoy des espaules? Il n'est mouuement, qui ne parle, et vn langage intelligible sans discipline, et vn langage publique.

And what of the hands? We request, promise, call, dismiss, threaten, pray, entreat, deny, refuse, question, admire, count, confess, repent, fear, show shame, doubt, instruct, command, incite, encourage, swear, testify, accuse, condemn, absolve, insult, scorn, defy, vex, flatter, applaud, bless, humble, mock, reconcile, recommend, exalt, celebrate, rejoice, complain, sadden, discourage, despair, astonish, exclaim, fall silent. And what not? All with a variety and multiplicity that rival the tongue's. With the head we invite, send away, approve, disapprove, contradict, welcome, honor, venerate, disdain, ask, turn down, cheer, lament, caress, scold, submit, defy, exhort, threaten, reassure, inquire. And what of the eyebrows? What of the shoulders? There is no movement that does not speak, in a language intelligible without instruction, and a public language.

Qui fait, voyant la varieté et vsage distingué des autres, que cestuy-cy doibt plustost est iugé le propre de l'humaine nature. Ie laisse à part ce que particulierement la necessité en apprend soudain à ceux qui en ont besoing: et les alphabets des doigts, et grammaires en gestes: et les sciences qui ne s'exercent et ne s'expriment que par iceux: et les nations que Pline dit n'auoir point d'autre langue. Vn ambassadeur de la ville d'Abdere, apres auoir longuement parlé au Roy Agis de Sparte, luy

Given the variety and the distinct usage of the other languages, this one should rather be judged the language proper to human nature. I leave aside what necessity quickly teaches in particular to those who need it, the finger alphabets and grammars of gesture, and the sciences that are practiced and expressed only through gestures. I leave aside, too, the nations that Pliny says have no other language. An ambassador from the city of Ab-

21 Tasso, Aminta II.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
	demanda: Et bien, Sire, quelle responce veux-tu que ie rapporte à nos citoyens?	dera, after speaking at length to King Agis of Sparta, asked him: "Well, Sire, what answer do you want me to take back to our citizens?"
	que ie t'ay laissé dire tout ce que tu as voulu, et tant que tu as voulu, sans iamais dire mot: voila pas vn taire parlier et bien intelligible?	"That I let you say all you wanted, and for as long as you wanted, without ever saying a word." Is that not a silence that speaks, and very intelligibly?

THE SKILLS OF ANIMALS

Bees, swallows and spiders work with an art that implies judgment, not mere instinct.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
2.12.29	Au reste, quelle sorte de nostre suffisance ne recognoissons nous aux operations des animaux? est-il police reglée auec plus d'ordre, diuersifiée à plus de charges et d'offices, et plus constamment entretenuë, que celle des mouches à miel? Cette disposition d'actions et de vacations si ordonnée, la pouuons nous imaginer se conduire sans discours et sans prudence? *His quidam signis atque hæc exempla sequuti,* *Esse apibus partem diuinæ mentis, et haustus* *Æthereos dixere.* Les arondelles que nous voyons au retour du printemps fureter tous les coins de nos maisons, cherchent elles sans iugement, et choisissent elles sans discretion de mille places, celle qui leur est la plus commode à se loger?	For the rest, which of our abilities do we not recognize in the workings of animals? Is there any government regulated with more order, divided into more charges and offices, and more steadily maintained, than that of the honeybees? Can we imagine so orderly an arrangement of actions and occupations being conducted without reasoning and prudence? *From these signs and following these examples, some* *Have said that bees have a share of the divine mind* *And draughts of the ether.* On the return of spring we see the swallows ferreting through every corner of our houses. Do they search without judgment? Do they choose without discernment, out of a thousand places, the one most convenient to lodge in?[22]
	Et en cette belle et admirable contexture de leurs bastimens, les oiseaux peuuent ils se seruir plustost d'vne figure quarrée, que de la ronde, d'vn angle obtus, que d'vn angle droit, sans en sçauoir les conditions et les effects? Prennent-ils tantost de l'eau, tantost de l'argile, sans iuger que la dureté s'amollit en l'humectant? Planchent-ils de mousse leur palais, ou de duuet, sans preuoir que les membres tendres de leurs petits y seront plus mollement et plus à l'aise? Se couurent-ils du vent pluuieux, et plantent leur loge à l'orient, sans cognoistre les conditions differentes de ces vents, et considerer que l'vn leur est plus salutaire que l'autre? Pourquoy espessit l'araignée sa toile en vn endroit, et relasche en vn autre?	And in the fine and admirable structure of their buildings, can birds use a square shape rather than a round one, an obtuse angle rather than a right angle, without knowing their properties and effects? Do they take now water, now clay, without judging that moistening softens what is hard? Do they floor their palace with moss or down without foreseeing that their young's tender limbs will lie there more softly and comfortably? Do they shelter from the rainy wind and set their dwelling toward the east without knowing the different qualities of these winds, and without considering that one is healthier for them than the other? Why does the spider thicken its web in one place and slacken it in another?
	se sert à cette heure de cette sorte de neud, tantost de celle-là, si elle n'a et deliberation, et pensement, et conclusion?	Why does it use now this kind of knot, now that one, unless it has deliberation, thought and conclusion?
2.12.30	Nous recognoissons assez en la pluspart de leurs ouurages, combien les animaux ont d'excellence au	We recognize well enough, in most of their works, how far animals excel us and how feeble our skill

FRENCH

dessus de nous, et combien nostre art est foible à les imiter. Nous voyons toutesfois aux nostres plus grossiers, les facultez que nous y employons, et que nostre ame s'y sert de toutes ses forces: pourquoy n'en estimons nous autant d'eux? Pourquoy attribuons nous à ie ne sçay quelle inclination naturelle et seruile, les ouurages qui surpassent tout ce que nous pouuons par nature et par art?

En quoy sans y penser nous leur donnons vn tres-grand auantage sur nous, de faire que Nature par vne douceur maternelle les accompaigne et guide, comme par la main à toutes les actions et commoditez de leur vie, et qu'à nous elle nous abandonne au hazard et à la fortune, et à quester par art, les choses necessaires à nostre conseruation; et nous refuse quant et quant les moyens de pouuoir arriuer par aucune institution et contention d'esprit, à la suffisance naturelle des bestes: de maniere que leur stupidité brutale surpasse en toutes commoditez, tout ce que peult nostre diuine intelligence. Vrayement à ce compte nous aurions bien raison de l'appeller vne tres-iniuste marastre.

Mais il n'en est rien, nostre police n'est pas si difforme et desreglée.

2.12.31 Nature a embrassé vniuersellement toutes ses creatures: et n'en est aucune, qu'elle n'ait bien plainement fourny de tous moyens necessaires à la conseruation de son estre. Car ces plaintes vulgaires que i'oy faire aux hommes (comme la licence de leurs opinions les esleue tantost au dessus des nuës, et puis les rauale aux Antipodes) que nous sommes le seul animal abandonné, nud sur la terre nuë, lié, garrotté, n'ayant dequoy s'armer et couurir que de la despouïlle d'autruy:

là où toutes les autres creatures, Nature les a reuestuës de coquilles, de gousses, d'escorse, de poil, de laine, de pointes, de cuir, de bourre, de plume, d'escaille, de toison, et de soye selon le besoin de leur estre: les a armées de griffes, de dents, de cornes, pour assaillir et pour defendre, et les a elle mesmes instruites à ce qui leur est propre, à nager, à courir, à voler, à chanter: là où l'homme ne sçait ny cheminer, ny parler, ny manger, ny rien que pleurer sans apprentissage.

Tum porro puer, vt sæuis proiectus ab vndis
Nauita, nudus humi iacet infans, indigus omni
Vitali auxilio, cùm primùm in luminis oras

ENGLISH

is at imitating them. Yet in our own cruder works we see the faculties we bring to them, and that our soul uses all its powers on them. Why do we not think the same of them? Why do we attribute to some kind of natural, servile inclination works that surpass anything we can do by nature or by skill?

In doing so, without realizing it, we give them a very great advantage over us. We make Nature, with a mother's tenderness, accompany and guide them as if by the hand in all the actions and conveniences of their life, while she abandons us to chance and to fortune, to seek out by skill the things we need to survive. At the same time she denies us the means of reaching, by any amount of education and mental effort, the natural competence of beasts, so that their brutish stupidity surpasses, in every convenience, all that our divine intelligence can do. Truly, on that reckoning we would have good reason to call her a most unjust stepmother.

But nothing of the sort is true: the order that governs us is not so misshapen and unruly.

Nature has embraced all her creatures universally, and there is none she has not very fully supplied with every means necessary to preserve its being. For there are these common complaints I hear men make (as the license of their opinions now lifts them above the clouds and then drags them down to the Antipodes): that we are the only animal abandoned, naked on the naked earth, bound and tied up, with nothing to arm and cover ourselves with but the spoils of others;

whereas Nature has clothed all the other creatures in shells, husks, bark, hair, wool, spines, hide, down, feathers, scales, fleece and silk, according to the needs of their being. She has armed them with claws, teeth and horns, to attack and to defend, and has herself taught them what is proper to them: to swim, to run, to fly, to sing. Man, meanwhile, cannot walk, or speak, or eat, or do anything but cry, without being taught.

Then again the child, like a sailor cast up by the cruel waves,
lies naked on the ground, speechless, lacking every

22 Virgil, Georgics IV.

FRENCH

Nexibus ex aluo matris natura profudit,
Vagitúque locum lugubri complet, vt æquum est
Cui tantùm in vita restet transire malorum.
At variæ crescunt pecudes, armenta, feræque,
Nec crepitacula eis opus est, nec cuiquam adhibenda est
Almæ nutricis blanda atque infracta loquela;
Nec varias quærunt vestes pro tempore cœli;
Denique non armis opus est, non mœnibus altis
Queis sua tutentur, quando omnibus omnia largè
Tellus ipsa parit, naturáque dædala rerum.

ENGLISH

help for life, as soon as into the shores of light
nature has poured him forth with labor from his mother's womb,
and he fills the place with mournful wailing, as is only fitting
for one who has so many evils still to pass through in life.
But the various flocks, herds and wild beasts grow up;
they have no need of rattles, nor must any of them be given
the coaxing, broken prattle of a fond nurse;
they seek no change of clothes to suit the season;
and lastly they need no weapons, no high walls
to guard their own, since for all of them all things
are lavishly brought forth by the earth herself and by nature, the cunning craftsman of things.[23]

2.12.32 Ces plaintes là sont fauces: il y a en la police du monde, vne egalité plus grande, et vne relation plus vniforme. Nostre peau est pourueue aussi suffisamment que la leur, de fermeté contre les iniures du temps, tesmoing plusieurs nations, qui n'ont encores essayé nul vsage de vestemens. Nos anciens Gaulois n'estoient gueres vestus, ne sont pas les Irlandois noz voisins, soubs vn ciel si froid. Mais nous le iugeons mieux par nous mesmes: car tous les endroits de la personne, qu'il nous plaist descouurir au vent et à l'air, se trouuent propres à le souffrir.

These complaints are false. There is, in the order of the world, a greater equality and a more uniform relationship. Our skin is provided as adequately as theirs with toughness against the harshness of the weather: witness several nations that have not yet tried any use of clothing. Our ancient Gauls wore hardly any clothes, nor do our neighbors the Irish, under so cold a sky. But we can judge it better from ourselves, for every part of the body that we choose to expose to the wind and the air turns out to be fit to bear it.

S'il y a partie en nous foible, et qui semble deuoir craindre la froidure, ce deuroit estre l'estomach, où se fait la digestion: noz peres le portoyent descouuert, et noz Dames, ainsi molles et delicates qu'elles sont, elles s'en vont tantost entr'ouuertes iusques au nombril. Les liaisons et emmaillottemens des enfants ne sont non plus necessaires: et les meres Lacedemoniennes esleuoient les leurs en toute liberté de mouuements de membres, sans les attacher ne plier. Nostre pleurer est commun à la plus part des autres animaux, et n'en est guere qu'on ne voye se plaindre et gemir long temps apres leur naissance: d'autant que c'est vne contenance bien sortable à la foiblesse, en quoy ils se sentent.

If there is any part of us that is weak and seems likely to fear the cold, it ought to be the stomach, where digestion takes place. Our fathers wore it uncovered, and our ladies, soft and delicate as they are, sometimes go about with their bodices open down to the navel. Binding and swaddling children is not necessary either: the Spartan mothers raised theirs in complete freedom to move their limbs, without tying them up or folding them in. Our crying is shared by most other animals, and there are hardly any that are not seen to whimper and moan long after their birth, since that is a bearing well suited to the weakness they feel themselves in.

Quant à l'vsage du manger, il est en nous, comme en eux, naturel et sans instruction. *Sentit enim vim quisque suam quam possit abuti.* Qui fait doute qu'vn enfant arriué à la force de se nourrir, ne sçeut quester sa nourriture? et la terre en produit, et luy en offre assez pour sa necessité, sans autre culture et artifice. Et sinon en tout temps,

As for eating, it is in us, as in them, natural and untaught. *For every creature senses what its powers are and how far it can use them.* Who doubts that a child, once he had the strength to feed himself, would know how to seek out his food? And the

23 Lucretius, On the Nature of Things, Book V.

FRENCH

aussi ne fait elle pas aux bestes, tesmoing les prouisions, que nous voyons faire aux fourmis et autres, pour les saisons steriles de l'année.

2.12.33 Ces nations, que nous venons de descouurir, si abondamment fournies de viande et de breuuage naturel, sans soing et sans façon, nous viennent d'apprendre que le pain n'est pas nostre seule nourriture: et que sans labourage, nostre mere Nature nous auoit munis à planté de tout ce qu'il nous falloit: voire, comme il est vrayssemblable, plus plainement et plus richement qu'elle ne fait à present, que nous y auons meslé nostre artifice: *Et tellus nitidas fruges, vinetáque læta*
Sponte sua primùm mortalibus ipsa creauit;
Ipsa dedit dulces fœtus, et pabula læta;
Quæ nunc vix nostro grandescunt aucta labore,
Conterimúsque boues et vires agricolarum; le débordement et desreglement de nostre appetit deuançant toutes les inuentions, que nous cherchons de l'assouuir.

2.12.34 Quant aux armes, nous en auons plus de naturelles que la plus part des autres animaux, plus de diuers mouuemens de membres, et en tirons plus de seruice naturellement et sans leçon: ceux qui sont duicts à combatre nuds, on les void se ietter aux hazards pareils aux nostres. Si quelques bestes nous surpassent en cet auantage, nous en surpassons plusieurs autres. Et l'industrie de fortifier le corps et le couurir par moyens acquis, nous l'auons par vn instinct et precepte naturel. Qu'il soit ainsi, l'elephant aiguise et esmoult ses dents, desquelles il se sert à la guerre (car il en a de particulieres pour cet vsage, lesquelles il espargne, et ne les employe aucunement à ses autres seruices).

Quand les taureaux vont au combat, ils respandent et iettent la poussiere à l'entour d'eux: les sangliers affinent leurs deffences: et l'ichneumon, quand il doit venir aux prises auec le crocodile, munit son corps, l'enduit et le crouste tout à l'entour, de limon bien serré et bien paistry, comme d'vne cuirasse. Pourquoy ne dirons nous qu'il est aussi naturel de nous armer de bois et de fer?

2.12.35 Quant au parler, il est certain, que s'il n'est pas naturel, il n'est pas necessaire. Toutesfois ie croy qu'vn enfant,

ENGLISH

earth produces enough of it and offers him enough for his needs, without any further cultivation or artifice. And if it does not do so at all times, neither does it for the beasts: witness the provisions we see ants and others laying up for the barren seasons of the year.

These nations we have just discovered, so abundantly supplied with natural food and drink, without effort or preparation, have just taught us that bread is not our only nourishment, and that without plowing, our mother Nature had furnished us in plenty with all we needed—indeed, as is likely, more fully and more richly than she does now that we have mixed our artifice into it: *And the earth herself, of her own accord, first created for mortals*
shining crops and joyful vineyards;
she herself gave sweet fruits and joyful pastures,
which now scarcely grow, though increased by our toil;
and we wear out our oxen and the strength of the farmers; the excess and unruliness of our appetite outrunning every invention by which we try to satisfy it.[24]

As for weapons, we have more natural ones than most other animals, more varied movements of the limbs, and we get more service from them naturally and without lessons. Those trained to fight naked are seen throwing themselves into the same dangers as we do. If some beasts surpass us in this advantage, we surpass many others. And the skill of strengthening the body and covering it by acquired means we have by a natural instinct and precept. To prove it: the elephant sharpens and grinds the tusks it uses in war (for it has special ones for this purpose, which it spares and never uses for its other tasks).

When bulls go into battle, they scatter and toss the dust around them; boars hone their tusks; and the ichneumon, when it is about to come to grips with the crocodile, fortifies its body, coating and crusting it all over with tightly packed, well-kneaded mud, as with a breastplate. Why shall we not say that it is just as natural for us to arm ourselves with wood and iron?[25]

As for speech, it is certain that if it is not natural, it is not necessary. Nevertheless I believe that a

FRENCH

qu'on auroit nourry en pleine solitude, esloigné de tout commerce (qui seroit vn essay malaisé à faire) auroit quelque espece de parolle pour exprimer ses conceptions: et n'est pas croyable, que Nature nous ait refusé ce moyen qu'elle a donné à plusieurs autres animaux. Car qu'est-ce autre chose que parler, cette faculté, que nous leur voyons de se plaindre, de se resiouyr, de s'entr'appeller au secours, se conuier à l'amour, comme ils font par l'vsage de leur voix? Comment ne parleroient elles entr'elles? elles parlent bien à nous, et nous à elles. En combien de sortes parlons nous à nos chiens, et ils nous respondent?

D'autre langage, d'autres appellations, deuisons nous auec eux, qu'auec les oyseaux, auec les pourceaux, les beufs, les cheuaux: et changeons d'idiome selon l'espece. *Cosi per entro loro schiera bruna*
S'ammusa l'vna con l'altra formica,
Forse à spiar lor via, et lor fortuna. Il me semble que Lactance attribuë aux bestes, non le parler seulement, mais le rire encore. Et la difference de langage, qui se voit entre nous, selon la difference des contrées, elle se treuue aussi aux animaux de mesme espece.

Aristote allegue à ce propos le chant diuers des perdrix, selon la situation des lieux: *Variæque volucres*
Longè alias alio iaciunt in tempore voces,
Et partim mutant cum tempestatibus vna
Raucisonos cantus. Mais cela est à sçauoir, quel langage parleroit cet enfant: et ce qui s'en dit par diuination, n'a pas beaucoup d'apparence. Si on m'allegue contre cette opinion, que les sourds naturels ne parlent point: ie respons que ce n'est pas seulement pour n'auoir peu receuoir l'instruction de la parolle par les oreilles, mais plustost pource que le sens de l'ouye, duquel ils sont priuez, se rapporte à celuy du parler, et se tiennent ensemble d'vne cousture naturelle.

En façon, que ce que nous parlons, il faut que nous le parlions premierement à nous, et que nous le facions sonner au dedans à nos oreilles, auant que de l'enuoyer aux estrangeres.

2.12.36 I'ay dict tout cecy, pour maintenir cette ressemblance, qu'il y a aux choses humaines: et pour nous ramener et

ENGLISH

child raised in complete solitude, far from all company (which would be a hard experiment to make), would have some kind of speech to express his ideas; and it is not credible that Nature has refused us this means, which she has given to many other animals. For what else is speaking but this faculty we see in them of complaining, rejoicing, calling one another for help, inviting one another to love, as they do by using their voices? How could they not speak among themselves? They certainly speak to us, and we to them. In how many ways do we speak to our dogs, and they answer us?

We converse with them in a different language, with different names, from those we use with birds, with pigs, oxen and horses; and we change idiom according to the species. *So, within their dark troop,*
one ant touches snouts with another,
perhaps to spy out their way and their fortune. It seems to me that Lactantius attributes to beasts not only speech but laughter as well. And the difference of language we see among ourselves, according to the difference of regions, is also found in animals of the same species.[26]

Aristotle cites on this point the song of partridges, which varies with the location: *And the various birds*
utter very different cries at different times,
and some change, along with the weather,
their raucous songs. But the question is what language that child would speak; and what is said about it by guesswork is not very plausible. If someone objects to this opinion that people deaf from birth do not speak, I answer that this is not only because they could not receive instruction in speech through their ears, but rather because the sense of hearing, which they lack, is bound up with that of speech, and the two are held together by a natural seam.

So whatever we speak, we must first speak it to ourselves and make it sound within, in our own ears, before sending it out to other people's.

I have said all this to maintain the likeness that exists with human things, and to bring us back and

24 Lucretius, On the Nature of Things, Book II.
25 The ichneumon is the Egyptian mongoose.
26 Dante, Purgatorio XXVI. Lactantius was a Christian writer of the late 3rd and early 4th centuries AD.

FRENCH	ENGLISH
ioindre à la presse. Nous ne sommes ny au dessus, ny au dessous du reste: tout ce qui est sous le ciel, dit le sage, court vne loy et fortune pareille. *Indupedita suis fatalibus omnia vinclis.* Il y a quelque difference, il y a des ordres et des degrez: mais c'est soubs le visage d'vne mesme nature: *Res quæque suo ritu procedit, et omnes / Fœdere naturæ certo discrimina seruant.*	join us to the crowd. We are neither above nor below the rest. All that is under heaven, says the wise man, runs under one law and one fortune. *All things are bound by their own fated chains.* There is some difference; there are orders and degrees; but it is under the face of one and the same nature: *Each thing proceeds in its own way, and all / keep their distinctions by a fixed covenant of nature.*[27]
2.12.37 Il faut contraindre l'homme, et le renger dans les barrieres de cette police. Le miserable n'a garde d'eniamber par effect au delà: il est entraué et engagé, il est assubiecty de pareille obligation que les autres creatures de son ordre, et d'vne condition fort moyenne, sans aucune prerogatiue, præexcellence vraye et essentielle. Celle qu'il se donne par opinion, et par fantasie, n'a ny corps ny goust.	We must constrain man and line him up within the barriers of this order. The poor wretch has no way of actually stepping over them: he is shackled and bound, subjected to the same obligation as the other creatures of his rank, and of a very middling condition, without any prerogative or true and essential preeminence. The preeminence he grants himself by opinion and fancy has neither body nor flavor.
Et s'il est ainsi, que luy seul de tous les animaux, ayt cette liberté de l'imagination, et ce desreglement de pensées, luy representant ce qui est, ce qui n'est pas; et ce qu'il veut; le faulx et le veritable c'est vn aduantage qui luy est bien cher vendu, et duquel il a bien peu à se glorifier: car de là naist la source principale des maux qui le pressent, peché, maladie, irresolution, trouble, desespoir.	And if it is true that he alone of all animals has this freedom of imagination and this unruliness of thought, which represent to him what is, what is not, and what he wants, the false and the true, it is an advantage sold to him very dear, and one he has very little reason to boast of. For from it springs the main source of the evils that press upon him: sin, sickness, irresolution, confusion, despair.

BEASTS REASON TOO

The fox on the ice and the dog at the crossroads reason as we would.

FRENCH	ENGLISH
2.12.38 Ie dy donc, pour reuenir à mon propos, qu'il n'y a point d'apparence d'estimer, que les bestes facent par inclination naturelle et forcée, les mesmes choses que nous faisons par nostre choix et industrie. Nous deuons conclurre de pareils effects, pareilles facultez, et de plus riches effects des facultez plus riches: et confesser par consequent, que ce mesme discours, cette mesme voye, que nous tenons à œuurer, aussi la tiennent les animaux, ou quelque autre meilleure.	I say, then, to return to my subject, that there is no likelihood in thinking that beasts do by natural and compelled inclination the same things we do by our choice and ingenuity. From like effects we must conclude like faculties, and from richer effects richer faculties; and consequently we must admit that the same reasoning, the same method we follow in working, the animals follow too—or some other, better one.
2.12.39 Pourquoy imaginons nous en eux cette contrainte naturelle, nous qui n'en esprouuons aucun pareil effect? Ioint qu'il est plus honorable d'estre acheminé et obligé à reglément agir par naturelle et ineuitable condition, et plus approchant de la diuinité, que d'agir reglément par	Why do we imagine this natural compulsion in them, we who experience nothing of the kind? Besides, it is more honorable, and closer to divinity, to be led and obliged to act in an orderly way by a natural and inevitable condition than to act in an orderly way by a rash and accidental freedom; and

27 The "wise man" is the author of Ecclesiastes; both Latin quotations are from Lucretius, Book V.

FRENCH

liberté temeraire et fortuite; et plus seur de laisser à Nature, qu'à nous les resnes de nostre conduitte.

La vanité de nostre presomption faict, que nous aymons mieux deuoir à noz forces, qu'à sa liberalité, nostre suffisance: et enrichissons les autres animaux des biens naturels, et les leur renonçons, pour nous honorer et annoblir des biens acquis: par vne humeur bien simple, ce me semble: car ie priseroy bien autant des graces toutes miennes et naïfues, que celles que i'aurois esté mendier et quester de l'apprentissage. Il n'est pas en nostre puissance d'acquerir vne plus belle recommendation que d'estre fauorisé de Dieu et de Nature.

2.12.40 Par ainsi le renard, dequoy se seruent les habitans de la Thrace, quand ils veulent entreprendre de passer par dessus la glace de quelque riuiere gelée, et le laschent deuant eux pour cet effect, quand nous le verrions au bord de l'eau approcher son oreille bien pres de la glace, pour sentir s'il orra d'vne longue ou d'vne voisine distance, bruire l'eau courant au dessoubs, et selon qu'il trouue par là, qu'il y a plus ou moins d'espesseur en la glace, se reculer, ou s'auancer, n'aurions nous pas raison de iuger qu'il luy passe par la teste ce mesme discours, qu'il feroit en la nostre: que c'est vne ratiocination et consequence tirée du sens naturel: Ce qui fait bruit, se remue; ce qui se remue, n'est pas gelé; ce qui n'est pas gelé est liquide, et ce qui est liquide plie soubs le faix?

Car d'attribuer cela seulement à vne viuacité du sens de l'ouye, sans discours et sans consequence, c'est vne chimere, et ne peut entrer en nostre imagination. De mesme faut-il estimer de tant de sortes de ruses et d'inuentions, dequoy les bestes se couurent des entreprises que nous faisons sur elles.

2.12.41 Et si nous voulons prendre quelque aduantage de cela mesme, qu'il est en nous de les saisir, de nous en seruir, et d'en vser à nostre volonté, ce n'est que ce mesme aduantage, que nous auons les vns sur les autres. Nous auons à cette condition noz esclaues, et les Climacides estoient ce pas des femmes en Syrie qui seruoyent couchées à quatre pattes, de marchepied et d'eschelle aux dames à monter en coche? Et la plus part des personnes libres, abandonnent pour bien legeres commoditez, leur vie, et leur estre à la puissance d'autruy. Les femmes et concubines des Thraces plaident à qui sera choisie pour estre tuée au tumbeau de son mary.

ENGLISH

it is safer to leave the reins of our conduct to Nature than to ourselves.

The vanity of our presumption makes us prefer to owe our abilities to our own powers rather than to her bounty. So we credit the other animals with the natural goods and hand those over to them, in order to honor and ennoble ourselves with acquired goods—a very simple-minded attitude, it seems to me, for I would prize graces that were wholly mine and natural just as highly as those I had gone begging and seeking from learning. It is not in our power to acquire a finer recommendation than to be favored by God and by Nature.

Take the fox, then, which the inhabitants of Thrace use when they want to venture across the ice of some frozen river, letting it loose ahead of them for this purpose. If we saw it at the water's edge putting its ear close to the ice, to sense whether it could hear the water running beneath from far off or near by, and then, according as it found by this that the ice was thicker or thinner, drawing back or going forward—would we not be right to judge that the same reasoning passes through its head as would pass through ours, and that it is a ratiocination and inference drawn from natural sense: What makes a noise moves; what moves is not frozen; what is not frozen is liquid; and what is liquid gives way under a weight?

For to attribute this solely to a keen sense of hearing, without reasoning and without inference, is a fantasy that cannot enter our imagination. We must think the same of the many kinds of tricks and contrivances by which beasts protect themselves from the designs we have on them.

And if we want to claim some advantage from the very fact that it is in our power to seize them, make use of them and treat them as we please, that is only the same advantage we have over one another. On these terms we have our slaves. And were not the Climacides women in Syria who crouched on all fours and served as footstools and ladders for ladies getting into their carriages? And most free people surrender their life and their being into the power of others for very slight advantages. The wives and concubines of the Thracians argue over which of them will be chosen to be killed at her husband's tomb.[28]

FRENCH

Les tyrans ont-ils iamais failly de trouuer assez d'hommes vouez à leur deuotion: aucuns d'eux adioustans d'auantage cette necessité de les accompagner à la mort, comme en la vie? Des armées entieres se sont ainsin obligées à leurs Capitaines. La formule du serment en cette rude escole des escrimeurs à outrance, portoit ces promesses: Nous iurons de nous laisser enchainer, brusler, battre, et tuer de glaiue, et souffrir tout ce que les gladiateurs legitimes souffrent de leur maistre; engageant tresreligieusement et le corps et l'ame à son seruice: *Vre meum, si vis, flamma caput, et pete ferro / Corpus, et intorto verbere terga seca.* C'estoit vne obligation veritable, et si il s'en trouuoit dix mille telle année, qui y entroyent et s'y perdoyent.

Quand les Scythes enterroyent leur Roy, ils estrangloyent sur son corps, la plus fauorie de ses concubines, son eschanson, escuyer d'escuirie, chambellan, huissier de chambre et cuisinier. Et en son anniuersaire ils tuoyent cinquante cheuaux montez de cinquante pages, qu'ils auoyent empalé par l'espine du dos iusques au gozier, et les laissoyent ainsi plantez en parade autour de la tombe. Les hommes qui nous seruent, le font à meilleur marché, et pour vn traictement moins curieux et moins fauorable, que celuy que nous faisons aux oyseaux, aux cheuaux, et aux chiens. A quel soucy ne nous demettons nous pour leur commodité?

Il ne me semble point, que les plus abiects seruiteurs facent volontiers pour leurs maistres, ce que les Princes s'honorent de faire pour ces bestes. Diogenes voyant ses parents en peine de le rachetter de seruitude: Ils sont fols, disoit-il, c'est celuy qui me traitte et nourrit, qui me sert; et ceux qui entretiennent les bestes, se doiuent dire plustost les seruir, qu'en estre seruis. Et si elles ont cela de plus genereux, que iamais lyon ne s'asseruit à vn autre lyon, ny vn cheual à vn autre cheual par faute de cœur.

2.12.42 Comme nous allons à la chasse des bestes, ainsi vont les tigres et les lyons à la chasse des hommes: et ont vn pareil exercice les vnes sur les autres: les chiens sur les lieures, les brochets sur les tanches, les arondeles sur les cigales, les esperuiers sur les merles et sur les allouettes:
Serpente ciconia pullos
Nutrit, et inuenta per deuia rura lacerta,

ENGLISH

Have tyrants ever failed to find enough men devoted to them, some of them even adding the obligation to accompany them in death as in life? Whole armies have bound themselves in this way to their captains. The form of the oath in that harsh school of fighters to the death contained these promises: We swear to let ourselves be chained, burned, beaten and killed by the sword, and to suffer all that regular gladiators suffer from their master—pledging both body and soul most religiously to his service: *Burn my head with fire, if you will, and strike my body / with the sword, and cut my back with the twisted lash.* It was a real obligation, and yet in a given year there were ten thousand who entered into it and perished by it.[29]

When the Scythians buried their king, they strangled over his body the favorite among his concubines, his cupbearer, his master of the horse, his chamberlain, his usher and his cook. And on the anniversary of his death they killed fifty horses ridden by fifty pages, whom they had impaled along the spine up to the throat, and left them planted there on display around the tomb. The men who serve us do it more cheaply, and for less careful and less kindly treatment than we give our birds, horses and dogs. What trouble do we not stoop to for their comfort?

It does not seem to me that the most abject servants would willingly do for their masters what princes take pride in doing for these beasts. Diogenes, seeing his relatives troubled about ransoming him from slavery, said: "They are fools; it is the man who looks after me and feeds me who serves me." And those who keep animals should be said to serve them rather than to be served by them. Besides, the animals have this more noble trait: never did a lion enslave itself to another lion, nor a horse to another horse, for lack of courage.[30]

Just as we go hunting beasts, so tigers and lions go hunting men; and the animals practice the same exercise on one another: dogs on hares, pike on tench, swallows on cicadas, sparrowhawks on blackbirds and larks: *The stork feeds her young*
on snakes and on lizards found in remote fields;
and the noble birds, Jupiter's servants,

28 Climacides comes from the Greek klimax, "ladder"; the custom is reported by Plutarch.
29 Tibullus, Elegies I.9.
30 Diogenes was said to have been captured by pirates and sold as a slave.

FRENCH

Et leporem aut capream famulæ Iouis et generosæ
In saltu venantur aues. Nous partons le fruict de nostre chasse auec noz chiens et oyseaux, comme la peine et l'industrie.

Et au dessus d'Amphipolis en Thrace, les chasseurs et les faucons sauuages, partent iustement le butin par moitié: comme le long des palus Mæotides, si le pescheur ne laisse aux loups de bonne foy, vne part esgale de sa prise, ils vont incontinent deschirer ses rets. Et comme nous auons vne chasse, qui se conduit plus par subtilité, que par force, comme celle des colliers de noz lignes et de l'hameçon, il s'en void aussi de pareilles entre les bestes.

Aristote dit, que la Seche iette de son col vn boyau long comme vne ligne, qu'elle estand au loing en le laschant, et le retire à soy quand elle veut: à mesure qu'elle apperçoit quelque petit poisson s'approcher, elle luy laisse mordre le bout de ce boyau, estant cachée dans le sable, ou dans la vase, et petit à petit le retire iusques à ce que ce petit poisson soit si prés d'elle, que d'vn sault elle puisse l'attraper.

2.12.43 Quant à la force, il n'est animal au monde en butte de tant d'offences, que l'homme: il ne nous faut point vne balaine, vn elephant, et vn crocodile, ny tels autres animaux, desquels vn seul est capable de deffaire vn grand nombre d'hommes: les poulx sont suffisans pour faire vacquer la dictature de Sylla: c'est le desieuner d'vn petit ver, que le cœur et la vie d'vn grand et triomphant Empereur.

2.12.44 Pourquoy disons nous, que c'est à l'homme science et cognoissance bastie par art et par discours, de discerner les choses vtiles à son viure, et au secours de ses maladies, de celles qui ne le sont pas, de cognoistre la force de la rubarbe et du polypode;

et quand nous voyons les cheures de Candie, si elles ont receu vn coup de traict, aller entre vn million d'herbes choisir le dictame pour leur guerison, et la tortue quand elle a mangé de la vipere, chercher incontinent de l'origanum pour se purger, le dragon fourbir et esclairer ses yeux auecques du fenoil, les cigongnes se donner elles mesmes des clysteres à tout de l'eau de marine, les elephans arracher non seulement de leur corps et de leurs compagnons, mais des corps aussi de leurs maistres, tesmoin celuy du Roy Porus qu'Alexandre deffit, les

ENGLISH

hunt the hare or the roe deer in the woodland pastures. We share the fruit of our hunting with our dogs and birds, as we share the toil and the skill.[31]

And above Amphipolis in Thrace, the hunters and the wild falcons share the booty exactly half and half; just as along the Maeotian marshes, if the fisherman does not in good faith leave the wolves an equal share of his catch, they promptly go and tear his nets. And just as we have a kind of hunting conducted more by cunning than by force, such as with snares, with our lines and with the hook, similar kinds are seen among the beasts too.[32]

Aristotle says that the cuttlefish throws out from its neck a gut as long as a fishing line, which it lets out to stretch far away and draws back to itself when it wishes. As soon as it sees some little fish approaching, it lets the fish bite the end of this gut, while it lies hidden in the sand or the mud, and little by little reels it in until the little fish is so close that it can catch it in one leap.

As for strength, there is no animal in the world exposed to so many injuries as man. We do not need a whale, an elephant or a crocodile, or other such animals, any one of which can destroy a great number of men: lice are enough to vacate Sulla's dictatorship. The heart and life of a great and triumphant emperor are breakfast for a little worm.[33]

Why do we say that, in man, it is science and knowledge built up by skill and reasoning to tell the things useful for his living and for the relief of his illnesses from those that are not, and to know the power of rhubarb and polypody;[34]

and yet when we see the goats of Crete, if they have been struck by an arrow, go and choose dittany out of a million herbs to cure themselves; the tortoise, when it has eaten a viper, immediately look for oregano to purge itself; the serpent polish and brighten its eyes with fennel; storks give themselves enemas of seawater; elephants pull out the javelins and darts thrown at them in battle—not only from their own bodies and their compan-

31 Juvenal, Satires XIV.
32 The Maeotian marshes are the Sea of Azov.
33 The Roman dictator Sulla was said to have died in 78 BC of a disease that bred lice in his flesh.
34 Polypody is a fern once used as a purgative.

FRENCH

iauelots et les dardz qu'on leur a iettez au combat, et les arracher si dextrement, que nous ne le sçaurions faire auec si peu de douleur: pourquoy ne disons nous de mesmes, que c'est science et prudence?

Car d'alleguer, pour les deprimer, que c'est par la seule instruction et maistrise de Nature, qu'elles le sçauent, ce n'est pas leur oster le tiltre de science et de prudence: c'est la leur attribuer à plus forte raison qu'à nous, pour l'honneur d'vne si certaine maistresse d'escole.

2.12.45 Chrysippus, bien qu'en toutes autres choses autant desdaigneux iuge de la condition des animaux, que nul autre Philosophe, considerant les mouuements du chien, qui se rencontrant en vn carrefour à trois chemins, ou à la queste de son maistre qu'il a esgaré, ou à la poursuitte de quelque proye qui fuit deuant luy, va essayant vn chemin apres l'autre, et apres s'estre asseuré des deux, et n'y auoir trouué la trace de ce qu'il cherche, s'eslance dans le troisiesme sans marchander:

il est contraint de confesser, qu'en ce chien là, vn tel discours se passe: I'ay suiuy iusques à ce carre-four mon maistre à la trace, il faut necessairement qu'il passe par l'vn de ces trois chemins: ce n'est ny par cettuy-cy, ny par celuy-là, il faut donc infailliblement qu'il passe par cet autre: et que s'asseurant par cette conclusion et discours, il ne se sert plus de son sentiment au troisiesme chemin, ny ne le sonde plus, ains s'y laisse emporter par la force de la raison.

Ce traict purement dialecticien, et cet vsage de propositions diuisées et conioinctes, et de la suffisante enumeration des parties, vaut-il pas autant que le chien le sçache de soy que de Trapezonce?

2.12.46 Si ne sont pas les bestes incapables d'estre encore instruites à nostre mode. Les merles, les corbeaux, les pies, les perroquets, nous leur apprenons à parler: et cette facilité, que nous recognoissons à nous fournir leur voix et haleine si souple et si maniable, pour la former et l'astreindre à certain nombre de lettres et de syllabes, tesmoigne qu'ils ont vn discours au dedans, qui les rend ainsi disciplinables et volontaires à apprendre.

Chacun est saoul, ce croy-ie, de voir tant de sortes de cingeries que les batteleurs apprennent à leurs chiens: les

ENGLISH

ions', but from their masters' bodies too, witness the elephant of King Porus, whom Alexander defeated—and pull them out so deftly that we could not do it with so little pain: why do we not likewise say that this is knowledge and wisdom?[35]

For to allege, in order to belittle them, that they know these things solely by the instruction and mastery of Nature is not to take away from them the title of knowledge and wisdom; it is to grant it to them with more reason than to us, in honor of so reliable a schoolmistress.

Chrysippus, though in all other matters as disdainful a judge of the condition of animals as any philosopher, considered the movements of a dog that comes to a crossroads where three roads meet, either in search of its master whom it has lost or in pursuit of some prey fleeing before it. The dog tries one road after another, and after making sure of two of them and finding no trace there of what it seeks, it dashes down the third without hesitation.

Chrysippus is forced to admit that a reasoning such as this goes on in that dog: I have followed my master's trail to this crossroads; he must necessarily have gone by one of these three roads; it is neither this one nor that one; therefore he must infallibly have gone by this other. And, made sure by this conclusion and reasoning, the dog no longer relies on its senses on the third road, nor tests it any further, but lets itself be carried along by the force of reason.

This purely dialectical move, this use of disjunctive and conjunctive propositions and of sufficient enumeration of the parts—is it not worth just as much whether the dog knows it by itself or learned it from Trebizond?[36]

And yet beasts are not incapable of being taught in our manner too. Blackbirds, ravens, magpies, parrots—we teach them to speak; and the readiness we see in them to lend us their voice and breath, so supple and pliable, so that we can shape it and bind it to a certain number of letters and syllables, shows that they have a reasoning within that makes them so teachable and willing to learn.

Everyone, I believe, has had his fill of seeing the many kinds of monkey tricks that showmen teach

FRENCH

dances, où ils ne faillent vne seule cadence du son qu'ils oyent; plusieurs diuers mouuemens et saults qu'ils leur font faire par le commandement de leur parolle: mais ie remerque auec plus d'admiration cet effect, qui est toutes-fois assez vulgaire, des chiens dequoy se seruent les aueugles, et aux champs et aux villes: ie me suis pris garde comme ils s'arrestent à certaines portes, d'où ils ont accoustumé de tirer l'aumosne, comme ils euitent le choc des coches et des charrettes, lors mesme que pour leur regard, ils ont assez de place pour leur passage: i'en ay veu le long d'vn fossé de ville, laisser vn sentier plain et vni, et en prendre vn pire, pour esloigner son maistre du fossé.

Comment pouuoit-on auoir faict conceuoir à ce chien, que c'estoit sa charge de regarder seulement à la seureté de son maistre, et mespriser ses propres commoditez pour le seruir? et comment auoit-il la cognoissance que tel chemin luy estoit bien assez large, qui ne le seroit pas pour vn aueugle? Tout cela se peut-il comprendre sans ratiocination?

2.12.47 Il ne faut pas oublier ce que Plutarque dit auoir veu à Rome d'vn chien, auec l'Empereur Vespasian le pere au Theatre de Marcellus. Ce chien seruoit à vn batteleur qui ioüoit vne fiction à plusieurs mines et à plusieurs personnages, et y auoit son rolle.

Il falloit entre autres choses qu'il contrefist pour vn temps le mort, pour auoir mangé de certaine drogue: apres auoir auallé le pain qu'on feignoit estre cette drogue, il commença tantost à trembler et branler, comme s'il eust esté estourdy: finalement s'estendant et se roidissant, comme mort, il se laissa tirer et trainer d'vn lieu à autre, ainsi que portoit le subject du ieu, et puis quand il cogneut qu'il estoit temps, il commença premierement à se remuer tout bellement, ainsi que s'il se fust reuenu d'vn profond sommeil, et leuant la teste regarda çà et là d'vne façon qui estonnoit tous les assistans.

2.12.48 Les bœufs qui seruoyent aux iardins Royaux de Suse, pour les arrouser et tourner certaines grandes rouës à puiser de l'eau, ausquelles il y a des baquets attachez, comme il s'en voit plusieurs en Languedoc, on leur auoit ordonné d'en tirer par iour iusques à cent tours chacun, ils estoient si accoustumez à ce nombre, qu'il estoit

ENGLISH

their dogs: the dances in which they do not miss a single beat of the music they hear, and the many different movements and leaps they are made to perform at a word of command. But I note with more wonder something that is nevertheless common enough: the dogs that blind men use, both in the country and in towns. I have noticed how they stop at certain doors where they are used to receiving alms, and how they avoid being struck by coaches and carts, even when they have room enough to pass for their own part. I have seen one, along a town moat, leave a smooth, level path and take a worse one, to keep its master away from the moat.

How could anyone have made this dog understand that its duty was to look only to its master's safety and to disregard its own convenience in order to serve him? And how did it know that a path quite wide enough for itself would not be so for a blind man? Can all this be understood without ratiocination?

We must not forget what Plutarch says he saw of a dog in Rome, in the presence of the Emperor Vespasian, the father, at the Theater of Marcellus. This dog belonged to a showman who was performing a play with many scenes and many characters, and it had its own part in it.

Among other things, it had to pretend for a while to be dead, from having eaten a certain drug. After swallowing the bread that was supposed to be this drug, it soon began to tremble and stagger as if it were dazed. Finally, stretching out and stiffening as though dead, it let itself be pulled and dragged from place to place, as the plot of the play required. Then, when it knew the time had come, it began first to stir very gently, as if it were waking from a deep sleep, and raising its head, it looked this way and that in a manner that astonished all the spectators.

The oxen used in the royal gardens of Susa to water them, turning certain great wheels for drawing water with buckets attached to them, like many to be seen in Languedoc, had been ordered to make up to a hundred turns each a day. They were so accustomed to this number that it was impossible by

35 Porus, an Indian king, was defeated by Alexander the Great at the Hydaspes in 326 BC.
36 George of Trebizond (1395–1486), author of a widely used textbook of logic.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
	impossible par aucune force de leur en faire tirer vn tour dauantage, et ayans faict leur tasche ils s'arrestoient tout court. Nous sommes en l'adolescence auant que nous sçachions compter iusques à cent, et venons de descouurir des nations qui n'ont aucune cognoissance des nombres.	any force to make them do a single turn more, and having done their task they stopped dead. We are in adolescence before we know how to count to a hundred, and we have just discovered nations that have no knowledge of numbers.[37]
2.12.49	Il y a encore plus de discours à instruire autruy qu'à estre instruit. Or laissant à part ce que Democritus iugeoit et prouuoit, que la plus part des arts, les bestes nous les ont apprises: comme l'araignée à tistre et à coudre, l'arondelle à bastir, le cigne et le rossignol la musique, et plusieurs animaux par leur imitation à faire la medecine: Aristote tient que les rossignols instruisent leurs petits à chanter, et y employent du temps et du soing: d'où il aduient que ceux que nous nourrissons en cage, qui n'ont point eu loisir d'aller à l'escole soubs leurs parens, perdent beaucoup de la grace de leur chant. Nous pouuons iuger par là, qu'il reçoit de l'amendement par discipline et par estude.	There is even more reasoning in teaching others than in being taught. Now, leaving aside what Democritus judged and proved—that beasts taught us most of the arts, as the spider taught us to weave and sew, the swallow to build, the swan and the nightingale music, and many animals, through our imitation of them, the practice of medicine—Aristotle holds that nightingales teach their young to sing and spend time and care on it. Hence those we raise in cages, which have not had the chance to go to school under their parents, lose much of the grace of their song. We can judge from this that their song improves through discipline and study.
	Et entre les libres mesme, il n'est pas vng et pareil; chacun en a pris selon sa capacité. Et sur la ialousie de leur apprentissage, ils se debattent à l'enuy, d'vne contention si courageuse, que par fois le vaincu y demeure mort, l'aleine luy faillant plustost que la voix. Les plus ieunes ruminent pensifs, et prennent à imiter certains couplets de chanson: le disciple escoute la leçon de son precepteur, et en rend compte auec grand soing: ils se taisent l'vn tantost, tantost l'autre: on oyt corriger les fautes, et sent-on aucunes reprehensions du precepteur.	And even among the free ones it is not one and the same: each has taken from it according to its capacity. Jealous over their learning, they compete with one another in a contest so spirited that sometimes the loser dies of it, his breath failing him before his voice does. The youngest ponder thoughtfully and set themselves to imitating certain snatches of song; the pupil listens to his teacher's lesson and repeats it back with great care; they fall silent, now one, now the other; one can hear faults being corrected and detect certain reproofs from the teacher.
2.12.50	I'ay veu, dit Arrius, autresfois vn elephant ayant à chacune cuisse vn cymbale pendu, et vn autre attaché à sa trompe, au son desquels tous les autres dançoyent en rond, s'esleuans et s'inclinans à certaines cadences, selon que l'instrument les guidoit, et y auoit plaisir à ouyr cette harmonie. Aux spectacles de Rome, il se voyoit ordinairement des elephans dressez à se mouuoir et dancer au son de la voix, des dances à plusieurs entrelasseures, coupeures et diuerses cadances tres-difficiles à apprendre. Il s'en est veu, qui en leur priué rememoroient leur leçon, et s'exerçoyent par soing et par estude pour n'estre tancez et battuz de leurs maistres.	I once saw, says Arrian, an elephant with a cymbal hanging from each thigh and another tied to its trunk, at the sound of which all the others danced in a circle, rising and bowing at certain beats as the instrument guided them; and it was a pleasure to hear this harmony. At the shows in Rome, elephants were regularly seen trained to move and dance to the sound of the voice—dances with many interweavings, breaks and varied rhythms, very hard to learn. Some have been seen rehearsing their lesson in private, practicing with care and study so as not to be scolded and beaten by their masters.[38]

37 Susa was a capital of the ancient Persian kings.
38 Arrian, Greek historian of the 2nd century AD, in his Indica.

FRENCH

2.12.51 Mais cett'autre histoire de la pie, de laquelle nous auons Plutarque mesme pour respondant, est estrange. Elle estoit en la boutique d'vn barbier à Rome, et faisoit merueilles de contrefaire auec la voix tout ce qu'elle oyoit. Vn iour il aduint que certaines trompettes s'arresterent à sonner long temps deuant cette boutique: depuis cela et tout le lendemain, voyla cette pie pensiue, muette et melancholique; dequoy tout le monde estoit esmerueillé, et pensoit-on que le son des trompettes l'eust ainsin estourdie et estonnée; et qu'auec l'ouye, la voix se fust quant et quant esteinte.

Mais on trouua en fin, que c'estoit vne estude profonde, et vne retraicte en soy-mesmes, son esprit s'exercitant et preparant sa voix, à representer le son de ces trompettes: de maniere que sa premiere voix ce fut celle là, d'exprimer parfaictement leurs reprises, leurs poses, et leurs nuances; ayant quicté par ce nouuel apprentissage, et pris à desdain tout ce qu'elle sçauoit dire auparauant.

2.12.52 Ie ne veux pas obmettre d'alleguer aussi cet autre exemple d'vn chien, que ce mesme Plutarque dit auoir veu (car quant à l'ordre, ie sens bien que ie le trouble, mais ie n'en obserue non plus à renger ces exemples, qu'au reste de toute ma besongne) luy estant dans vn nauire, ce chien estant en peine d'auoir l'huyle qui estoit dans le fond d'vne cruche, où il ne pouuoit arriuer de la langue, pour l'estroite emboucheure du vaisseau, alla querir des cailloux, et en mit dans cette cruche iusques à ce qu'il eust faict hausser l'huyle plus pres du bord, où il la peust atteindre. Cela qu'est-ce, si ce n'est l'effect d'vn esprit bien subtil?

On dit que les corbeaux de Barbarie en font de mesme, quand l'eau qu'ils veulent boire est trop basse.

2.12.53 Cette action est aucunement voisine de ce que recitoit des elephans, vn Roy de leur nation, Iuba; que quand par la finesse de ceux qui les chassent, l'vn d'entre eux se trouue pris dans certaines fosses profondes qu'on leur prepare, et les recouure lon de menues brossailles pour les tromper, ses compagnons y apportent en diligence force pierres, et pieces de bois, afin que cela l'ayde à s'en mettre hors. Mais cet animal rapporte en tant d'autres effects à l'humaine suffisance, que si ie vouloy suiure par le menu ce que l'experience en a appris, ie gaignerois aisément ce que ie maintiens ordinairement, qu'il se

ENGLISH

But that other story, about the magpie, for which we have Plutarch himself as guarantor, is a strange one. It lived in a barber's shop in Rome and did wonders at mimicking with its voice everything it heard. One day some trumpeters happened to stop and play for a long time in front of the shop. After that, and all the next day, there was the magpie, pensive, mute and melancholy. Everyone marveled at this, and people thought the sound of the trumpets had so dazed and stunned it that its voice had been extinguished along with its hearing.

But it was found in the end that this was deep study and a withdrawal into itself, its mind exercising and preparing its voice to reproduce the sound of those trumpets. So its first utterance was that one: a perfect rendering of their repeats, their pauses and their changes of tone; for the sake of this new learning, it had given up and come to scorn everything it could say before.

I do not want to leave out this other example either, of a dog that the same Plutarch says he saw (for as to order, I am well aware that I am mixing it up, but I observe it no more in arranging these examples than in all the rest of my work). He was on a ship, and this dog, struggling to get at the oil at the bottom of a jar, which it could not reach with its tongue because of the vessel's narrow mouth, went and fetched pebbles and put them into the jar until it had raised the oil close enough to the rim to reach it. What is that, if not the work of a very subtle mind?

They say that the ravens of Barbary do the same when the water they want to drink is too low.[39]

This action is somewhat akin to what Juba, a king of their own country, related of elephants: that when, through the cunning of their hunters, one of them is caught in one of the deep pits prepared for them and covered over with small brushwood to deceive them, its companions hurry to bring plenty of stones and pieces of wood to help it get out. But this animal resembles human ability in so many other actions that if I wanted to follow in detail what experience has taught about it, I would easily win the point I usually maintain: that there

39 Barbary is the coast of North Africa.

FRENCH

trouue plus de difference de tel homme à tel homme, que de tel animal à tel homme.

Le gouuerneur d'vn elephant en vne maison priuée de Syrie, desroboit à tous les repas, la moitié de la pension qu'on luy auoit ordonnée: vn iour le maistre voulut luy-mesme le penser, versa dans sa mangeoire la iuste mesure d'orge, qu'il luy auoit prescrite, pour sa nourriture: l'elephant regardant de mauuais œil ce gouuerneur, separa auec la trompe, et en mit à part la moitié, declarant par là le tort qu'on luy faisoit. Et vn autre, ayant vn gouuerneur qui mesloit dans sa mangeaille des pierres pour en croistre la mesure, s'approcha du pot où il faisoit cuyre sa chair pour son disner, et le luy remplit de cendre.

Cela ce sont des effects particuliers: mais ce que tout le monde a veu, et que tout le monde sçait, qu'en toutes les armées qui se conduisoyent du pays de Leuant, l'vne des plus grandes forces consistoit aux elephans, desquels on tiroit des effects sans comparaison plus grands que nous ne faisons à present de nostre artillerie, qui tient à peu pres leur place en vne battaille ordonnée (cela est aisé à iuger à ceux qui cognoissent les histoires anciennes) *Si quidem Tyrio seruire solebant*
Annibali, et nostris ducibus, regique Molosso,
Horum maiores, et dorso ferre cohortes,
Partem aliquam belli, et euntem in prælia turrim. Il falloit bien qu'on se respondist à bon escient de la creance de ces bestes et de leur discours, leur abandonnant la teste d'vne battaille;

là où le moindre arrest qu'elles eussent sçeu faire, pour la grandeur et pesanteur de leur corps, le moindre effroy qui leur eust faict tourner la teste sur leurs gens, estoit suffisant pour tout perdre.

Et s'est veu peu d'exemples, où cela soit aduenu, qu'ils se reiectassent sur leurs trouppes, au lieu que nous mesmes nous reiectons les vns sur les autres, et nous rompons. On leur donnoit charge non d'vn mouuement simple, mais de plusieurs diuerses parties au combat: comme faisoient aux chiens les Espagnols à la nouuelle conqueste des Indes; ausquels ils payoient solde, et faisoient partage au butin. Et montroient ces animaux, autant d'addresse et de iugement à poursuiure et arrester leur victoire, à charger ou à reculer, selon les occasions, à distinguer les amis des ennemis, comme ils faisoient d'ardeur et d'aspreté. Nous admirons et poisons mieux les choses

ENGLISH

is more difference between this man and that one than between this animal and that man.[40]

The keeper of an elephant in a private house in Syria stole half its ration at every meal. One day the master decided to feed it himself and poured into its manger the exact measure of barley he had prescribed for its food. The elephant, glaring at the keeper, separated half of it with its trunk and set it aside, thereby declaring the wrong being done to it. And another, whose keeper mixed stones into its fodder to increase the measure, went up to the pot in which he was cooking his meat for dinner and filled it with ashes for him.

These are individual incidents. But what everyone has seen and everyone knows is that in all the armies brought from the lands of the Levant, one of the greatest strengths lay in the elephants, which achieved results incomparably greater than we now get from our artillery, which roughly takes their place in a pitched battle (this is easy to judge for those who know ancient history): *Since indeed they used to serve the Tyrian*
Hannibal, and our generals, and the Molossian king,
these beasts' ancestors, and to carry cohorts on their backs,
a share of the war, and a tower going into battle.
People must surely have had complete and serious confidence in the reliability of these beasts and their reasoning, to entrust them with the front of a battle;[41]

for the slightest halt they might have made, given the size and weight of their bodies, the slightest fright that turned their heads back toward their own side, was enough to lose everything.

And few cases have been seen where they turned back on their own troops, whereas we ourselves fall back on one another and break ranks. They were given not a single movement to perform but several different parts in the fighting—as the Spaniards did with their dogs in the recent conquest of the Indies, paying them wages and giving them a share of the booty. And these animals showed as much skill and judgment in pursuing and halting their victory, in charging or retreating as occasion required, in telling friends from enemies, as they

40 Juba II, king of Mauretania (died AD 23), a learned writer on Africa.
41 Juvenal, Satires XII; the Molossian king is Pyrrhus of Epirus.

FRENCH	ENGLISH
estrangeres que les ordinaires: et sans cela ie ne me fusse pas amusé à ce long registre.	did ardor and fierceness. We admire and weigh foreign things more than ordinary ones; otherwise I would not have amused myself with this long register.
Car selon mon opinion, qui contrerollera de pres ce que nous voyons ordinairement es animaux, qui viuent parmy nous, il y a dequoy y trouuer des effects autant admirables, que ceux qu'on va recueillant és pays et siecles estrangers. C'est vne mesme nature qui roule son cours. Qui en auroit suffisamment iugé le present estat, en pourroit seurement conclurre et tout l'aduenir et tout le passé.	For in my opinion, whoever looks closely at what we commonly see in the animals that live among us will find in them actions as wonderful as those that people go collecting in foreign lands and ages. It is one and the same nature that rolls on its course. Whoever had sufficiently judged its present state could safely infer from it both the whole future and the whole past.

JUDGING WHAT WE DO NOT UNDERSTAND

As we scorn foreigners we do not understand, so we misjudge the beasts.

FRENCH	ENGLISH
2.12.54 I'ay veu autresfois parmy nous, des hommes amenez par mer de loingtain pays, desquels par ce que nous n'entendions aucunement le langage, et que leur façon au demeurant et leur contenance, et leurs vestemens, estoient du tout esloignez des nostres, qui de nous ne les estimoit et *[non civilisés]* et brutes? qui n'attribuoit à stupidité et à bestise, de les voir muets, ignorans la langue Françoise, ignorans nos baise-mains, et nos inclinations serpentées; nostre port et nostre maintien, sur lequel sans faillir, doit prendre son patron la nature humaine? Tout ce qui nous semble estrange, nous le condamnons, et ce que nous n'entendons pas. Il nous aduient ainsin au iugement que nous faisons des bestes.	I once saw among us men brought by sea from a distant country. Because we did not understand their language at all, and because their manners, their bearing and their clothes were entirely unlike ours, which of us did not consider them uncivilized and brutish? Who did not put it down to stupidity and dullness to see them mute, ignorant of the French language, ignorant of our hand-kissings and our serpentine bows, of our carriage and our bearing—on which, of course, human nature must without fail take its model? Everything that seems strange to us, we condemn, and everything we do not understand. That is how it goes with us in the judgment we make of beasts.
Elles ont plusieurs conditions, qui se rapportent aux nostres: de celles-là par comparaison nous pouuons tirer quelque coniecture: mais de ce qu'elles ont particulier, que sçauons nous que c'est? Les cheuaux, les chiens, les bœufs, les brebis, les oyseaux, et la pluspart des animaux, qui viuent auec nous, recognoissent nostre voix, et se laissent conduire par elle: si faisoit bien encore la murene de Crassus, et venoit à luy quand il l'appelloit: et le font aussi les anguilles, qui se trouuent en la fontaine d'Arethuse: et i'ay veu des gardoirs assez, où les poissons accourent, pour manger, à certain cry de ceux qui les traictent. *Nomen habent, et ad magistri / Vocem quisque sui venit citatus.* Nous pouuons iuger de cela.	They have many characteristics that correspond to ours: from those, by comparison, we can draw some conjecture. But as for what is peculiar to them, what do we know of what it is? Horses, dogs, oxen, sheep, birds and most of the animals that live with us recognize our voice and let themselves be led by it. So too did Crassus's moray eel, which came to him when he called it; and so do the eels in the fountain of Arethusa; and I have seen plenty of fishponds where the fish come running to feed at a certain call from those who tend them. *They have names, and each comes when summoned / at its master's voice.* That much we can judge.[42]
2.12.55 Nous pouuons aussi dire, que les elephans ont quelque participation de religion, d'autant qu'apres plusieurs	We can also say that elephants have some share in religion, since after several ablutions and purifica-

FRENCH

ablutions et purifications, on les voit haussans leur trompe, comme des bras; et tenans les yeux fichez vers le soleil leuant, se planter long temps en meditation et contemplation, à certaines heures du iour; de leur propre inclination, sans instruction et sans precepte. Mais pour ne voir aucune telle apparence és autres animaux, nous ne pouuons pourtant establir qu'ils soient sans religion, et ne pouuons prendre en aucune part ce qui nous est caché.

2.12.56 Comme nous voyons quelque chose en cette action que le philosophe Cleanthes remerqua, par ce qu'elle retire aux nostres: Il vid, dit-il, des fourmis partir de leur fourmiliere, portans le corps d'vn fourmis mort, vers vne autre fourmiliere, de laquelle plusieurs autres fourmis leur vindrent au deuant, comme pour parler à eux, et apres auoir esté ensemble quelque piece, ceux-cy s'en retournerent, pour consulter, pensez, auec leurs concitoyens, et firent ainsi deux ou trois voyages pour la difficulté de la capitulation. En fin ces derniers venus, apporterent aux premiers vn ver de leur taniere comme pour la rançon du mort, lequel ver les premiers chargerent sur leur dos, et emporterent chez eux, laissans aux autres le corps du trespassé.

Voila l'interpretation que Cleanthes y donna: tesmoignant par là que celles qui n'ont point de voix, ne laissent pas d'auoir pratique et communication mutuelle; de laquelle c'est nostre deffaut que nous ne soyons participans; et nous meslons à cette cause sottement d'en opiner.

2.12.57 Or elles produisent encores d'autres effects, qui surpassent de bien loing nostre capacité, ausquels il s'en faut tant que nous puissions arriuer par imitation, que par imagination mesme nous ne les pouuons conceuoir. Plusieurs tiennent qu'en cette grande et derniere battaille nauale qu'Antonius perdit contre Auguste, sa galere capitainesse fut arrestée au milieu de sa course, par ce petit poisson, que les Latins nomment *remora*, à cause de cette sienne proprieté d'arrester toute sorte de vaisseaux, ausquels il s'attache.

Et l'Empereur Caligula vogant auec vne grande flotte en la coste de la Romanie, sa seule galere fut arrestée tout court, par ce mesme poisson; lequel il fit prendre attaché comme il estoit au bas de son vaisseau, tout despit dequoy vn si petit animal pouuoit forcer et la mer et les vents, et la violence de tous ses auirons, pour estre seulement attaché par le bec à sa galere, car c'est vn

ENGLISH

tions they are seen raising their trunks like arms and, with their eyes fixed on the rising sun, standing still for a long time in meditation and contemplation at certain hours of the day, of their own inclination, without instruction or precept. But because we see no such sign in other animals, we cannot for all that establish that they are without religion; we cannot grasp in any respect what is hidden from us.

So too we see something in this action that the philosopher Cleanthes noticed, because it resembles ours. He saw, he says, some ants leaving their anthill carrying the body of a dead ant toward another anthill, from which several other ants came out to meet them as if to talk with them. After being together for some time, these went back to consult—just imagine—with their fellow citizens, and made two or three trips in this way because the terms were hard to settle. At last the latter brought the former a worm from their den, as if as ransom for the dead one; the first group loaded this worm on their backs and carried it home, leaving the others the body of the deceased.

That is the interpretation Cleanthes gave of it, showing thereby that creatures without voices still have dealings and communication with one another; it is our own defect that we have no share in it, and so we are foolish to meddle in giving opinions on the matter.

Now they produce still other effects that far surpass our capacity—so far beyond imitation that we cannot even conceive them in imagination. Many hold that in the great final naval battle that Antony lost to Augustus, his flagship was stopped in midcourse by the little fish the Latins call *remora*, because of its peculiar property of stopping every kind of vessel it attaches itself to.[43]

And when the Emperor Caligula was sailing with a great fleet along the coast of Romania, his galley alone was stopped dead by this same fish. He had it taken, attached as it was to the bottom of his vessel, quite vexed that so small an animal could overpower the sea and the winds and the force of

42 Martial, Epigrams IV.30. The fountain of Arethusa is a spring at Syracuse in Sicily.
43 The battle of Actium, 31 BC; Latin remora means "delay".

FRENCH

poisson à coquille, et s'estonna encore non sans grande raison, de ce que luy estant apporté dans le batteau, il n'auoit plus cette force, qu'il auoit au dehors. Vn citoyen de Cyzique acquit iadis reputation de bon mathematicien, pour auoir appris la condition de l'herisson.

Il a sa taniere ouuerte à diuers endroits et à diuers vents; et preuoyant le vent aduenir, il va boucher le trou du costé de ce vent-là; ce que remerquant ce citoyen, apportoit en sa ville certaines predictions du vent, qui auoit à tirer. Le cameleon prend la couleur du lieu, où il est assis: mais le poulpe se donne luy-mesme la couleur qu'il luy plaist, selon les occasions, pour se cacher de ce qu'il craint, et attrapper ce qu'il cherche. Au cameleon c'est changement de passion, mais au poulpe c'est changement d'action.

Nous auons quelques mutations de couleur, à la frayeur, la cholere, la honte, et autres passions, qui alterent le teint de nostre visage: mais c'est par l'effect de la souffrance, comme au cameleon. Il est bien en la iaunisse de nous faire iaunir, mais il n'est pas en la disposition de nostre volonté. Or ces effects que nous recognoissons aux autres animaux, plus grands que les nostres, tesmoignent en eux quelque faculté plus excellente, qui nous est occulte; comme il est vraysemblable que sont plusieurs autres de leurs conditions et puissances, desquelles nulles apparances ne viennent iusques à nous.

2.12.58 De toutes les predictions du temps passé, les plus anciennes et plus certaines estoyent celles qui se tiroient du vol des oyseaux. Nous n'auons rien de pareil ny de si admirable. Cette regle, cet ordre du bransler de leur aisle, par lequel on tire des consequences des choses à venir, il faut bien qu'il soit conduit par quelque excellent moyen à vne si noble operation; car c'est prester à la lettre, d'aller attribuant ce grand effect, à quelque ordonnance naturelle, sans l'intelligence, consentement, et discours, de qui le produit: et est vne opinion euidemment faulse.

Qu'il soit ainsi: la torpille a cette condition, non seulement d'endormir les membres qui la touchent, mais au trauers des filets, et de la scene, elle transmet vne pesanteur endormie aux mains de ceux qui la remuent et manient: voire dit-on d'auantage, que si on verse de l'eau dessus, on sent cette passion qui gaigne contremont

ENGLISH

all his oars merely by being attached by its beak to his galley—for it is a shellfish. And he was astonished besides, not without good reason, that once it was brought into the boat it no longer had the strength it had outside. A citizen of Cyzicus once gained a reputation as a good mathematician for having learned the ways of the hedgehog.[44]

Its den has openings in various places, facing various winds; and foreseeing the coming wind, it goes and stops up the hole on that wind's side. Noticing this, the citizen would bring his city predictions of which wind was going to blow. The chameleon takes the color of the place where it sits; but the octopus gives itself whatever color it pleases, as occasion requires, to hide from what it fears and catch what it seeks. In the chameleon it is a change it undergoes; in the octopus it is a change it makes.

We have some changes of color in fright, anger, shame and other passions that alter the complexion of our face; but that is the effect of something we undergo, as with the chameleon. Jaundice can certainly make us turn yellow, but that is not at the disposal of our will. Now these effects we recognize in other animals, greater than ours, testify to some more excellent faculty in them that is hidden from us; as are, very likely, many other characteristics and powers of theirs, no sign of which ever reaches us.

Of all the predictions of times past, the oldest and most certain were those drawn from the flight of birds. We have nothing like it, nothing so wonderful. That rule, that order in the beating of their wings, from which people draw inferences about things to come, must surely be guided to so noble an operation by some excellent means. For it is merely playing with words to go attributing this great effect to some natural ordering, without intelligence, consent and reasoning in whatever produces it; and it is a plainly false opinion.

That this is so: the torpedo fish has this property, that it not only numbs the limbs that touch it, but also, through nets and seines, transmits a numbing heaviness to the hands of those who stir and handle it. Indeed they say further that if you pour water on it, you feel this sensation creeping up-

44 Cyzicus was a Greek city on the Sea of Marmara.

FRENCH

iusques à la main, et endort l'attouchement au trauers de l'eau. Cette force est merueilleuse: mais elle n'est pas inutile à la torpille: elle la sent et s'en sert; de maniere que pour attraper la proye qu'elle queste, on la void se tapir soubs le limon, afin que les autres poissons se coulans par dessus, frappez et endormis de cette sienne froideur, tombent en sa puissance.

Les gruës, les arondeles, et autres oyseaux passagers, changeans de demeure selon les saisons de l'an, montrent assez la cognoissance qu'elles ont de leur faculté diuinatrice, et la mettent en vsage.

2.12.59 Les chasseurs nous asseurent, que pour choisir d'vn nombre de petits chiens, celuy qu'on doit conseruer pour le meilleur, il ne faut que mettre la mere au propre de le choisir elle mesme; comme si on les emporte hors de leur giste, le premier qu'elle y rapportera, sera tousiours le meilleur: ou bien si on fait semblant d'entourner de feu le giste, de toutes parts, celuy des petits, au secours duquel elle courra premierement. Par où il appert qu'elles ont vn vsage de prognostique que nous n'auons pas: ou qu'elles ont quelque vertu à iuger de leurs petits, autre et plus viue que la nostre.

2.12.60 La maniere de naistre, d'engendrer, nourrir, agir, mouuoir, viure et mourir des bestes, estant si voisine de la nostre, tout ce que nous retranchons de leurs causes motrices, et que nous adioustons à nostre condition au dessus de la leur, cela ne peut aucunement partir du discours de nostre raison.

Pour reglement de nostre santé, les medecins nous proposent l'exemple du viure des bestes, et leur façon: car ce mot est de tout temps en la bouche du peuple:
Tenez chaults les pieds et la teste,
Au demeurant viuez en beste. La generation est la principale des actions naturelles: nous auons quelque disposition de membres, qui nous est plus propre à cela: toutesfois ils nous ordonnent de nous ranger à l'assiette et disposition brutale, comme plus effectuelle: *More ferarum,*
Quadrupedúmque magis ritu, plerumque putantur
Concipere vxores: quia sic loca sumere possunt,
Pectoribus positis, sublatis semina lumbis. Et reiettent comme nuisibles ces mouuements indiscrets, et insolents, que les femmes y ont meslé de leur creu; les ramenant à l'exemple et vsage des bestes de leur sexe, plus modeste et rassis.

ENGLISH

ward to your hand, numbing your touch through the water. This power is marvelous; but it is not useless to the torpedo. It feels it and makes use of it, so that to catch the prey it is after, it can be seen lurking under the mud, so that the other fish gliding over it, struck and numbed by this cold of its own, fall into its power.[45]

Cranes, swallows and other birds of passage, changing their abode with the seasons of the year, show plainly enough that they know they have this power of divination, and they put it to use.

Hunters assure us that to choose, out of a litter of puppies, the one that should be kept as the best, you need only let the mother choose it herself. Thus if you carry them out of their bed, the first one she brings back will always be the best; or else, if you pretend to surround the bed with fire on all sides, it will be the one she runs to rescue first. From which it appears that they have a use of prognostication that we lack, or else some power of judging their young that is different from ours and keener.

Since the way beasts are born, breed, feed, act, move, live and die is so close to our own, whatever we strip away from their motive causes and add to our own condition above theirs cannot possibly arise from any reasoning of our reason.

For the regulation of our health, doctors put before us the example of the way beasts live and their manner; for this saying has always been on the lips of the people: *Keep your feet and your head warm,*
For the rest, live like a beast. Generation is the chief of the natural actions. We have a certain arrangement of limbs that is better suited to us for it; yet they order us to adopt the posture and position of the brutes, as more effective: *In the manner of wild beasts,*
And rather in the fashion of four-footed creatures, wives are generally thought
To conceive: because so the seeds can reach their place, With breasts lowered and loins raised. And they reject as harmful those indiscreet and immodest movements that women have added of their own invention, bringing them back to the example and prac-

45 The torpedo is the electric ray.

FRENCH	ENGLISH
	tice of the beasts of their sex, which are more modest and sedate.
Nam mulier prohibet se concipere atque repugnat, *Clunibus ipse viri Venerem si læta retractet,* *Atque exossato ciet omni pectore fluctus.* *Eijcit enim sulci recta regione viáque* *Vomerem, atque locis auertit seminis ictum.*	*For a woman prevents herself from conceiving and fights against it* *If in her delight she thrusts back against the man with her buttocks* *And stirs up waves with her whole body gone limp.* *For she throws the plowshare out of the straight line and path* *Of the furrow, and turns the stroke of the seed away from its place.*

THE VIRTUES OF ANIMALS

Animals show justice, friendship, gratitude, fidelity and even religion.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
2.12.61	Si c'est iustice de rendre à chacun ce qui luy est deu, les bestes qui seruent, ayment et deffendent leurs bienfaicteurs, et qui poursuyuent et outragent les estrangers et ceux qui les offencent, elles representent en cela quelque air de nostre iustice: comme aussi en conseruant vne equalité tres-equitable en la dispensation de leurs biens à leurs petits. Quant à l'amitié, elles l'ont sans comparaison plus viue et plus constante, que n'ont pas les hommes. Hyrcanus le chien du Roy Lysimachus, son maistre mort, demeura obstiné sus son lict, sans vouloir boire ne manger: et le iour qu'on en brusla le corps, il print sa course, et se ietta dans le feu, où il fut bruslé.	If justice is giving each his due, then the beasts that serve, love and defend their benefactors, and that chase and attack strangers and those who harm them, show in this something of the look of our justice; as they also do in keeping a most fair equality in sharing out their goods among their young. As for friendship, theirs is incomparably keener and more constant than that of men. Hyrcanus, the dog of King Lysimachus, when his master died, stayed stubbornly on his bed, refusing to eat or drink; and on the day the body was burned, he took a run and threw himself into the fire, where he was burned.
	Comme fit aussi le chien d'vn nommé Pyrrhus; car il ne bougea de dessus le lict de son maistre, depuis qu'il fut mort: et quand on l'emporta, il se laissa enleuer quant et luy, et finalement se lança dans le buscher où on brusloit le corps de son maistre.	So too did the dog of a certain Pyrrhus. It did not stir from its master's bed from the time he died, and when he was carried out it let itself be lifted along with him, and finally leaped onto the pyre on which its master's body was being burned.
2.12.62	Il y a certaines inclinations d'affection, qui naissent quelquefois en nous, sans le conseil de la raison, qui viennent d'vne temerité, fortuite, que d'autres nomment sympathie: les bestes en sont capables comme nous. Nous voyons les cheuaux prendre certaine accointance des vns aux autres, iusques à nous mettre en peine pour les faire viure ou voyager separément. On les void appliquer leur affection à certain poil de leurs compagnons, comme à certain visage: et où ils le rencontrent, s'y ioindre incontinent auec feste et demonstration de bienueillance; et prendre quelque autre forme à contre-cœur et en haine. Les animaux ont choix comme nous, en leurs amours, et font quelque triage de leur femelles.	There are certain inclinations of affection that sometimes arise in us without the counsel of reason, coming from a chance rashness that others call sympathy: beasts are capable of them just as we are. We see horses form a kind of attachment to one another, to the point that we have trouble making them live or travel apart. We see them fix their affection on a certain coat in their companions, as on a certain face; and wherever they meet it, they join it at once with rejoicing and signs of goodwill, while taking some other form in dislike and hatred. Animals make choices as we do in their loves, and do some sorting among their females.

FRENCH	ENGLISH
Ils ne sont pas exempts de nos ialousies et d'enuies extremes et irreconciliables.	They are not free of our jealousies, or of extreme and irreconcilable envy.
2.12.63 Les cupiditez sont ou naturelles et necessaires, comme le boire et le manger; ou naturelles et non necessaires, comme l'accointance des femelles; ou elles ne sont ny naturelles ny necessaires: de cette derniere sorte sont quasi toutes celles des hommes: elles sont toutes superfluës et artificielles. Car c'est merueille combien peu il faut à Nature pour se contenter, combien peu elle nous a laissé à desirer. Les apprests à nos cuisines ne touchent pas son ordonnance. Les Stoiciens disent qu'vn homme auroit dequoy se substanter d'vne oliue par iour. La delicatesse de nos vins, n'est pas de sa leçon, ny la recharge que nous adioustons aux appetits amoureux: *Neque illa / Magno prognatum deposcit consule cunnum.*	Desires are either natural and necessary, like drinking and eating; or natural and not necessary, like intercourse with females; or neither natural nor necessary. Of this last kind are nearly all the desires of men: they are all superfluous and artificial. For it is a wonder how little Nature needs to be content, how little she has left us to desire. The preparations of our kitchens are no part of her ordinance. The Stoics say that a man could sustain himself on one olive a day. The delicacy of our wines is not of her teaching, nor the extra spice we add to our amorous appetites: *Nor does she / Demand private parts descended from a great consul.*
2.12.64 Ces cupiditez estrangeres, que l'ignorance du bien, et vne fauce opinion ont coulées en nous, sont en si grand nombre, qu'elles chassent presque toutes les naturelles. Ny plus ny moins que si en vne cité, il y auoit si grand nombre d'estrangers, qu'ils en missent hors les naturels habitans, ou esteignissent leur authorité et puissance ancienne, l'vsurpant entierement, et s'en saisissant.	These foreign desires, which ignorance of the good and false opinion have slipped into us, are so numerous that they drive out almost all the natural ones. It is just as if in a city there were so many foreigners that they put out the native inhabitants, or extinguished their ancient authority and power, usurping it entirely and seizing it for themselves.
2.12.65 Les animaux sont beaucoup plus reglez que nous ne sommes, et se contiennent auec plus de moderation soubs les limites que Nature nous a prescripts. Mais non pas si exactement, qu'ils n'ayent encore quelque conuenance à nostre desbauche. Et tout ainsi comme il s'est trouué des desirs furieux, qui ont poussé les hommes à l'amour des bestes, elles se trouuent aussi par fois esprises de nostre amour, et reçoiuent des affections monstrueuses d'vne espece à autre.	Animals are much better regulated than we are, and keep with more moderation within the limits that Nature has prescribed for us. But not so strictly that they do not still have something in common with our debauchery. And just as there have been furious desires that drove men to love beasts, so beasts too are sometimes smitten with love for us, and conceive monstrous affections from one species to another.
Tesmoin l'elephant corriual d'Aristophanes le grammairien, en l'amour d'vne ieune bouquetiere en la ville d'Alexandrie, qui ne luy cedoit en rien aux offices d'vn poursuyuant bien passionné: car se promenant par le marché, où lon vendoit des fruicts, il en prenoit auec sa trompe, et les luy portoit: il ne la perdoit de veuë, que le moins qu'il luy estoit possible; et luy mettoit quelquefois la trompe dans le sein par dessoubs son collet, et luy tastoit les tettins. Ils recitent aussi d'vn dragon amoureux d'vne fille; et d'vne oye esprise de l'amour d'vn enfant, en la ville d'Asope; et d'vn belier seruiteur de la menestriere Glaucia: et il se void tous les iours des magots furieusement espris de l'amour des femmes.	Witness the elephant that was the rival of Aristophanes the grammarian for the love of a young flower girl in the city of Alexandria, and yielded to him in nothing in the attentions of an ardent suitor. Walking through the market where fruit was sold, he would take some with his trunk and bring it to her; he let her out of his sight as little as he possibly could; and sometimes he would put his trunk into her bosom under her collar and feel her breasts. They also tell of a serpent in love with a girl; of a goose enamored of a boy in the town of Asopus; and of a ram that courted the minstrel Glaucia; and every day we see apes furiously in love with women.[46]

FRENCH

On void aussi certains animaux s'addonner à l'amour des masles de leur sexe. Oppianus et autres recitent quelques exemples, pour montrer la reuerence que les bestes en leurs mariages portent à la parenté; mais l'experience nous fait bien souuent voir le contraire; *Nec habetur turpe iuuencæ*
Ferre patrem tergo; fit equo sua filia coniux;
Quásque creauit, init pecudes caper; ipsáque cuius
Semine concepta est, ex illo concipit ales.

2.12.66 De subtilité malitieuse, en est-il vne plus expresse que celle du mulet du philosophe Thales? lequel passant au trauers d'vne riuiere chargé de sel, et de fortune y estant bronché, si que les sacs qu'il portoit en furent tous mouillez, s'estant apperçeu que le sel fondu par ce moyen, luy auoit rendu sa charge plus legere, ne failloit iamais aussi tost qu'il rencontroit quelque ruisseau, de se plonger dedans auec sa charge, iusques à ce que son maistre descouurant sa malice, ordonna qu'on le chargeast de laine, à quoy se trouuant mesconté, il cessa de plus vser de cette finesse.

2.12.67 Il y en a plusieurs qui representent naïfuement le visage de nostre auarice; car on leur void vn soin extreme de surprendre tout ce qu'elles peuuent, et de le curieusement cacher, quoy qu'elles n'en tirent point vsage. Quant à la mesnagerie, elles nous surpassent non seulement en cette preuoyance d'amasser et espargner pour le temps à venir, mais elles ont encore beaucoup de parties de la science, qui y est necessaire. Les fourmis estandent au dehors de l'aire leurs grains et semences pour les esuenter, refreschir et secher, quand ils voyent qu'ils commencent à se moisir et à sentir le rance, de peur qu'ils ne se corrompent et pourrissent.

Mais la caution et preuention dont ils vsent à ronger le grain de froment, surpasse toute imagination de prudence humaine. Par ce que le froment ne demeure pas tousiours sec ny sain, ains s'amolit, se resoult et destrempe comme en laict, s'acheminant à germer et produire: de peur qu'il ne deuienne semence, et perde sa nature et proprieté de magasin pour leur nourriture, ils rongent le bout, par où le germe a coustume de sortir.

ENGLISH

We also see certain animals giving themselves to the love of males of their own sex. Oppian and others report some examples to show the respect that beasts pay to kinship in their matings; but experience very often shows us the contrary: *It is not held shameful for a heifer*
To bear her father on her back; the horse takes his own daughter as mate;
The goat mounts the flock he has fathered; and the bird
Conceives by the very one from whose seed she was conceived.[47]

Of malicious cunning, is there a clearer example than that of the mule of the philosopher Thales? Crossing a river loaded with salt, it happened to stumble, so that the sacks it carried were all soaked. Noticing that the salt, melted in this way, had made its load lighter, it never failed, as soon as it came to a stream, to plunge in with its load, until its master, discovering its trick, ordered it to be loaded with wool. Finding its reckoning wrong, it gave up the trick.

There are many of them that show to the life the face of our avarice; for we see in them an extreme care to snatch up everything they can and hide it carefully, though they make no use of it. As for husbandry, they surpass us not only in this foresight of gathering and saving for the time to come, but they also have many parts of the knowledge it requires. Ants spread their grain and seeds outside their storehouse to air, cool and dry them, when they see them beginning to mold and smell rancid, for fear they spoil and rot.

But the caution and foresight they show in gnawing the grain of wheat surpasses anything human prudence can imagine. Wheat does not always stay dry and sound, but softens, dissolves and turns as if to milk, on its way to sprouting and growing; so, for fear it may become seed and lose its nature and quality as a store for their food, they gnaw off the end from which the germ usually comes out.

46 Aristophanes of Byzantium, Alexandrian scholar of the 3rd–2nd century BC; the story comes from Plutarch.
47 Oppian, Greek poet of the 2nd century AD, author of poems on hunting and fishing.

HUMAN WAR, ANIMAL WAR

War, the proudest human action, rises from trivial causes and can be routed by bees.

FRENCH

2.12.68 Quant à la guerre, qui est la plus grande et pompeuse des actions humaines, ie sçaurois volontiers, si nous nous en voulons seruir pour argument de quelque prerogatiue, ou au rebours pour tesmoignage de nostre imbecillité et imperfection: comme de vray, la science de nous entre-deffaire et entretuer, de ruiner et perdre nostre propre espece, il semble qu'elle n'a pas beaucoup dequoy se faire desirer aux bestes qui ne l'ont pas. Quando leoni / Fortior eripuit vitam leo?

quo nemore vnquam
Expirauit aper maioris dentibus apri? *Mais elles n'en sont pas vniuersellement exemptes pourtant: tesmoin les furieuses rencontres des mouches à miel, et les entreprinses des Princes des deux armées contraires:* Sæpe duobus
Regibus incessit magno discordia motu;
Continuóque animos vulgi et trepidantia bello
Corda licet longé præsciscere. Ie ne voy iamais cette diuine description, qu'il ne m'y semble lire peinte l'ineptie et vanité humaine.

Car ces mouuemens guerriers, qui nous rauissent de leur horreur et espouuantement, cette tempeste de sons et de cris: *Fulgur ibi ad cælum se tollit, totáque circum*
Ære renidescit tellus, subtèrque virûm vi
Excitur pedibus sonitus, clamoréque montes
Icti reiectant voces ad sidera mundi. cette effroyable ordonnance de tant de milliers d'hommes armez, tant de fureur, d'ardeur, et de courage, il est plaisant à considerer par combien vaines occasions elle est agitée, et par combien legeres occasions esteinte. *Paridis propter narratur amorem*
Græcia Barbariæ diro collisa duello. Toute l'Asie se perdit et se consomma en guerres pour le macquerellage de Paris.

L'enuie d'vn seul homme, vn despit, vn plaisir, vne ialousie domestique, causes qui ne deuroient pas esmouuoir deux harangeres à s'esgratigner, c'est l'ame et le mouuement de tout ce grand trouble. Voulons nous en croire ceux mesmes qui en sont les principaux autheurs

ENGLISH

As for war, which is the greatest and most pompous of human actions, I should like to know whether we mean to use it as an argument for some prerogative of ours, or, on the contrary, as evidence of our feebleness and imperfection. For indeed the science of destroying and killing one another, of ruining and wrecking our own species, does not seem to have much to make it desirable to the beasts that lack it. When has a stronger lion / ever taken a lion's life?[48]

In what forest
did a boar ever breathe his last under the tusks of a bigger boar? *But they are not universally exempt from it, all the same: witness the furious clashes of honeybees, and the enterprises of the princes of the two opposing armies:* Often between two
kings discord arises with great upheaval;
and at once you may foresee from afar the passions of the crowd
and their hearts throbbing for war. I never see this divine description without seeming to read in it a painting of human folly and vanity.

For these warlike movements that carry us away with their horror and dread, this storm of sounds and cries: *There the flash rises to the sky, and all the earth around*
gleams with bronze, and beneath, by the might of men, a sound is raised by their feet, and the mountains, struck by the clamor,
hurl the voices back to the stars of heaven. this fearful array of so many thousands of armed men, so much fury, ardor and courage—it is amusing to consider by what vain occasions it is stirred up, and by what slight occasions it is put out. *For the love of Paris, so the story goes,*
Greece clashed with the barbarians in dire war. All Asia was lost and consumed in wars for Paris's pandering.

The envy of a single man, a grudge, a pleasure, a domestic jealousy—causes that should not move two fishwives to scratch each other—these are the soul and the motive force of all this great turmoil. Shall we believe the very men who are its princip-

48 Juvenal, Satires XV.

FRENCH

et motifs? Oyons le plus grand, le plus victorieux Empereur, et le plus puissant qui fust onques, se iouant et mettant en risée tres-plaisamment et tres-ingenieusement, plusieurs batailles hazardées et par mer et par terre, le sang et la vie de cinq cens mille hommes qui suiuirent sa fortune, et les forces et richesses des deux parties du monde espuisées pour le seruice de ses entreprinses: Quòd futuit Glaphyran Antonius, hanc mihi pœnam / Fuluia constituit, se quoque vti futuam.

/ Fuluiam ego vt futuam! quid si me Manius oret
Pædicem, faciam? non puto, si sapiam.
Aut futue, aut pugnemus, ait: quid si mihi vita
Charior est ipsa mentula? signa canant. *I'vse en liberté de conscience de mon Latin, auecq le congé, que vous m'en auez donné. Or ce grand corps à tant de visages et de mouuemens, qui semblent menasser le ciel et la terre:* Quàm multi Lybico
voluuntur marmore fluctus,
Sæuus vbi Orion hybernis conditur vndis,
Vel cùm sole nouo densæ torrentur aristæ,
Aut Hermi campo, aut Lyciæ flauentibus aruis,
Scuta sonant, pulsùque pedum tremit excita tellus: ce furieux monstre, à tant de bras et à tant de testes, c'est tousiours l'homme foyble, calamiteux, et miserable.

Ce n'est qu'vne formilliere esmeuë et eschaufée, *It nigrum campis agmen:* vn souffle de vent contraire, le croassement d'vn vol de corbeaux, le faux pas d'vn cheual, le passage fortuite d'vn aigle, vn songe, vne voix, vn signe, vne brouée matiniere, suffisent à le renuerser et porter par terre.

Donnez luy seulement d'vn rayon de soleil par le visage, le voyla fondu et esuanouy: qu'on luy esuente seulement vn peu de poussiere aux yeux, comme aux mouches à miel de nostre Poëte, voyla toutes nos enseignes, nos legions, et le grand Pompeius mesmes à leur teste, rompu et fracassé: car ce fut luy, ce me semble, que Sertorius battit en Espaigne à tout ces belles armes, qui ont aussi seruy à Eumenes contre Antigonus, à Surena contre Crassus: *Hi motus animorum, atque hæc certamina tanta /*

ENGLISH

al authors and movers? Let us hear the greatest, the most victorious and the most powerful emperor who ever lived, joking and making very amusing and very witty fun of many battles risked by sea and by land, of the blood and lives of five hundred thousand men who followed his fortune, and of the forces and riches of two parts of the world exhausted in the service of his enterprises: Because Antony is screwing Glaphyra, Fulvia has set me this penalty: / that I must screw her too.[49]

/ I, screw Fulvia! What if Manius begged me
to sodomize him—would I do it? Not, I think, if I had any sense.
"Either screw me or let us fight," she says. What if dearer to me than life
is my prick itself? Let the trumpets sound! *I use my Latin with freedom of conscience, by the leave you have given me. Now this great body with so many faces and movements, which seem to threaten heaven and earth:* As many as the waves that roll on the Libyan sea
when fierce Orion sets in the winter waves,
or as the thick ears of corn scorched by the new sun
on the plain of Hermus or in the yellow fields of Lycia,
so the shields clang, and the earth trembles,
roused by the tramp of feet: this furious monster with so many arms and so many heads is still, always, man—feeble, calamitous and wretched.[50]

It is only an anthill stirred up and heated: *The black column moves across the plains:* a gust of contrary wind, the croaking of a flight of crows, a horse's stumble, the chance passing of an eagle, a dream, a voice, a sign, a morning mist are enough to overturn it and bring it to the ground.[51]

Just strike it in the face with a ray of sunlight, and there it is, melted away and vanished. Just blow a little dust in its eyes, as with the honeybees of our Poet, and there are all our standards, our legions, and even the great Pompey at their head, broken and shattered. For it was he, I think, whom Sertorius beat in Spain with those fine weapons, which also served Eumenes against Antigonus and

49 An epigram by the emperor Augustus, preserved by Martial (XI.20); Glaphyra was Antony's mistress and Fulvia his wife.
50 Montaigne is addressing the princess, probably Margaret of Valois, for whom this essay is said to have been written; the second quotation is Virgil, Aeneid VII.
51 Virgil, Aeneid IV, describing ants.

FRENCH

Pulueris exigui iactu compressa quiescent. Qu'on descouple mesmes de noz mouches apres, elles auront et la force et le courage de le dissiper.

De fresche memoire, les Portugais assiegeans la ville de Tamly, au territoire de Xiatine, les habitans d'icelle porterent sur la muraille quantité de ruches, dequoy ils sont riches. Et auec du feu chasserent les abeilles si viuement sur leurs ennemis, qu'ils abandonnerent leur entreprinse, ne pouuans soustenir leurs assauts et piqueures. Ainsi demeura la victoire et liberté de leur ville, à ce nouueau secours: auec telle fortune, qu'au retour du combat, il ne s'en trouua vne seule à dire. Les ames des Empereurs et des sauatiers sont iettées à mesme moule. Considerant l'importance des actions des Princes et leur poix, nous nous persuadons qu'elles soyent produictes par quelques causes aussi poisantes et importantes.

Nous nous trompons: ils sont menez et ramenez en leurs mouuemens, par les mesmes ressors, que nous sommes aux nostres. La mesme raison qui nous fait tanser auec vn voisin, dresse entre les Princes vne guerre: la mesme raison qui nous fait fouëtter vn laquais, tombant en vn Roy, luy fait ruiner vne prouince. Ils veulent aussi legerement que nous, mais ils peuuent plus. Pareils appetits agitent vn ciron et vn elephant.

2.12.69 Quant à la fidelité, il n'est animal au monde traistre au prix de l'homme. Nos histoires racontent la vifue poursuitte que certains chiens ont faict de la mort de leurs maistres. Le Roy Pyrrhus ayant rencontré vn chien qui gardoit vn homme mort, et ayant entendu qu'il y auoit trois iours qu'il faisoit cet office, commanda qu'on enterrast ce corps, et mena ce chien quant et luy. Vn iour qu'il assistoit aux montres generales de son armee, ce chien apperceuant les meurtriers de son maistre, leur courut sus, auec grans aboys et aspreté de courroux, et par ce premier indice achemina la vengeance de ce meurtre, qui en fut faicte bien tost apres par la voye de la iustice.

Autant en fit le chien du sage Hesiode, ayant conuaincu les enfans de Ganistor Naupactien, du meurtre commis

ENGLISH

Surena against Crassus: *These passions of the soul and these great contests / will be checked and stilled by the throwing of a little dust.* Even let some of our bees loose on it afterwards: they will have the strength and the courage to scatter it.[52]

Within recent memory, when the Portuguese were besieging the town of Tamly, in the territory of Xiatine, its inhabitants brought a quantity of beehives onto the wall, for they have plenty of them. And with fire they drove the bees so fiercely onto their enemies that the Portuguese gave up their enterprise, unable to withstand their attacks and stings. Thus the victory and the freedom of their town were owed to this new kind of help—with such good fortune that on their return from the fight not a single bee was missing. The souls of emperors and of cobblers are cast in the same mold. Considering the importance and weight of the actions of princes, we persuade ourselves that they must be produced by causes equally weighty and important.[53]

We are mistaken. They are pushed this way and that in their movements by the same springs as we are in ours. The same reason that makes us quarrel with a neighbor sets off a war between princes; the same reason that makes us whip a lackey, when it falls on a king, makes him ruin a province. Their will is as light as ours, but their power is greater. The same appetites stir a mite and an elephant.

As for fidelity, there is no animal in the world as treacherous as man. Our histories tell of the eager pursuit that certain dogs have made to avenge their masters' deaths. King Pyrrhus, having come upon a dog guarding a dead man, and hearing that it had been doing this duty for three days, ordered the body to be buried and took the dog along with him. One day, when he was attending the general review of his army, the dog spotted its master's murderers and ran at them with loud barking and fierce anger; and by this first clue it set in motion the vengeance for the murder, which was carried out soon afterwards by way of justice.

So too did the dog of the wise Hesiod, which convicted the sons of Ganyctor of Naupactus of the

52 Sertorius, Roman rebel general in Spain; Eumenes and Antigonus, successors of Alexander; Surena, the Parthian general who defeated Crassus in 53 BC. The quotation is from Virgil, Georgics IV.
53 Montaigne took this episode from Simon Goulart's French version of a history of the Portuguese conquests in the East.

FRENCH

en la personne de son maistre. Vn autre chien estant à la garde d'vn temple à Athenes, ayant aperçeu vn larron sacrilege qui emportoit les plus beaux ioyaux, se mit à abbayer contre luy tant qu'il peut: mais les marguilliers ne s'estans point esueillez pour cela, il se mit à suyure, et le iour estant venu, se tint vn peu plus esloigné de luy, sans le perdre iamais de veuë: s'il luy offroit à manger, il n'en vouloit pas, et aux autres passans qu'il rencontroit en son chemin, il leur faisoit feste de la queuë, et prenoit de leurs mains ce qu'ils luy donnoient à manger: si son larron s'arrestoit pour dormir, il s'arrestoit quant et quant au lieu mesmes.

La nouuelle de ce chien estant venuë aux marguilliers de cette eglise, ils se mirent à le suiure à la trace, s'enquerans des nouuelles du poil de ce chien, et en fin le rencontrerent en la ville de Cromyon, et le larron aussi, qu'ils ramenerent en la ville d'Athenes, où il fut puny. Et les iuges en recognoissance de ce bon office, ordonnerent du public certaine mesure de bled pour nourrir le chien, et aux prestres d'en auoir soin. Plutarque tesmoigne cette histoire, comme chose tres-aueree et aduenue en son siecle.

ENGLISH

murder of its master. Another dog, guarding a temple in Athens, saw a sacrilegious thief carrying off the finest jewels and began to bark at him as loud as it could. But since the wardens did not wake up for all that, it began to follow him; and when day came, it kept a little farther off, without ever losing sight of him. If he offered it food, it would not take it; but to the other passers-by it met on the way it wagged its tail and took from their hands whatever they gave it to eat. If its thief stopped to sleep, it stopped at the same spot as well.

When news of this dog reached the wardens of that church, they set out to follow its track, asking for news of a dog of that color, and at last found it in the town of Cromyon, and the thief too, whom they brought back to the city of Athens, where he was punished. And the judges, in acknowledgment of this good service, ordered that a certain measure of grain be provided from public funds to feed the dog, and that the priests take care of it. Plutarch vouches for this story as a well-attested thing that happened in his own time.

ANDRODUS AND THE LION

A lion spares the slave who once pulled a splinter from its paw.

FRENCH

2.12.70 Quant à la gratitude, car il me semble que nous auons besoin de mettre ce mot en credit, ce seul exemple y suffira, qu'Appion recite comme en ayant esté luy mesme spectateur. Vn iour, dit-il, qu'on donnoit à Rome au peuple le plaisir du combat de plusieurs bestes estranges, et principalement de lyons de grandeur inusitee, il y en auoit vn entre autres, qui par son port furieux, par la force et grosseur de ses membres, et vn rugissement hautain et espouuantable, attiroit à soy la veuë de toute l'assistance. Entre les autres esclaues, qui furent presentez au peuple en ce combat des bestes, fut vn Androdus de Dace, qui estoit à vn Seigneur Romain, de qualité consulaire.

Ce lyon l'ayant apperceu de loing, s'arresta premierement tout court, comme estant entré en admiration, et puis s'approcha tout doucement d'vne façon molle et paisible, comme pour entrer en recognoissance auec luy. Cela faict, et s'estant asseuré de

ENGLISH

As for gratitude—for it seems to me we need to bring this word back into credit—this single example will suffice, which Apion reports as having witnessed himself. One day, he says, when the people in Rome were being given the pleasure of a fight among many strange beasts, chiefly lions of unusual size, there was one among them which, by its furious bearing, by the strength and size of its limbs, and by a proud and terrifying roar, drew the eyes of the whole audience. Among the other slaves brought before the people in this fight with the beasts was one Androdus, from Dacia, who belonged to a Roman lord of consular rank.[54]

This lion, seeing him from afar, first stopped short as if struck with wonder, and then came up very gently, in a soft and peaceful way, as if to recognize him. That done, and having made sure of what it was looking for, it began to wag its tail like

54 Apion, Greek grammarian of the 1st century AD; the story, told by Aulus Gellius, is that of the slave usually called Androclus or Androcles.

FRENCH

ce qu'il cherchoit, il commença à battre de la queuë à la mode des chiens qui flattent leur maistre, et à baiser, et lescher les mains et les cuisses de ce pauure miserable, tout transi d'effroy et hors de soy. Androdus ayant repris ses esprits par la benignité de ce lyon, et r'asseuré sa veuë pour le considerer et recognoistre: c'estoit vn singulier plaisir de voir les caresses, et les festes qu'ils s'entrefaisoient l'vn à l'autre.

Dequoy le peuple avant esleué des cris de ioye, l'Empereur fit appeller cet esclaue, pour entendre de luy le moyen d'vn si estrange euenement. Il luy recita vne histoire nouuelle et admirable. Mon maistre, dict-il, estant proconsul en Aphrique, ie fus contrainct par la cruauté et rigueur qu'il me tenoit, me faisant iournellement battre, me desrober de luy, et m'en fuir. Et pour me cacher seurement d'vn personnage ayant si grande authorité en la prouince, ie trouuay mon plus court, de gaigner les solitudes et les contrees sablonneuses et inhabitables de ce pays là, resolu, si le moyen de me nourrir venoit à me faillir, de trouuer quelque façon de me tuer moy-mesme.

Le soleil estant extrememement aspre sur le midy, et les chaleurs insupportables, ie m'embatis sur vne cauerne cachee et inaccessible, et me iettay dedans. Bien tost apres y suruint ce lyon, ayant vne patte sanglante et blessee, tout plaintif et gemissant des douleurs qu'il y souffroit: à son arriuee i'eu beaucoup de frayeur, mais luy me voyant mussé dans vn coing de sa loge, s'approcha tout doucement de moy, me presentant sa patte offencee, et me la montrant comme pour demander secours: ie luy ostay lors vn grand escot qu'il y auoit, et m'estant vn peu appriuoisé à luy, pressant sa playe en fis sortir l'ordure qui s'y amassoit, l'essuyay, et nettoyay le plus proprement que ie peux.

Luy se sentant allegé de son mal, et soulagé de cette douleur, se prit à reposer, et à dormir, ayant tousiours sa patte entre mes mains. De là en hors luy et moy vesquismes ensemble en cette cauerne trois ans entiers de mesmes viandes: car des bestes qu'il tuoit à sa chasse, il m'en apportoit les meilleurs endroits, que ie faisois cuire au soleil à faute de feu, et m'en nourrissois.

A la longue, m'estant ennuyé de cette vie brutale et sauuage, comme ce lyon estoit allé vn iour à sa queste accoustumee, ie partis de là, et à ma troisiesme iournee fus surpris par les soldats, qui me menerent d'Affrique en cette ville à mon maistre, lequel soudain me condamna à mort, et à estre abandonné aux bestes. Or à ce que ie voy

ENGLISH

dogs fawning on their master, and to kiss and lick the hands and thighs of this poor wretch, who was frozen with fright and beside himself. Androdus recovered his wits thanks to the lion's gentleness, and steadied his gaze enough to look at it and recognize it; and it was a singular pleasure to see the caresses and the welcome they gave each other.

When the people raised cries of joy at this, the Emperor had the slave called, to learn from him how so strange an event had come about. He told him a new and wonderful story. When my master was proconsul in Africa, he said, I was forced by the cruelty and harshness with which he treated me, having me beaten every day, to steal away from him and flee. And to hide myself safely from a personage of such great authority in the province, I found it quickest to make for the solitudes and the sandy, uninhabitable regions of that country, resolved, if the means of feeding myself should fail me, to find some way of killing myself.

The sun being extremely fierce around noon and the heat unbearable, I came upon a hidden, inaccessible cave and threw myself into it. Soon afterwards this lion arrived, with a bloody, wounded paw, all plaintive and moaning from the pain it was suffering. At its arrival I was very frightened; but seeing me hiding in a corner of its den, it came up to me very gently, holding out its injured paw and showing it to me as if asking for help. I then pulled out a large splinter that was in it, and having grown a little used to the lion, I pressed the wound and squeezed out the matter that had collected in it, wiped it, and cleaned it as neatly as I could.

Feeling relieved of its trouble and eased of that pain, it lay down to rest and sleep, with its paw still in my hands. From then on, the lion and I lived together in that cave for three whole years on the same food; for of the beasts it killed in its hunting it brought me the best parts, which I cooked in the sun for lack of fire, and I lived on them.

In the end, having grown weary of this brutish and wild life, one day when the lion had gone off on its usual hunt, I left; and on my third day's march I was caught by soldiers, who brought me from Africa to this city, to my master, who at once condemned me to death and to be thrown to the

FRENCH

ce lyon fut aussi pris bien tost apres, qui m'a à cette heure voulu recompenser du bien-fait et guerison qu'il auoit reçeu de moy. Voyla l'histoire qu'Androdus recita à l'Empereur, laquelle il fit aussi entendre de main à main au peuple.

Parquoy à la requeste de tous il fut mis en liberté, et absous de cette condamnation, et par ordonnance du peuple luy fut faict present de ce lyon. Nous voyions depuis, dit Appion, Androdus conduisant ce lyon à tout vne petite laisse, se promenant par les tauernes à Rome, receuoir l'argent qu'on luy donnoit: le lyon se laisser couurir des fleurs qu'on luy iettoit, et chacun dire en les rencontrant: Voyla le lyon hoste de l'homme, voyla l'homme medecin du lyon.

2.12.71 Nous pleurons souuent la perte des bestes que nous aymons, aussi font elles la nostre. *Pòst, bellator equus, positis insignibus, Æthon / It lacrymans, guttisque humectat grandibus ora.*

2.12.72 Comme aucunes de nos nations ont les femmes en commun, aucunes à chacun la sienne: cela ne se voit-il pas aussi entre les bestes, et des mariages mieux gardez que les nostres?

2.12.73 Quant à la societé et confederation qu'elles dressent entre elles pour se liguer ensemble, et s'entresecourir, il se voit des bœufs, des porceaux, et autres animaux, qu'au cry de celuy que vous offencez, toute la trouppe accourt à son aide, et se ralie pour sa deffence. L'escare, quand il a aualé l'ameçon du pescheur, ses compagnons s'assemblent en foule autour de luy, et rongent la ligne: et si d'auenture il y en a vn, qui ait donné dedans la nasse, les autres luy baillent la queuë par dehors, et luy la serre tant qu'il peut à belles dents: ils le tirent ainsin au dehors et l'entrainent.

Les barbiers, quand l'vn de leurs compagnons est engagé, mettent la ligne contre leur dos, dressant vne espine qu'ils ont dentelee comme vne scie, à tout laquelle ils la scient et coupent.

2.12.74 Quant aux particuliers offices, que nous tirons l'vn de l'autre, pour le seruice de la vie, il s'en void plusieurs pareils exemples parmy elles. Ils tiennent que la balaine ne marche iamais qu'elle n'ait au deuant d'elle vn petit poisson semblable au goujon de mer, qui s'appelle pour cela la guide: la baleine le suit, se laissant mener et tourner aussi facilement, que le timon fait retourner la

ENGLISH

beasts. Now, as far as I can see, this lion was also caught soon afterwards, and has now wished to repay me for the kindness and the cure it had received from me. That is the story Androdus told the Emperor, which he also had passed along from hand to hand to the people.

So at everyone's request he was set free and absolved of his sentence, and by order of the people the lion was given to him as a present. Afterwards, says Apion, we saw Androdus leading this lion on a little leash, going round the taverns in Rome and receiving the money people gave him, the lion letting itself be covered with the flowers they threw at it, and everyone saying when they met them: "There is the lion, the man's host; there is the man, the lion's physician."

We often weep for the loss of the beasts we love; so do they for ours. *Then came his warhorse Aethon, his trappings laid aside, / walking in tears, and wetting his face with great drops.*

Just as some of our nations hold their women in common, and in others each man has his own, is this not also seen among beasts—and marriages better kept than ours?

As for the society and confederation they form among themselves, to league together and help one another, we see oxen, pigs and other animals where, at the cry of the one you are hurting, the whole herd runs to its aid and rallies to defend it. When the parrot fish has swallowed the fisherman's hook, its companions gather in a crowd around it and gnaw through the line; and if by chance one of them has got into the trap, the others hold out their tails to it from outside, and it grips them with its teeth as hard as it can: in this way they pull it out and drag it away.

The fish called barbers, when one of their companions is caught, set the line against their back, raising a spine they have, toothed like a saw, with which they saw through it and cut it.

As for the particular services we get from one another for the needs of life, many similar examples are seen among them. They hold that the whale never moves without having in front of it a little fish like the sea gudgeon, which for that reason is called the guide. The whale follows it, letting itself

FRENCH

nauire: et en recompense aussi, au lieu que toute autre chose, soit beste ou vaisseau, qui entre dans l'horrible chaos de la bouche de ce monstre, est incontinent perdu et englouty, ce petit poisson s'y retire en toute seureté, et y dort, et pendant son sommeil la baleine ne bouge: mais aussi tost qu'il sort, elle se met à le suyure sans cesse: et si de fortune elle l'escarte, elle va errant çà et là, et souuent se froissant contre les rochers, comme vn vaisseau qui n'a point de gouuernail.

Ce que Plutarque tesmoigne auoir veu en l'isle d'Anticyre. Il y a vne pareille societé entre le petit oyseau qu'on nomme le roytelet, et le crocodile: le roytelet sert de sentinelle à ce grand animal: et si l'ichneumon son ennemy s'approche pour le combattre, ce petit oyseau, de peur qu'il ne le surprenne endormy, va de son chant et à coup de bec l'esueillant, et l'aduertissant de son danger.

Il vit des demeurans de ce monstre, qui le reçoit familierement en sa bouche, et luy permet de becqueter dans ses machoueres, et entre ses dents, et y recueillir les morceaux de chair qui y sont demeurez: et s'il veut fermer la bouche, il l'aduertit premierement d'en sortir en la serrant peu à peu sans l'estreindre et l'offencer.

Cette coquille qu'on nomme la nacre, vit aussi ainsin auec le pinnothere, qui est vn petit animal de la sorte d'vn cancre, luy seruant d'huissier et de portier assis à l'ouuerture de cette coquille, qu'il tient continuellement entrebaaillee et ouuerte, iusques à ce qu'il y voye entrer quelque petit poisson propre à leur prise: car lors il entre dans la nacre, et luy va pinsant la chair viue, et la contraint de fermer sa coquille: lors eux deux ensemble mangent la proye enfermee dans leur fort. En la maniere de viure des tuns, on y remarque vne singuliere science des trois parties de la mathematique.

Quant à l'astrologie, ils l'enseignent à l'homme: car ils s'arrestent au lieu où le solstice d'hyuer les surprend, et n'en bougent iusques à l'equinoxe ensuyuant: voyla pourquoy Aristote mesme leur concede volontiers cette science. Quant à la geometrie et arithmetique, ils font tousiours leur bande de figure cubique, carree en tout sens, et en dressent vn corps de bataillon, solide, clos, et enuironné tout à l'entour, à six faces toutes esgalles: puis nagent en cette ordonnance carree, autant large derriere que deuant, de façon que qui en void et compte vn rang, il peut aisément nombrer toute la trouppe, d'autant que

ENGLISH

be led and turned as easily as the rudder turns the ship. And in return, whereas everything else, beast or vessel, that enters the horrible chaos of this monster's mouth is at once lost and swallowed up, this little fish takes refuge there in complete safety and sleeps there; and while it sleeps the whale does not stir. But as soon as it comes out, the whale starts following it without stopping; and if by chance it loses it, it wanders here and there, often crashing against the rocks, like a ship without a rudder.

Plutarch testifies that he saw this on the island of Anticyra. There is a similar partnership between the little bird called the wren and the crocodile. The wren serves as sentinel to this great animal; and if its enemy the ichneumon approaches to fight it, this little bird, for fear it may catch the crocodile asleep, wakes it with its song and with pecks of its beak, warning it of its danger.

The bird lives on this monster's leftovers; the crocodile receives it familiarly into its mouth and lets it peck about in its jaws and between its teeth, gathering the bits of flesh left there. And when it wants to close its mouth, it first warns the bird to come out by closing it little by little, without squeezing or hurting it.

The shellfish called the pinna also lives in this way with the pinnotheres, a little creature of the crab kind, which serves it as usher and doorkeeper, sitting at the opening of the shell, which it keeps continually ajar and open until it sees some little fish come in that is fit for their catch. Then it goes into the pinna and pinches its living flesh, forcing it to close its shell; and then the two of them together eat the prey shut up in their fortress. In the way tuna live, one observes a singular knowledge of the three parts of mathematics.

As for astronomy, they teach it to man: for they stop at the place where the winter solstice overtakes them and do not stir from it until the following equinox. That is why Aristotle himself readily grants them this science. As for geometry and arithmetic, they always form their school in a cubic figure, square in every direction, and make of it a solid battalion, closed and enclosed all around, with six equal faces. Then they swim in this square formation, as wide behind as in front, so that whoever sees and counts one rank can easily number the whole troop, since the number in

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
	le nombre de la profondeur est esgal à la largeur, et la largeur, à la longueur.	depth is equal to the breadth, and the breadth to the length.
2.12.75	Quant à la magnanimité, il est malaisé de luy donner vn visage plus apparent, qu'en ce faict du grand chien, qui fut enuoyé des Indes au Roy Alexandre: on luy presenta premierement vn cerf pour le combattre, et puis vn sanglier, et puis vn ours, il n'en fit compte, et ne daigna se remuer de sa place: mais quand il veid vn lyon, il se dressa incontinent sur ses pieds, montrant manifestement qu'il declaroit celuy-là seul digne d'entrer en combat auecques luy.	As for magnanimity, it is hard to give it a more evident face than in the case of the great dog sent from the Indies to King Alexander. They first set a stag before it to fight, then a boar, then a bear: it took no notice of them and did not deign to stir from its place. But when it saw a lion, it immediately rose to its feet, showing plainly that it declared that one alone worthy to enter into combat with it.
2.12.76	Touchant la repentance et recognoissance des fautes, on recite d'vn elephant, lequel ayant tué son gouuerneur par impetuosité de cholere, en print vn dueil si extreme, qu'il ne voulut onques puis manger, et se laissa mourir.	Concerning repentance and the acknowledgment of faults, they tell of an elephant which, having killed its keeper in a fit of anger, mourned so deeply that it would never eat again, and let itself die.
2.12.77	Quant à la clemence, on recite d'vn tygre, la plus inhumaine beste de toutes, que luy ayant esté baillé vn cheureau, il souffrit deux iours la faim auant que de le vouloir offencer, et le troisiesme il brisa la cage où il estoit enfermé, pour aller chercher autre pasture, ne se voulant prendre au cheureau, son familier et son hoste.	As for clemency, they tell of a tiger, the most inhuman beast of all, which, having been given a kid, went hungry for two days rather than harm it, and on the third broke the cage in which it was shut up to go and look for other fodder, not wishing to attack the kid, its familiar and its guest.
2.12.78	Et quant aux droicts de la familiarité et conuenance, qui se dresse par la conuersation, il nous aduient ordinairement d'appriuoiser des chats, des chiens, et des lieures ensemble.	And as for the rights of familiarity and fellow-feeling that grow up from living together, we commonly tame cats, dogs and hares together.
2.12.79	Mais ce que l'experience apprend à ceux qui voyagent par mer, et notamment en la mer de Sicile, de la condition des halcyons, surpasse toute humaine cogitation. De quelle espece d'animaux a iamais Nature tant honoré les couches, la naissance, et l'enfantement? car les poëtes disent bien qu'vne seule isle de Delos, estant au parauant vagante, fut affermie pour le seruice de l'enfantement de Latone: mais Dieu a voulu que toute la mer fust arrestée, affermie et applanie, sans vagues, sans vents et sans pluye, cependant que l'halcyon fait ses petits, qui est iustement enuiron le solstice, le plus court iour de l'an: et par son priuilege nous auons sept iours et sept nuicts, au fin cœur de l'hyuer, que nous pouuons nauiguer sans danger.	But what experience teaches those who travel by sea, and notably in the Sicilian sea, about the nature of halcyons surpasses all human thought. What species of animal has Nature ever so honored in its lying-in, birth and bringing forth? The poets do say that a single island, Delos, which had drifted until then, was made fast to serve for the delivery of Latona; but God willed that the whole sea should be stilled, made firm and smooth, without waves, without winds and without rain, while the halcyon brings forth its young, which is just about the solstice, the shortest day of the year. And by its privilege we have seven days and seven nights, in the very heart of winter, when we can sail without danger.[55]
	Leurs femelles ne recognoissent autre masle que le leur propre: l'assistent toute leur vie sans iamais	Their females acknowledge no male but their own; they stay with him all their lives without

55 Latona (Leto) gave birth to Apollo and Artemis on Delos; the halcyon's calm is the origin of "halcyon days."

FRENCH

l'abandonner: s'il vient à estre debile et cassé, elles le chargent sur leurs espaules, le portent par tout, et le seruent iusques à la mort.

2.12.80 Mais aucune suffisance n'a encores peu atteindre à la cognoissance de cette merueilleuse fabrique, dequoy l'halcyon compose le nid pour ses petits, ny en deuiner la matiere.

2.12.81 Plutarque, qui en a veu et manié plusieurs, pense que ce soit des arestes de quelque poisson qu'elle conioinct et lie ensemble, les entrelassant les vnes de long, les autres de trauers, et adioustant des courbes et des arrondissemens, tellement qu'en fin elle en forme vn vaisseau rond prest à voguer: puis quand elle a paracheué de le construire, elle le porte au batement du flot marin, là où la mer le battant tout doucement, luy enseigne à radouber ce qui n'est pas bien lié, et à mieux fortifier aux endroits où elle void que sa structure se desmeut, et se lasche pour les coups de mer: et au contraire ce qui est bien ioinct, le batement de la mer le vous estreinct, et vous le serre de sorte, qu'il ne se peut ny rompre ny dissoudre, ou endommager à coups de pierre, ny de fer, si ce n'est à toute peine.

Et ce qui plus est à admirer, c'est la proportion et figure de la concauité du dedans: car elle est composée et proportionnée, de maniere qu'elle ne peut receuoir ny admettre autre chose, que l'oiseau qui l'a bastie: car à toute autre chose, elle est impenetrable, close, et fermée, tellement qu'il ny peut rien entrer, non pas l'eau de la mer seulement. Voyla vne description bien claire de ce bastiment et empruntée de bon lieu: toutesfois il me semble qu'elle ne nous esclaircit pas encore suffisamment la difficulté de cette architecture. Or de quelle vanité nous peut-il partir, de loger au dessoubs de nous, et d'interpreter desdaigneusement les effects que nous ne pouuons imiter ny comprendre?

2.12.82 Pour suyure encore vn peu plus loing cette equalité et correspondance de nous aux bestes, le priuilege dequoy nostre ame se glorifie, de ramener à sa condition, tout ce qu'elle conçoit, de despouiller de qualitez mortelles, et corporelles, tout ce qui vient à elle, de renger les choses qu'elle estime dignes de son accointance, à desuestir et despouiller leurs conditions corruptibles, et leur faire laisser à part, comme vestemens superflus et viles, l'espesseur, la longueur, la profondeur, le poids, la couleur, l'odeur, l'aspreté, la polisseure, la dureté, la mollesse, et tous accidents sensibles, pour les accommoder à sa condition immortelle et spirituelle: de

ENGLISH

ever abandoning him; if he grows weak and broken down, they carry him on their shoulders, take him everywhere, and serve him until death.

But no ability has yet been able to attain knowledge of the marvelous structure from which the halcyon makes the nest for its young, nor to guess its material.

Plutarch, who saw and handled several of them, thinks it is made of the bones of some fish, which the bird joins and binds together, interlacing some lengthwise and others crosswise, and adding curves and roundings, so that in the end it forms a round vessel ready to sail. Then, when it has finished building it, it carries it to where the waves break, and there the sea, beating on it very gently, shows it how to mend what is not well bound and how to strengthen the places where it sees the structure shifting and loosening under the blows of the sea. And, on the other hand, whatever is well joined the beating of the sea tightens and presses together so that it cannot be broken or dissolved, or damaged by blows of stone or iron, except with great difficulty.

And what is most to be wondered at is the proportion and shape of the hollow inside. It is made and proportioned in such a way that it can receive or admit nothing but the bird that built it; to anything else it is impenetrable, closed and shut, so that nothing can get in, not even sea water. There is a very clear description of this building, and borrowed from a good source; and yet it seems to me that it still does not sufficiently clear up for us the difficulty of this architecture. Now, from what vanity can it come in us to rank beneath ourselves, and to interpret disdainfully, the works we can neither imitate nor understand?

To pursue this equality and correspondence between us and the beasts a little further: our soul glories in the privilege of bringing everything it conceives back to its own condition; of stripping everything that comes to it of mortal and bodily qualities; of compelling the things it deems worthy of its acquaintance to doff and strip off their corruptible conditions, and to leave aside, like superfluous and vile garments, thickness, length, depth, weight, color, smell, roughness, smoothness, hardness, softness and all sensible

FRENCH

maniere que Rome et Paris, que i'ay en l'ame, Paris que i'imagine, ie l'imagine et le comprens, sans grandeur et sans lieu, sans pierre, sans plastre, et sans bois: ce mesme priuilege, dis-ie, semble estre bien euidemment aux bestes.

Car vn cheual accoustumé aux trompettes, aux harquebusades, et aux combats, que nous voyons tremousser et fremir en dormant, estendu sur sa litiere, comme s'il estoit en la meslée, il est certain qu'il conçoit en son ame vn son de tabourin sans bruict, vne armée sans armes et sans corps. *Quippe videbis equos fortes, cùm membra iacebunt*
In somnis, sudare tamen, spiraréque sæpe,
Et quasi de palma summas contendere vires. Ce lieure qu'vn leurier imagine en songe, apres lequel nous le voyons haleter en dormant, alonger la queuë, secoüer les iarrets, et representer parfaictement les mouuemens de sa course: c'est vn lieure sans poil et sans os.

Venantúmque canes in molli sæpe quiete,
Iactant crura tamen subitò, vocésque repente
Mittunt, et crebras reducunt naribus auras,
Vt vestigia si teneant inuenta ferarum:
Experge factique, sequuntur inania sæpe
Ceruorum simulacra, fugæ quasi dedita cernant;
Donec discussis redeant erroribus ad se. Les chiens de garde, que nous voyons souuent gronder en songeant, et puis iapper tout à faict, et s'esueiller en sursaut, comme s'ils apperceuoient quelque estranger arriuer; cet estranger que leur ame void, c'est vn homme spirituel, et imperceptible, sans dimension, sans couleur, et sans estre: *Consueta domi catulorum blanda propago*
Degere, sæpe leuem ex oculis volucrémque soporem
Discutere, et corpus de terra corripere instant,
Proinde quasi ignotas facies atque ora tuantur.

ENGLISH

accidents, so as to fit them to its own immortal and spiritual condition. So it is that Rome and Paris, which I have in my mind—Paris, which I imagine—I imagine and grasp without size and without place, without stone, without plaster and without wood. This same privilege, I say, seems quite evidently to belong to the beasts.

For a horse accustomed to trumpets, to arquebus fire and to battle, which we see quivering and trembling in its sleep, stretched out on its litter as if it were in the fray—it is certain that it conceives in its soul the sound of a drum without noise, an army without weapons and without bodies. *Indeed you will see brave horses, when their limbs lie*
in sleep, sweat nonetheless, and pant again and again,
and strain their utmost strength as if for the prize. That hare which a greyhound imagines in its dream, after which we see it panting in its sleep, stretching out its tail, jerking its hocks and perfectly reproducing the movements of its run: it is a hare without fur and without bones.

And hunters' dogs, often in gentle rest,
suddenly toss their legs nonetheless, and all at once let out
cries, and draw in quick breaths through their nostrils,
as if they had found and were holding the tracks of wild beasts;
and once awake, they often chase the empty
images of stags, as if they saw them in flight,
until they shake off their delusions and come back to themselves. The watchdogs that we often see growling in their dreams, and then barking outright and waking with a start, as if they saw some stranger arriving: that stranger whom their soul sees is a spiritual and imperceptible man, without dimension, without color and without being. *The fawning brood of puppies, used to living*
indoors, often hasten to shake light, fluttering sleep from their eyes
and to spring up from the ground,
as if they beheld unknown faces and features.

THE BEAUTY OF BODIES

Ideals of beauty vary everywhere, and many animals are more beautiful than we are.

FRENCH

2.12.83 Quant à la beauté du corps, auant passer outre, il me faudroit sçauoir si nous sommes d'accord de sa description. Il est vray-semblable que nous ne sçauons

ENGLISH

As for bodily beauty, before going further I would need to know whether we agree on how to describe it. It is likely that we hardly know what

FRENCH

guere, que c'est que beauté en nature et en general, puisque à l'humaine et nostre beauté nous donnons tant de formes diuerses, de laquelle, s'il y auoit quelque prescription naturelle, nous la recognoistrions en commun, comme la chaleur du feu. Nous en fantasions les formes à nostre appetit.

Turpis Romano Belgicus ore color. Les Indes la peignent noire et basannée, aux leures grosses et enflées, au nez plat et large: et chargent de gros anneaux d'or le cartilage d'entre les nazeaux, pour le faire pendre iusques à la bouche, comme aussi la balieure, de gros cercles enrichis de pierreries, si qu'elle leur tombe sur le menton, et est leur grace de montrer leurs dents iusques au dessous des racines. Au Peru les plus grandes oreilles sont les plus belles, et les estendent autant qu'ils peuuent par artifice.

Et vn homme d'auiourdhuy, dit auoir veu en vne nation Orientale, ce soing de les agrandir, en tel credit, et de les charger de poisants ioyaux, qu'à touts coups il passoit son bras vestu au trauers d'vn trou d'oreille. Il est ailleurs des nations, qui noircissent les dents auec grand soing, et ont à mespris de les voir blanches: ailleurs ils les teignent de couleur rouge. Non seulement en Basque les femmes se trouuent plus belles la teste rase: mais assez ailleurs: et qui plus est, en certaines contrées glaciales, comme dit Pline.

Les Mexicanes content entre les beautez, la petitesse du front, et où elles se font le poil par tout le reste du corps, elles le nourrissent au front, et peuplent par art: et ont en si grande recommandation la grandeur des tetins, qu'elles affectent de pouuoir donner la mammelle à leurs enfans par dessus l'espaule. Nous formerions ainsi la laideur. Les Italiens la façonnent grosse et massiue: les Espagnols vuidée et estrillée: et entre nous, l'vn la fait blanche, l'autre brune: l'vn molle et delicate, l'autre forte et vigoureuse: qui y demande de la mignardise, et de la douceur, qui de la fierté et majesté.

Tout ainsi que la preferance en beauté, que Platon attribue à la figure spherique, les Epicuriens la donnent à la pyramidale plustost, ou carrée: et ne peuuent aualer vn Dieu en forme de boule.

2.12.84 Mais quoy qu'il en soit, Nature ne nous a non plus priuilegiez en cela qu'au demeurant, sur ses loix

ENGLISH

beauty is in nature and in general, since we give so many different forms to our own human beauty; if there were some natural rule for it, we would all recognize it in common, like the heat of fire. We fancy its forms to suit our appetite.

A Belgian complexion is ugly on a Roman face. The Indies paint beauty black and swarthy, with thick, swollen lips and a flat, broad nose; and they load the cartilage between the nostrils with big gold rings to make it hang down to the mouth, and likewise the lower lip with large hoops set with precious stones, so that it falls onto the chin; and it is their idea of grace to show their teeth down below the roots. In Peru the biggest ears are the most beautiful, and they stretch them artificially as far as they can.[56]

And a man of our own day says he saw in an Eastern nation this care to enlarge them, and to load them with heavy jewels, held in such esteem that he could pass his arm, sleeve and all, through the hole of an ear whenever he liked. Elsewhere there are nations that blacken their teeth with great care and scorn to see them white; elsewhere they dye them red. Not only in the Basque country do women think themselves more beautiful with shaven heads, but in plenty of other places too; and what is more, in certain icy regions, as Pliny says.

Mexican women count a small forehead among the beauties; and while they remove the hair everywhere else on their bodies, on the forehead they cultivate it and thicken it by art. And they hold large breasts in such high regard that they make a point of being able to give their children the breast over their shoulder. That is how we would fashion ugliness. The Italians make beauty plump and massive; the Spanish, lean and spare; and among us, one makes it fair, another dark; one soft and delicate, another strong and vigorous; one asks for daintiness and sweetness in it, another for pride and majesty.

In just the same way, the preference in beauty that Plato gives to the spherical figure the Epicureans give rather to the pyramid, or the square; and they cannot swallow a god in the shape of a ball.

But however that may be, Nature has no more privileged us in this than in the rest, above her

FRENCH

communes. Et si nous nous iugeons bien, nous trouuerons que s'il est quelques animaux moins fauorisez en cela que nous, il y en a d'autres, et en grand nombre, qui le sont plus. *A multis animalibus decore vincimur*: voyre des terrestres nos compatriotes. Car quant aux marins, laissant la figure, qui ne peut tomber en proportion, tant elle est autre: en couleur, netteté, polissure, disposition, nous leur cedons assez: et non moins, en toutes qualitez, aux aërées.

Et cette prerogatiue que les poëtes font valoir de nostre stature droicte, regardant vers le ciel son origine,
Pronáque cùm spectent animalia cætera terram,
Os homini sublime dedit, cœlúmque videre
Iussit, et erectos ad sydera tollere vultus. elle est vrayement poëtique: car il y a plusieurs bestioles, qui ont la veuë renuersée tout à faict vers le ciel: et l'encoleure des chameaux, et des austruches, ie la trouue encore plus releuée et droite que la nostre. Quels animaux n'ont la face au haut, et ne l'ont deuant, et ne regardent vis à vis, comme nous: et ne descouurent en leur iuste posture autant du ciel et de la terre que l'homme?

Et quelles qualitez de nostre corporelle constitution en Platon et en Cicero ne peuuent seruir à mille sortes de bestes? Celles qui nous retirent le plus, ce sont les plus laides, et les plus abiectes de toute la bande: car pour l'apparence exterieure et forme du visage, ce sont les magots: *Simia quàm similis, turpissima bestia, nobis!* pour le dedans et parties vitales, c'est le pourceau.

2.12.85 Certes quand i'imagine l'homme tout nud (ouy en ce sexe qui semble auoir plus de part à la beauté) ses tares, sa subiection naturelle, et ses imperfections, ie trouue que nous auons eu plus de raison que nul autre animal, de nous couurir. Nous auons esté excusables d'emprunter ceux que Nature auoit fauorisé en cela plus que nous, pour nous parer de leur beauté, et nous cacher soubs leur despouille, de laine, plume, poil, soye. Remerquons au demeurant, que nous sommes le seul animal, duquel le defaut offence nos propres compagnons, et seuls qui

ENGLISH

common laws. And if we judge ourselves rightly, we will find that if there are some animals less favored than we are in this respect, there are others, and many of them, that are more so. *We are surpassed in beauty by many animals*: indeed even by the land animals, our compatriots. For as for the creatures of the sea, leaving aside shape, which is so different that no comparison is possible, in color, clearness, smoothness and arrangement we yield to them a good deal; and no less, in all qualities, to the creatures of the air.[57]

And that prerogative the poets make so much of, our upright stature, looking toward heaven, its origin: *And while the other animals stoop and look at the earth,*
to man he gave an uplifted face, and bade him look at the sky
and raise his eyes erect toward the stars. it is truly poetic. For there are many little creatures whose gaze is turned entirely toward the sky; and the necks of camels and ostriches I find even higher and more upright than ours. What animals do not have their face on top and in front, and look straight ahead as we do, and do not take in, in their natural posture, as much of sky and earth as man?

And what qualities of our bodily constitution, as described in Plato and in Cicero, cannot apply to a thousand kinds of beasts? Those that resemble us most are the ugliest and most abject of the whole crew: for outward appearance and the shape of the face, it is the apes, *How like us is the ape, the ugliest of beasts!* for the inside and the vital organs, it is the pig.[58]

Indeed, when I picture man stark naked (yes, even in the sex that seems to have the larger share of beauty), with his blemishes, his natural subjection and his imperfections, I find that we have had more reason than any other animal to cover ourselves. We could be excused for borrowing from the creatures Nature had favored more than us in this respect, to deck ourselves out in their beauty and hide under their spoils: wool, feathers, fur, silk. Let us note, moreover, that we are the only animal whose defects offend our own com-

56 Propertius, Elegies II.18.
57 Seneca, Letters 124.
58 A line of Ennius quoted by Cicero, On the Nature of the Gods I.

FRENCH

auons à nous desrober en nos actions naturelles, de nostre espece.

Vrayement c'est aussi vn effect digne de consideration, que les maistres du mestier ordonnent pour remede aux passions amoureuses, l'entiere veuë et libre du corps qu'on recherche: que pour refroidir l'amitié, il ne faille que voir librement ce qu'on ayme. *Ille quòd obscœnas in aperto corpore partes / Viderat, in cursu qui fuit, hæsit amor.* Et encore que cette recepte puisse à l'auenture partir d'vne humeur vn peu delicate et refroidie: si est-ce vn merueilleux signe de nostre defaillance, que l'vsage et la cognoissance nous dégoute les vns des autres. Ce n'est pas tant pudeur, qu'art et prudence, qui rend nos dames si circonspectes, à nous refuser l'entrée de leurs cabinets, auant qu'elles soyent peintes et parées pour la montre publique.

Nec veneres nostras hoc fallit, quò magis ipsæ
Omnia summopere hos vitæ postscenia celant,
Quos retinere volunt adstrictóque esse in amore. Là où en plusieurs animaux, il n'est rien d'eux que nous n'aimions, et qui ne plaise à nos sens: de façon que de leurs excremens mesmes et de leur descharge, nous tirons non seulement de la friandise au manger, mais nos plus riches ornemens et parfums. Ce discours ne touche que nostre commun ordre, et n'est pas si sacrilege d'y vouloir comprendre ces diuines, supernaturelles et extraordinaires beautez, qu'on voit par fois reluire entre nous, comme des astres soubs vn voile corporel et terrestre.

2.12.86 Au demeurant la part mesme que nous faisons aux animaux, des faueurs de Nature, par nostre confession, elle leur est bien auantageuse. Nous nous attribuons des biens imaginaires et fantastiques, des biens futurs et absens, desquels l'humaine capacité ne se peut d'elle mesme respondre: ou des biens que nous nous attribuons faucement, par la licence de nostre opinion, comme la raison, la science et l'honneur: et à eux, nous laissons en partage des biens essentiels, maniables et palpables, la paix, le repos, la securité, l'innocence et la santé: la santé, dis-ie, le plus beau et le plus riche present, que Nature nous sçache faire.

De façon que la Philosophie, voire la Stoïque, ose bien dire qu'Heraclitus et Pherecydes, s'ils eussent peu

ENGLISH

panions, and the only ones who must hide from our own species in our natural actions.

Truly, it is also a fact worth considering that the masters of the craft prescribe, as a remedy for the passions of love, a full and free sight of the body one desires: to cool one's affection, one need only look freely at what one loves. *That man, because he had seen the obscene parts of the body laid bare, / found his love, which had been in full course, stopped short.* And although this prescription may perhaps come from a somewhat fastidious and chilly temperament, it is still a remarkable sign of our deficiency that familiarity and acquaintance make us disgusted with one another. It is not so much modesty as skill and prudence that makes our ladies so careful to refuse us entry to their private rooms before they are painted and dressed for public display.[59]

Nor are our Venuses unaware of this; all the more do they
take the utmost pains to hide this whole backstage of life
from those they wish to keep bound fast in love.
Whereas in many animals there is nothing that we do not love and that does not please our senses. From their very excrements and discharges we draw not only delicacies to eat but our richest ornaments and perfumes. This reasoning concerns only the common run of us. I am not so sacrilegious as to try to include those divine, supernatural and extraordinary beauties that we sometimes see shining among us, like stars under a bodily and earthly veil.

For the rest, the very share of Nature's favors that we allot to the animals is, by our own admission, very much to their advantage. We attribute to ourselves imaginary and fanciful goods, future and absent goods, for which human capacity cannot of itself answer. Or we falsely attribute to ourselves goods through the license of our opinion, such as reason, knowledge and honor. And to them we leave as their share essential, tangible and palpable goods: peace, rest, security, innocence and health—health, I say, the finest and richest gift that Nature can give us.

So much so that Philosophy, even the Stoic kind, dares to say this of Heraclitus and Pherecydes: if

FRENCH

eschanger leur sagesse auecques la santé, et se deliurer par ce marché, l'vn de l'hydropisie, l'autre de la maladie pediculaire qui le pressoit, ils eussent bien faict. Par où ils donnent encore plus grand prix à la sagesse, la comparant et contrepoisant à la santé, qu'ils ne font en cette autre proposition, qui est aussi des leurs. Ils disent que si Circé eust presenté à Vlysses deux breuuages, l'vn pour faire deuenir vn homme de fol sage, l'autre de sage fol, qu'Vlysses eust deu plustost accepter celuy de la folie, que de consentir que Circé eust changé sa figure humaine en celle d'vne beste.

Et disent que la sagesse mesme eust parlé à luy en cette maniere: Quitte moy, laisse moy là, plustost que de me loger sous la figure et corps d'un asne. Comment? cette grande et diuine sapience, les philosophes la quittent donc, pour ce voile corporel et terrestre? Ce n'est donc plus par la raison, par le discours, et par l'ame, que nous excellons sur les bestes: c'est par nostre beauté, nostre beau teint, et nostre belle disposition de membres, pour laquelle il nous faut mettre nostre intelligence, nostre prudence, et tout le reste à l'abandon. Or i'accepte cette naïfue et franche confession. Certes ils ont cogneu que ces parties là, dequoy nous faisons tant de feste, que ce n'est vaine fantasie.

Quand les bestes auroient donc toute la vertu, la science, la sagesse et suffisance Stoique, ce seroyent tousiours des bestes: ny ne seroyent comparables à vn homme miserable, meschant et insensé. Car en fin tout ce qui n'est comme nous sommes, n'est rien qui vaille. Et Dieu pour se faire valoir, il faut qu'il y retire, comme nous dirons tantost. Par où il appert que ce n'est par vray discours, mais par vne fierté folle et opiniastreté, que nous nous preferons aux autres animaux, et nous sequestrons de leur condition et societé.

ENGLISH

they could have exchanged their wisdom for health, and by that bargain rid themselves, the one of dropsy, the other of the lice disease that afflicted him, they would have done well. In this they set an even higher value on wisdom, by comparing it and weighing it against health, than they do in another proposition that is also theirs. They say that if Circe had offered Ulysses two potions, one to make a man wise instead of foolish, the other foolish instead of wise, Ulysses ought rather to have accepted the potion of folly than consent to Circe's changing his human shape into that of a beast.

And they say that wisdom herself would have spoken to him thus: "Leave me, let me go, rather than lodge me in the shape and body of an ass." What? So the philosophers abandon this great and divine wisdom for the sake of this bodily and earthly veil? Then it is no longer by reason, by reasoning and by the soul that we excel the beasts. It is by our beauty, our fair complexion and the fine arrangement of our limbs, for which we must throw away our intelligence, our prudence and all the rest. Well, I accept this natural and frank confession. Surely they recognized that those qualities we make such a fuss about are nothing but empty fancy.

So even if the beasts had all the virtue, knowledge, wisdom and competence of the Stoics, they would still be beasts, and could not be compared with a wretched, wicked and senseless man. For in the end, whatever is not as we are is worth nothing. And God himself, to be esteemed, must resemble us, as we shall say presently. From which it is plain that it is not by true reasoning but by a foolish pride and obstinacy that we prefer ourselves to the other animals and set ourselves apart from their condition and company.

WHAT REASON COSTS US

Our share is passions, anxieties and vices, and learning eases none of them.

FRENCH

2.12.87 Mais pour reuenir à mon propos, nous auons pour nostre part, l'inconstance, l'irresolution, l'incertitude, le deuil, la superstition, la solicitude des choses à venir, voire apres nostre vie, l'ambition, l'auarice, la ialousie, l'enuie,

ENGLISH

But to return to my subject: we have for our share inconstancy, irresolution, uncertainty, grief, superstition, anxiety about things to come, even after our life, ambition, avarice, jealousy, envy,

59 Ovid, Remedies of Love.

FRENCH

les appetits desreglez, forcenez et indomptables, la guerre, la mensonge, la desloyauté, la detraction, et la curiosité. Certes nous auons estrangement surpayé ce beau discours, dequoy nous nous glorifions, et cette capacité de iuger et cognoistre, si nous l'auons achetée au prix de ce nombre infiny des passions, ausquelles nous sommes incessamment en prinse.

S'il ne nous plaist de faire encore valoir, comme fait bien Socrates, cette notable prerogatiue sur les bestes, que où Nature leur a prescript certaines saisons et limites à la volupté Venerienne, elle nous en a lasché la bride à toutes heures et occasions. *Vt vinum ægrotis, quia prodest rarò, nocet sæpissime, melius est non adhibere omnino, quàm, spe dubiæ salutis, in apertam perniciem incurrere: Sic, haud scio, an melius fuerit humano generi motum istum celerem cogitationis, acumen, solertiam, quam rationem vocamus, quoniam pestifera sint multis, admodum paucis salutaria, non dari omnino, quàm tam munificè et tam largè dari.* De quel fruit pouuons nous estimer auoir esté à Varro et Aristote, cette intelligence de tant de choses? Les a elle exemptez des incommoditez humaines?

ont-ils esté deschargez des accidents qui pressent vn crocheteur? ont ils tiré de la logique quelque consolation à la goute? pour auoir sçeu comme cette humeur se loge aux iointures, l'en ont ils moins sentie? sont ils entrez en composition de la mort, pour sçauoir qu'aucunes nations s'en resiouissent: et du cocuage, pour sçauoir les femmes estre communes en quelque region? Au rebours, ayans tenu le premier rang en sçauoir, l'vn entre les Romains, l'autre, entre les Grecs, et en la saison où la science fleurissoit le plus, nous n'auons pas pourtant appris qu'ils ayent eu aucune particuliere excellence en leur vie: voire le Grec a assez affaire à se descharger d'aucunes tasches notables en la sienne.

A on trouué que la volupté et la santé soyent plus sauoureuses à celuy qui sçait l'astrologie, et la grammaire: *Illiterati num minus nerui rigent?* et la honte et pauureté moins importunes? *Scilicet et morbis et debilitate carebis,*
Et luctum et curam effugies, et tempora vitæ
Longa tibi post hæc facto meliore dabuntur.

2.12.88

ENGLISH

unruly, frenzied and untamable appetites, war, lying, disloyalty, slander and curiosity. Truly, we have paid a strangely excessive price for this fine reasoning we glory in, and this capacity to judge and know, if we have bought it at the cost of this infinite number of passions that constantly have us in their grip.

Unless we also choose to make much, as Socrates indeed does, of this notable prerogative over the beasts: whereas Nature has prescribed certain seasons and limits for them in the pleasures of Venus, she has given us free rein at all hours and on all occasions. *As with wine for the sick: since it seldom helps and very often harms, it is better not to give it at all than, in the hope of a doubtful recovery, to run into certain ruin. So I do not know whether it would not have been better for the human race that this swift movement of thought, this sharpness, this ingenuity that we call reason, should not have been given at all, since it is pernicious to many and wholesome to very few, rather than given so bountifully and so lavishly.* What fruit can we suppose that their understanding of so many things brought Varro and Aristotle? Did it exempt them from human troubles?[60]

Were they relieved of the mishaps that weigh on a porter? Did they draw from logic any consolation for the gout? For knowing how that humor lodges in the joints, did they feel it any less? Did they come to terms with death because they knew that some nations rejoice in it, or with cuckoldry because they knew that in some region wives are held in common? On the contrary: the one held first rank in learning among the Romans, the other among the Greeks, and at the time when learning flourished most. Yet we have not heard that they had any particular excellence in their lives; indeed the Greek has his work cut out clearing himself of certain notable stains on his.

Has anyone found that pleasure and health taste better to the man who knows astrology and grammar? *Are the sinews of the unlettered any less stiff?* Or that shame and poverty are less troublesome? *No doubt you will be free of sickness and frailty,*
you will escape grief and care, and a long span of life
will be granted you hereafter under a better fate.[61]

60 Cicero, On the Nature of the Gods.
61 Horace, Epodes; then Juvenal, Satires.

FRENCH

I'ay veu en mon temps, cent artisans, cent laboureurs, plus sages et plus heureux que des recteurs de l'vniuersité: et lesquels i'aimerois mieux ressembler. La doctrine, ce m'est aduis, tient rang entre les choses necessaires à la vie, comme la gloire, la noblesse, la dignité, ou pour le plus comme la richesse, et telles autres qualitez qui y seruent voyrement, mais de loing, et plus par fantasie que par nature. Il ne nous faut guere non plus d'offices, de regles, et de loix de viure, en nostre communauté, qu'il en faut aux grues et formis en la leur. Et neantmoins nous voyons qu'elles s'y conduisent tres ordonnément, sans erudition.

Si l'homme estoit sage, il prendroit le vray prix de chasque chose, selon qu'elle seroit la plus vtile et propre à sa vie. Qui nous contera par nos actions et deportemens, il s'en trouuera plus grand nombre d'excellens entre les ignorans, qu'entre les sçauans; ie dy en toute sorte de vertu. La vieille Rome me semble en auoir bien porté de plus grande valeur, et pour la paix, et pour la guerre, que cette Rome sçauante, qui se ruina soy-mesme. Quand le demeurant seroit tout pareil, aumoins la preud'hommie et l'innocence demeureroient du costé de l'ancienne: car elle loge singulierement bien auec la simplicité. Mais ie laisse ce discours, qui me tireroit plus loing, que ie ne voudrois suyure.

I'en diray seulement encore cela, que c'est la seule humilité et submission, qui peut effectuer vn homme de bien. Il ne faut pas laisser au iugement de chacun la cognoissance de son deuoir: il le luy faut prescrire, non pas le laisser choisir à son discours: autrement selon l'imbecillité et varieté infinie de nos raisons et opinions, nous nous forgerions en fin des deuoirs, qui nous mettroient à nous manger les vns les autres, comme dit Epicurus.

2.12.89 La premiere loy, que Dieu donna iamais à l'homme, ce fut vne loy de pure obeyssance: ce fut vn commandement, nud et simple où l'homme n'eust rien à cognoistre et à causer, d'autant que l'obeyr est le propre office d'vne ame raisonnable, recognoissant vn celeste, superieur et bienfacteur. De l'obeyr et ceder naist toute autre vertu, comme du cuider, tout peché. Et au rebours: la premiere tentation qui vint à l'humaine nature de la part du diable, sa premiere poison, s'insinua en nous, par les promesses qu'il nous fit de science et de cognoissance, *Eritis sicut dij, scientes bonum et malum*. Et les Sereines, pour piper Vlysse en Homere, et l'attirer en leurs dangereux et ruineux laqs, luy offrent en don la science.

ENGLISH

In my time I have seen a hundred craftsmen, a hundred plowmen, wiser and happier than university rectors, and whom I would rather resemble. Learning, in my view, ranks among the things necessary to life in the way that glory, nobility and rank do, or at most wealth, and other such qualities. They do serve life, but from a distance, and more in fancy than by nature. We need hardly more offices, rules and laws of living in our community than cranes and ants need in theirs. And yet we see that they conduct themselves in a very orderly way without any erudition.

If man were wise, he would set the true value on each thing according to how useful and suited it was to his life. If we are counted by our actions and conduct, a greater number of excellent men will be found among the ignorant than among the learned—I mean in every kind of virtue. Old Rome seems to me to have produced men of far greater worth, both for peace and for war, than that learned Rome which ruined itself. Even if all the rest were equal, at least integrity and innocence would remain on the side of the old Rome, for integrity dwells singularly well with simplicity. But I leave this subject, which would draw me further than I would care to follow.

I will say only this further: it is humility and submission alone that can make a good man. We must not leave the knowledge of his duty to each man's judgment. It must be prescribed to him, not left to the choice of his reasoning. Otherwise, given the weakness and infinite variety of our reasons and opinions, we would end by forging ourselves duties that would set us to eating one another, as Epicurus says.

The first law that God ever gave to man was a law of pure obedience. It was a bare and simple commandment, in which man had nothing to understand or to argue about, since obeying is the proper function of a rational soul that recognizes a heavenly superior and benefactor. From obeying and yielding springs every other virtue, as from presumption springs every sin. Conversely, the first temptation that came to human nature from the devil, his first poison, worked its way into us through the promises he made us of knowledge and understanding: *You shall be as gods, knowing good and evil.* And the Sirens, to trick Ulysses in

FRENCH

ENGLISH

Homer and lure him into their dangerous and ruinous snares, offer him knowledge as a gift.[62]

La peste de l'homme c'est l'opinion de sçauoir. Voyla pourquoy l'ignorance nous est tant recommandée par nostre religion, comme piece propre à la creance et à l'obeyssance. *Cauete, ne quis vos decipiat per philosophiam et inanes seductiones, secundum elementa mundi.* En cecy y a il vne generalle conuenance entre tous les philosophes de toutes sectes, que le souuerain bien consiste en la tranquillité de l'ame et du corps. Mais où la trouuons nous? *Ad summum sapiens vno minor est Ioue: diues,*
Liber, honoratus, pulcher, rex denique regum:
Præcipuè sanus, nisi cùm pituita molesta est.

Man's plague is the opinion that he knows. That is why our religion so commends ignorance to us, as something suited to belief and obedience. *Beware lest any man deceive you through philosophy and vain seductions, according to the elements of the world.* On one point there is general agreement among all philosophers of all schools: the sovereign good consists in tranquillity of soul and body. But where do we find it? *In short, the wise man is inferior only to Jupiter: rich,*
free, honored, handsome, in a word king of kings;
above all healthy—except when he is plagued by phlegm.[63]

2.12.90 Il semble à la verité, que Nature, pour la consolation de nostre estat miserable et chetif, ne nous ait donné en partage que la presumption. C'est ce que dit Epictete, que l'homme n'a rien proprement sien, que l'vsage de ses opinions. Nous n'auons que du vent et de la fumée en partage. Les Dieux ont la santé en essence, dit la philosophie, et la maladie en intelligence: l'homme au rebours, possede ses biens par fantasie, les maux en essence. Nous auons eu raison de faire valoir les forces de nostre imagination: car tous nos biens ne sont qu'en songe.

It seems indeed that Nature, to console us in our wretched and puny state, has given us nothing for our share but presumption. That is what Epictetus says: man has nothing properly his own but the use of his opinions. We have nothing but wind and smoke for our share. The gods have health in essence, says philosophy, and sickness only in understanding. Man, on the contrary, possesses his goods in fancy and his ills in essence. We have been right to make much of the powers of our imagination, for all our goods exist only in dreams.

2.12.91 Oyez brauer ce pauure et calamiteux animal. Il n'est rien, dit Cicero, si doux que l'occupation des lettres: de ces lettres, dis-ie, par le moyen desquelles l'infinité des choses, l'immense grandeur de Nature, les cieux en ce monde mesme, et les terres, et les mers nous sont descouuertes: ce sont elles qui nous ont appris la religion, la moderation, la grandeur de courage: et qui ont arraché nostre ame des tenebres, pour luy faire voir toutes choses hautes, basses, premieres, dernieres, et moyennes: ce sont elles qui nous fournissent dequoy bien et heureusement viure, et nous guident à passer nostre aage sans desplaisir et sans offence. Cestuy-cy ne semble il pas parler de la condition de Dieu tout-viuant et tout-puissant?

Listen to this poor, calamitous animal boasting. "Nothing," says Cicero, "is so sweet as the pursuit of letters—of those letters, I mean, by means of which the infinity of things, the immense grandeur of Nature, the heavens in this very world, and the lands and the seas are revealed to us. It is they that have taught us religion, moderation, greatness of courage. They have snatched our soul from the darkness to let it see all things, high, low, first, last and in between. It is they that furnish us with the means to live well and happily, and guide us to pass our lives without displeasure and without offense." Does this man not seem to be speaking of the condition of the ever-living and almighty God?

Et quant à l'effect, mille femmelettes ont vescu au village vne vie plus equable, plus douce, et plus constante, que ne fut la sienne. *Deus ille fuit Deus, inclute Memmi,*
Qui princeps vitæ rationem inuenit eam, quæ

And as for the result, a thousand simple village women have lived a more even, gentler and steadier life than his was. *He was a god, a god, illustrious Memmius,*

62 Genesis 3:5. In the Odyssey (Book XII) the Sirens promise that whoever listens to them will leave knowing more.
63 Saint Paul, Colossians 2:8; then Horace, Epistles I.1.

FRENCH

Nunc appellatur Sapientia, quique per artem
Fluctibus è tantis vitam tantisque tenebris,
In tam tranquillo et tam clara luce locauit. Voyla des paroles tresmagnifiques et belles: mais vn bien leger accident, mit l'entendement de cestuy-cy en pire estat, que celuy du moindre berger: nonobstant ce Dieu precepteur et cette diuine sapience. De mesme impudence est cette promesse du liure de Democritus: Ie m'en vay parler de toutes choses.

Et ce sot tiltre qu'Aristote nous preste, de Dieux mortels: et ce iugement de Chrysippus, que Dion estoit aussi vertueux que Dieu. Et mon Seneca recognoist, dit-il, que Dieu luy a donné le viure: mais qu'il a de soy le bien viure. Conformément à cet autre, *In virtute verè gloriamur: quod non contingeret, si id donum à Deo non à nobis haberemus*. Cecy est aussi de Seneca: Que le sage a la fortitude pareille à Dieu: mais en l'humaine foiblesse, par où il le surmonte. Il n'est rien si ordinaire que de rencontrer des traicts de pareille temerité.

Il n'y a aucun de nous qui s'offence tant de se voir apparier à Dieu, comme il fait de se voir deprimer au rang des autres animaux: tant nous sommes plus ialoux de nostre interest, que de celuy de nostre createur.

2.12.92 Mais il faut mettre aux pieds cette sotte vanité, et secouër viuement et hardiment les fondemens ridicules, sur quoy ces fausses opinions se bastissent. Tant qu'il pensera auoir quelque moyen et quelque force de soy, iamais l'homme ne recognoistra ce qu'il doit à son maistre: il fera tousiours de ses œufs poulles, comme on dit: il le faut mettre en chemise. Voyons quelque notable exemple de l'effect de sa philosophie. Possidonius estant pressé d'vne si douloureuse maladie, qu'elle luy faisoit tordre les bras, et grincer les dents, pensoit bien faire la figue à la douleur pour s'escrier contre elle: Tu as beau faire, si ne diray-ie pas que tu sois mal.

Il sent mesmes passions que mon laquays, mais il se braue sur ce qu'il contient aumoins sa langue sous les loix de sa secte. *Re succumbere non oportebat verbis gloriantem.* Archesilas estant malade de la goutte, Carneades qui le vint visiter, s'en retournoit tout fasché: il le rappella, et

ENGLISH

who first discovered that rule of life which
is now called Wisdom, and who by his skill
from such great storms and such great darkness
set life in so calm and so clear a light. Those are very magnificent and fine words. But a very slight accident put the understanding of this man in a worse state than that of the lowliest shepherd, for all his divine teacher and his divine wisdom. Of the same impudence is the promise in Democritus's book: "I am going to speak of all things."[64]

And that foolish title Aristotle lends us, of "mortal gods"; and that judgment of Chrysippus, that Dion was as virtuous as God. And my Seneca acknowledges, he says, that God gave him life, but that living well he has from himself. In keeping with that other one: *We rightly glory in virtue, which would not be the case if we had it as a gift from God and not from ourselves.* This too is from Seneca: the wise man has fortitude equal to God's, but in the midst of human weakness, and in that he surpasses him. There is nothing more common than to come across strokes of similar rashness.

There is not one of us who is as offended at seeing himself matched with God as he is at seeing himself lowered to the rank of the other animals: so much more jealous are we of our own interest than of our creator's.

But we must trample this foolish vanity underfoot, and shake boldly and vigorously the ridiculous foundations on which these false opinions are built. As long as he thinks he has some means and some power of his own, man will never recognize what he owes to his master. He will always be counting his eggs as hens, as the saying goes. He must be stripped down to his shirt. Let us look at some notable example of the effect of his philosophy. Posidonius was gripped by an illness so painful that it made him twist his arms and grind his teeth. He thought he was thumbing his nose at the pain by crying out against it: "Do your worst, still I will not say that you are an evil."

He feels the same sufferings as my lackey, but he prides himself on at least keeping his tongue within the laws of his school. *He who boasted in words ought not to have given way in deeds.* When Arcesilaus was ill with gout, Carneades, who had

64 Lucretius, On the Nature of Things V, praising Epicurus. Tradition held that Lucretius was driven mad by a love potion.

FRENCH

luy montrant ses pieds et sa poittrine: Il n'est rien venu de là icy, luy dit-il. Cestuy cy a vn peu meilleure grace: car il sent auoir du mal, et en voudroit estre depestré. Mais de ce mal pourtant son cœur n'en est pas abbatu et affoibly. L'autre se tient en sa roideur, plus, ce crains-ie, verbale qu'essentielle. Et Dionysius Heracleotes affligé d'vne cuison vehemente des yeux, fut rangé à quitter ces resolutions Stoïques.

ENGLISH

come to visit him, was going away much distressed. Arcesilaus called him back and, pointing to his feet and his chest, said: "Nothing has come from there to here." This one shows a little better grace, for he feels that he is in pain and would like to be rid of it; yet his heart is not cast down or weakened by that pain. The other holds to his stiffness, which is, I fear, more verbal than real. And Dionysius of Heraclea, afflicted with a violent burning in the eyes, was brought to give up those Stoic resolutions.

THE COMFORTS OF IGNORANCE

Simplicity spares pain better than philosophy, whose remedies end in ignorance and death.

FRENCH

2.12.93 Mais quand la science feroit par effect ce qu'ils disent, d'émousser et rabattre l'aigreur des infortunes qui nous suyuent, que fait elle, que ce que fait beaucoup plus purement l'ignorance et plus euidemment? Le philosophe Pyrrho courant en mer le hazard d'vne grande tourmente, ne presentoit à ceux qui estoyent auec luy à imiter que la securité d'vn porceau, qui voyageoit auecques eux, regardant cette tempeste sans effroy. La philosophie au bout de ses preceptes nous renuoye aux exemples d'vn athlete et d'vn muletier: ausquels on void ordinairement beaucoup moins de ressentiment de mort, de douleurs, et d'autres inconueniens, et plus de fermeté, que la science n'en fournit onques à aucun, qui n'y fust nay et preparé de soy-mesmes par habitude naturelle.

Qui fait qu'on incise et taille les tendres membres d'vn enfant et ceux d'vn cheual plus aisément que les nostres, si ce n'est l'ignorance? Combien en a rendu de malades la seule force de l'imagination? Nous en voyons ordinairement se faire saigner, purger, et medeciner pour guerir des maux qu'ils ne sentent qu'en leur discours. Lors que les vrais maux nous faillent, la science nous preste les siens: cette couleur et ce teint vous presagent quelque defluxion caterreuse: cette saison chaude vous menasse d'vne émotion fieureuse: cette coupeure de la ligne vitale de vostre main gauche, vous aduertit de quelque notable et voisine indisposition. Et en fin elle s'en addresse tout detroussément à la santé mesme.

Cette allegresse et vigueur de ieunesse, ne peut arrester en vne assiette, il luy faut desrober du sang et de la force, de peur qu'elle ne se tourne contre vous mesmes. Comparés la vie d'vn homme asseruy à telles imaginations, à celle d'vn laboureur, se laissant aller

ENGLISH

But even if learning did in fact do what they say, blunting and dulling the sharpness of the misfortunes that dog us, what does it do but what ignorance does much more purely and more evidently? The philosopher Pyrrho, caught at sea in a great storm, offered those who were with him nothing to imitate but the composure of a pig that was traveling with them, watching the tempest without fear. Philosophy, at the end of its precepts, sends us back to the examples of an athlete and a muleteer. In them we commonly see much less feeling of death, pain and other troubles, and more firmness, than learning ever supplied to anyone who was not born to it and prepared for it of himself by natural disposition.

What makes it easier to cut and carve the tender limbs of a child, or those of a horse, than ours, if not ignorance? How many has the mere power of imagination made ill? We commonly see people having themselves bled, purged and dosed to cure ills they feel only in their reasoning. When real ills fail us, learning lends us its own: this color and this complexion portend some catarrhal discharge; this hot season threatens you with a feverish attack; this break in the life line of your left hand warns you of some notable and imminent illness. And in the end it goes straight for health itself.

This liveliness and vigor of youth cannot stay settled; you must draw off some of its blood and strength, lest it turn against you. Compare the life of a man enslaved to such fancies with that of a plowman. The plowman follows his natural appet-

FRENCH

apres son appetit naturel, mesurant les choses au seul sentiment present, sans science et sans prognostique, qui n'a du mal que lors qu'il l'a: où l'autre a souuent la pierre en l'ame auant qu'il l'ait aux reins: comme s'il n'estoit point assez à temps pour souffrir le mal lors qu'il y sera, il l'anticipe par fantasie, et luy court au deuant.

2.12.94 Ce que ie dy de la medecine, se peut tirer par exemple generalement à toute science. De là est venuë cette ancienne opinion des philosophes, qui logeoient le souuerain bien à la recognoissance de la foiblesse de nostre iugement. Mon ignorance me preste autant d'occasion d'esperance que de crainte: et n'ayant autre regle de ma santé, que celle des exemples d'autruy, et des euenemens que ie vois ailleurs en pareille occasion, i'en trouue de toutes sortes: et m'arreste aux comparaisons, qui me sont plus fauorables.

Ie reçois la santé les bras ouuerts, libre, plaine, et entiere: et aiguise mon appetit à la iouïr, d'autant plus qu'elle m'est à present moins ordinaire et plus rare: tant s'en faut que ie trouble son repos et sa douceur, par l'amertume d'vne nouuelle et contrainte forme de viure.

2.12.95 Les bestes nous montrent assez combien l'agitation de nostre esprit nous apporte de maladies. Ce qu'on nous dit de ceux du Bresil, qu'ils ne mouroyent que de vieillesse, on l'attribue à la serenité et tranquillité de leur air, ie l'attribue plustost à la tranquillité et serenité de leur ame, deschargée de toute passion, pensée et occupation tendue ou desplaisante: comme gents qui passoyent leur vie en vne admirable simplicité et ignorance, sans lettres, sans loy, sans Roy, sans relligion quelconque.

2.12.96 Et d'où vient ce qu'on trouue par experience, que les plus grossiers et plus lourds sont plus fermes et plus desirables aux executions amoureuses? et que l'amour d'vn muletier se rend souuent plus acceptable, que celle d'vn gallant homme? sinon qu'en cettuy-cy l'agitation de l'ame trouble sa force corporelle, la rompt, et lasse: comme elle lasse aussi et trouble ordinairement soy-mesmes? Qui la desment, qui la iette plus coustumierement à la manie, que sa promptitude, sa pointe, son agilité, et en fin sa force propre? Dequoy se fait la plus subtile folie que de la plus subtile sagesse?

Comme des grandes amitiez naissent des grandes inimitiez, des santez vigoreuses les mortelles maladies:

ENGLISH

ite and measures things only by present sensation, without learning and without prognosis; he suffers only when he is ill. The other often has the stone in his soul before he has it in his kidneys. As if it were not soon enough to suffer the illness when it comes, he anticipates it in fancy and runs out to meet it.

What I say of medicine can be extended by way of example to every kind of learning. From this came that ancient opinion of the philosophers who placed the sovereign good in recognizing the weakness of our judgment. My ignorance gives me as much reason for hope as for fear. I have no other rule for my health than the examples of others and the outcomes I see elsewhere on similar occasions; I find some of every kind, and fix on the comparisons that are most favorable to me.

I welcome health with open arms, free, full and entire, and I sharpen my appetite to enjoy it, all the more because it is now less usual and rarer for me. So far am I from disturbing its rest and sweetness with the bitterness of a new and constrained way of life.

The beasts show us well enough how many illnesses the agitation of our mind brings us. We are told of the people of Brazil that they died only of old age, and this is attributed to the serenity and calm of their air. I attribute it rather to the calm and serenity of their souls, free of any passion and of any tense or unpleasant thought or occupation, as people who spent their lives in an admirable simplicity and ignorance, without letters, without law, without king, without any religion whatever.

And how else do we explain what experience shows, that the coarsest and dullest men are firmer and more desirable in the performance of love, and that a muleteer's love is often more welcome than a gentleman's? Is it not that in the gentleman the agitation of the soul disturbs his bodily strength, breaks it and wearies it, just as it also commonly wearies and disturbs itself? What unhinges the soul, what more often throws it into madness, than its own quickness, its keenness, its agility, in short its own strength? What is the subtlest folly made of, if not the subtlest wisdom?

Just as great enmities are born of great friendships, and mortal illnesses of vigorous health, so

FRENCH

ainsi des rares et vifues agitations de noz ames, les plus excellentes manies, et plus detraquées: il n'y a qu'vn demy tour de cheuille à passer de l'vn à l'autre. Aux actions des hommes insensez, nous voyons combien proprement s'aduient la folie, auec les plus vigoureuses operations de nostre ame. Qui ne sçait combien est imperceptible le voisinage d'entre la folie auec les gaillardes eleuations d'vn esprit libre; et les effects d'vne vertu supreme et extraordinaire? Platon dit les melancholiques plus disciplinables et excellens: aussi n'en est-il point qui ayent tant de propension à la folie. Infinis esprits se treuuent ruinez par leur propre force et soupplesse.

Quel sault vient de prendre de sa propre agitation et allegresse, l'vn des plus iudicieux, ingenieux et plus formés à l'air de cette antique et pure poësie, qu'autre poëte Italien aye de long temps esté? N'a-t-il pas dequoy sçauoir gré à cette sienne viuacité meurtriere? à cette clarté qui l'a aueuglé? à cette exacte, et tendue apprehension de la raison, qui l'a mis sans raison? à la curieuse et laborieuse queste des sciences, qui l'a conduit à la bestise? à cette rare aptitude aux exercices de l'ame, qui l'a rendu sans exercice et sans ame?

I'eus plus de despit encore que de compassion, de le voir à Ferrare en si piteux estat suruiuant à soy-mesmes, mescognoissant et soy et ses ouurages; lesquels sans son sçeu, et toutesfois à sa veuë, on a mis en lumiere incorrigez et informes.

2.12.97 Voulez vous vn homme sain, le voulez vous reglé, et en ferme et seure posture? affublez le de tenebres d'oisiueté et de pesanteur. Il nous faut abestir pour nous assagir: et nous esblouir, pour nous guider.

Et si on me dit que la commodité d'auoir l'appetit froid et mousse aux douleurs et aux maux, tire apres soy cette incommodité, de nous rendre aussi par consequent moins aiguz et frians, à la iouyssance des biens et des plaisirs: cela est vray: mais la misere de nostre condition porte, que nous n'auons tant à iouyr qu'à fuir, et que l'extreme volupté ne nous touche pas comme vne legere douleur: *Segnius homines bona quàm mala sentiunt*: nous ne sentons point l'entiere santé, comme la moindre des maladies:

ENGLISH

from the rare and vivid agitations of our souls come the most remarkable and most deranged manias: it takes only half a turn of the peg to pass from the one to the other. In the actions of madmen we see how neatly folly fits in with the most vigorous operations of our soul. Who does not know how imperceptible is the borderline between folly and the lively flights of a free mind, and the effects of a supreme and extraordinary virtue? Plato says that melancholics are the most teachable and the most excellent; and indeed there are none so prone to madness. Countless minds are found ruined by their own strength and suppleness.

What a fall, through his own agitation and liveliness, has just been taken by one of the most judicious and ingenious of poets, more deeply formed in the manner of that ancient and pure poetry than any other Italian poet has been for a long time! Has he not good reason to be grateful to that murderous liveliness of his? to that brightness which has blinded him? to that exact and intense grasp of reason which has left him without reason? to that curious and laborious quest for knowledge which has led him to stupidity? to that rare aptitude for the exercises of the mind, which has left him with no exercise and no mind?[65]

I felt even more vexation than pity at seeing him in Ferrara in so pitiful a state, outliving himself, not knowing himself or his works. Without his knowledge and yet before his eyes, they have been published uncorrected and unshaped.

Do you want a man healthy? Do you want him orderly, in a firm and steady posture? Wrap him in the darkness of idleness and dullness. We must be stupefied to be made wise, and blinded to be guided.

Someone may tell me that the advantage of having a cold and blunted sensibility to pains and ills brings with it a disadvantage: it also makes us, in consequence, less keen and eager in the enjoyment of goods and pleasures. That is true. But the wretchedness of our condition is such that we have less to enjoy than to flee, and the greatest pleasure does not touch us as much as a slight

65 Torquato Tasso, confined as insane in the hospital of Sant'Anna at Ferrara from 1579 to 1586; Montaigne passed through Ferrara in 1580.

FRENCH

Pungit
In cute vix summa violatum plagula corpus,
Quando valere nihil quemquam mouet.

Hoc iuuat vnum,
Quòd me non torquet latus, aut pes: cætera quisquam
Vix queat aut sanum sese, aut sentire valentem. *Nostre bien estre, ce n'est que la priuation d'estre mal. Voyla pourquoy la secte de philosophie, qui a le plus faict valoir la volupté, encore l'a elle rengée à la seule indolence. Le n'auoir point de mal, c'est le plus auoir de bien, que l'homme puisse esperer: comme disoit Ennius.* Nimium boni est, cui nihil est mali.

2.12.98 Car ce mesme chatouillement et aiguisement, qui se rencontre en certains plaisirs, et semble nous enleuer au dessus de la santé simple, et de l'indolence; cette volupté actiue, mouuante, et ie ne sçay comment cuisante et mordante, celle là mesme, ne vise qu'à l'indolence, comme à son but. L'appetit qui nous rauit à l'accointance des femmes, il ne cherche qu'à chasser la peine que nous apporte le desir ardent et furieux, et ne demande qu'à l'assouuir, et se loger en repos, et en l'exemption de cette fieure. Ainsi des autres. Ie dy donc, que si la simplesse nous achemine à point n'auoir de mal, elle nous achemine à vn tres-heureux estat selon nostre condition.

Si ne la faut-il point imaginer si plombée, qu'elle soit du tout sans sentiment. Car Crantor auoit bien raison de combattre l'indolence d'Epicurus, si on la bastissoit si profonde que l'abort mesme et la naissance des maux en fust à dire. Ie ne louë point cette indolence qui n'est ny possible, ny desirable. Ie suis content de n'estre pas malade: mais si ie le suis, ie veux sçauoir que ie le suis, et si on me cauterise ou incise, ie le veux sentir. De vray, qui desracineroit la cognoissance du mal, il extirperoit quand et quand la cognoissance de la volupté, et en fin aneantiroit l'homme.

Istud nihil dolere, non sine magna mercede contingit immanitatis in animo, stuporis in corpore. Le mal est à l'homme bien à son tour. Ny la douleur ne luy est tousiours à fuïr, ny la volupté tousiours à suiure.

2.12.99

ENGLISH

pain. *Men feel good things less keenly than bad.* We do not feel perfect health as we feel the least of illnesses: We feel the sting
when the body is hurt by a little wound that barely grazes the skin,
while being well moves no one at all.[66]

This alone delights me:
that my side or my foot does not torment me; beyond that, one
could hardly tell oneself to be sound or feel oneself to be well. *Our well-being is nothing but the absence of being ill. That is why the school of philosophy that made the most of pleasure still reduced it to mere freedom from pain. To have no pain is to have the most good that man can hope for, as Ennius said:* He has good aplenty who has nothing bad.

Consider the tickling and sharpening found in certain pleasures, which seems to lift us above simple health and freedom from pain. That active, moving pleasure, somehow burning and biting—even that aims only at freedom from pain as its goal. The appetite that carries us away into intimacy with women seeks only to drive out the torment brought on by ardent and furious desire. It asks only to satisfy it and come to rest, freed from that fever. And so with the others. I say, then, that if simplicity leads us to having no pain, it leads us to a very happy state, given our condition.

Yet we must not imagine it so leaden as to be wholly without feeling. Crantor was quite right to attack Epicurus's freedom from pain, if it were built so deep that even the approach and onset of ills were missing. I do not praise that freedom from pain which is neither possible nor desirable. I am content not to be ill; but if I am, I want to know that I am, and if I am cauterized or cut, I want to feel it. In truth, whoever rooted out the knowledge of pain would at the same time extirpate the knowledge of pleasure, and in the end annihilate man.

This freedom from all pain is not achieved without a great price: inhumanity in the mind, insensibility in the body. Pain, in its turn, is good for man. Neither is pain always to be fled, nor pleasure always to be pursued.

FRENCH

C'est vn tres-grand auantage pour l'honneur de l'ignorance, que la science mesme nous reiecte entre ses bras, quand elle se trouue empeschée à nous roidir contre la pesanteur des maux: elle est contrainte de venir à cette composition, de nous lascher la bride, et donner congé de nous sauuer en son giron, et nous mettre soubs sa faueur à l'abri des coups et iniures de la Fortune. Car que veut elle dire autre chose, quand elle nous presche de retirer notre pensée des maux qui nous tiennent, et l'entretenir des voluptez perdues; et de nous seruir pour consolation des maux presens, de la souuenance des biens passez, et d'appeller à nostre secours vn contentement esuanouy, pour l'opposer à ce qui nous presse?

Leuationes ægritudinum in auocatione à cogitanda molestia, et reuocatione ad contemplandas voluptates ponit, si ce n'est qu'où la force luy manque, elle veut vser de ruse, et donner vn tour de soupplesse et de iambe, où la vigueur du corps et des bras vient à luy faillir. Car non seulement à vn philosophe, mais simplement à vn homme rassis, quand il sent par effect l'alteration cuisante d'vne fieure chaude, quelle monnoye est-ce, de le payer de la souuenance de la douceur du vin Grec? Ce seroit plustost luy empirer son marché, *Che ricordarsi il ben doppia la noia.*

2.12.100 De mesme condition est cet autre conseil, que la Philosophie donne; de maintenir en la memoire seulement le bonheur passé, et d'en effacer les desplaisirs que nous auons soufferts; comme si nous auions en nostre pouuoir la science de l'oubly: et conseil duquel nous valons moins encore vn coup. *Suauis est laborum præteritorum memoria.* Comment? la Philosophie qui me doit mettre les armes à la main, pour combattre la Fortune; qui me doit roidir le courage pour fouller aux pieds toutes les aduersitez humaines, vient elle à cette mollesse, de me faire conniller par ces destours coüards et ridicules? Car la memoire nous represente, non pas ce que nous choisissons, mais ce qui luy plaist.

Voire il n'est rien qui imprime si viuement quelque chose en nostre souuenance, que le desir de l'oublier. C'est vne bonne maniere de donner en garde, et d'empreindre en nostre ame quelque chose, que de la solliciter de la perdre. Et cela est faulx, *Est situm in nobis, vt et aduersa quasi perpetua obliuione obruamus, et secunda iucundè et suauiter meminerimus*. Et cecy est vray, *Memini etiam quæ*

ENGLISH

It is a very great point in ignorance's honor that learning itself throws us back into its arms when it finds itself at a loss to stiffen us against the weight of our ills. Learning is forced to come to this compromise: to give us free rein, to allow us to take refuge in ignorance's lap and to shelter, under its protection, from the blows and injuries of Fortune. For what else does it mean when it preaches that we should withdraw our thoughts from the ills that grip us and occupy them with lost pleasures? Or that we should use the memory of past goods as consolation for present ills, and call to our aid a vanished contentment to set against what is pressing us?

He places the relief of distress in calling the mind away from thinking of its trouble and back to the contemplation of pleasures—unless it is that, where strength fails it, learning wants to use cunning, and to try a nimble trick and a trip of the leg where the vigor of body and arms fails it. Take not just a philosopher but simply a level-headed man, when he actually feels the burning disturbance of a high fever: what sort of coin is it to pay him with the memory of the sweetness of Greek wine? It would rather make his bargain worse: *For remembering good doubles the pain.*[67]

Of the same kind is that other counsel Philosophy gives: to keep in memory only past happiness and erase from it the displeasures we have suffered—as if we had the art of forgetting in our power; and a counsel that leaves us worse off yet again. *The memory of past toils is sweet.* What? Philosophy ought to put weapons in my hand to fight Fortune; it ought to stiffen my courage to trample underfoot all human adversities. Does it sink to such softness as to make me dodge like a rabbit through these cowardly and ridiculous byways? For memory presents to us not what we choose, but what it pleases.

Indeed, nothing imprints something so vividly on our memory as the desire to forget it. A good way to entrust something to our soul's keeping and stamp it there is to urge the soul to lose it. And this is false: *It is in our power to bury adversity in an almost perpetual oblivion, and to remember prosperity pleasantly and sweetly.* And this is true: *I remember*

66 Livy; then Latin verses by Étienne de La Boétie, Montaigne's friend.
67 Cicero, Tusculan Disputations, on Epicurus.

FRENCH

nolo: obliuisci non possum quæ volo. Et de qui est ce conseil? de celuy, *qui se vnus sapientem profiteri sit ausus*: *Qui genus humanum ingenio superauit, et omnes / Præstrinxit stellas, exortus vti ætherius sol.* De vuider et desmunir la memoire, est-ce pas le vray et propre chemin à l'ignorance?

Iners malorum remedium ignorantia est. Nous voyons plusieurs pareils preceptes, par lesquels on nous permet d'emprunter du vulgaire des apparences friuoles, où la raison viue et forte ne peut assez: pourueu qu'elles nous seruent de contentement et de consolation. Où ils ne peuuent guérir la playe, ils sont contents de l'endormir et pallier. Ie croy qu'ils ne me nieront pas cecy, que s'ils pouuoyent adiouster de l'ordre, et de la constance, en vn estat de vie, qui se maintinst en plaisir et en tranquillité par quelque foiblesse et maladie de iugement, qu'ils ne l'acceptassent: *Potare, et spargere flores / Incipiam, patiárque vel inconsultus haberi.* Il se trouueroit plusieurs philosophes de l'aduis de Lycas.

Cettuy-cy ayant au demeurant ses mœurs bien reglées, viuant doucement et paisiblement en sa famille, ne manquant à nul office de son deuoir envers les siens et estrangers, se conseruant tresbien des choses nuisibles, s'estoit par quelque alteration de sens imprimé en la ceruelle vne resuerie. C'est qu'il pensoit estre perpetuellement aux theatres à y voir des passetemps, des spectacles, et des plus belles comedies du monde. Guery qu'il fut par les medecins, de cette humeur peccante, à peine qu'il ne les mist en procés pour le restablir en la douceur de ces imaginations. Pol!

me occidistis, amici,
Non seruastis, ait; cui sic extorta voluptas,
Et demptus per vim mentis gratissimus error. D'vne pareille resuerie à celle de Thrasylaus, fils de Pythodorus, qui se faisoit à croire que tous les nauires qui relaschoient du port de Pyrée, et y abordoient, ne trauailloyent que pour son seruice: se resiouyssant de la bonne fortune de leur nauigation, les recueillant auec ioye. Son frere Crito l'ayant faict remettre en son meilleur sens, il regrettoit cette sorte de condition, en laquelle il auoit vescu en liesse, et deschargé de tout desplaisir.

ENGLISH

even what I would rather not; I cannot forget what I would. And whose counsel is this? His *who alone dared to proclaim himself wise*: *Who surpassed the human race in genius, and outshone / all the stars, as the sun risen in the sky.* Is not emptying and stripping the memory the true and proper road to ignorance?[68]

Ignorance is a sluggish remedy for ills. We see several similar precepts by which we are allowed to borrow frivolous appearances from the common people where lively, strong reason does not suffice, provided they serve us for contentment and consolation. Where they cannot heal the wound, they are content to numb it and dress it over. I believe they will not deny me this: if they could add order and constancy to a state of life kept in pleasure and tranquillity through some weakness and sickness of judgment, they would accept it. *I shall begin to drink and scatter flowers, / and even put up with being thought reckless.* There would be many philosophers of Lycas's opinion.[69]

This man was otherwise well-regulated in his ways, living gently and peaceably in his household, failing in no duty toward his own people or toward strangers, and guarding himself very well against harmful things. Yet through some disorder of the senses he had got a delusion fixed in his brain: he thought he was perpetually at the theater watching entertainments, spectacles and the finest comedies in the world. When the doctors had cured him of this morbid humor, he very nearly sued them to be restored to the sweetness of those fancies. Good heavens!

you have killed me, my friends,
not saved me, he said; you have wrenched my pleasure from me
and taken away by force my mind's most delightful illusion. His was a delusion like that of Thrasylaus, son of Pythodorus, who made himself believe that all the ships that put out from the port of Piraeus and came into it were working only for his service. He rejoiced in the good fortune of their voyages and welcomed them with joy. When his brother Crito had him restored to his better senses, he missed that condition in which he had lived in gladness, free of all displeasure.

68 Epicurus, as described by Cicero and by Lucretius.
69 Seneca, Oedipus; then Horace, Epistles I.5. Horace tells the story that follows in Epistles II.2.

FRENCH

C'est ce que dit ce vers ancien Grec, qu'il y a beaucoup de commodité à n'estre pas si aduisé: Εν τω φρονειν γαρ μηδεν, ήδιστος βιος Et l'Ecclesiaste; En beaucoup de sagesse, beaucoup de desplaisir: et, Qui acquiert science, s'acquiert du trauail et tourment.

2.12.101 Cela mesme, à quoy la Philosophie consent en general, cette derniere recepte qu'elle ordonne à toute sorte de necessitez, qui est de mettre fin à la vie, que nous ne pouuons supporter: *Placet? pare. Non placet? quacumque vis exi. Pungit dolor? vel fodiat sanè? si nudus es, da iugulum: sin tectus armis Vulcanijs, id est fortitudine, resiste:* et ce mot des Grecs conuiues qu'ils y appliquent, *Aut bibat, aut abeat*: qui sonne plus sortablement en la langue d'vn Gascon, qu'en celle de Ciceron, qui change volontiers en V. le B: Viuere si rectè nescis, decede peritis.

/ Lusisti satis, edisti satis, atque bibisti:
Tempus abire tibi est, ne potum largius æquo
Rideat, et pulset lasciua decentius ætas. qu'est-ce autre chose qu'vne confession de son impuissance; et vn renuoy, non seulement à l'ignorance, pour y estre à couuert, mais à la stupidité mesme, au non sentir, et au non estre?

Democritum postquàm matura vetustas
Admonuit memorem, motus languescere mentis:
Sponte sua letho caput obuius obtulit ipse. C'est ce que disoit Antisthenes, qu'il falloit faire prouision ou de sens pour entendre, ou de licol pour se pendre: et ce que Chrysippus alleguoit sur ce propos du poëte Tyrtæus, *De la vertu, ou de mort approcher.* Et Crates disoit, que l'amour se guerissoit par la faim, sinon par le temps: et à qui ces deux moyens ne plairoyent, par la hart. Celuy Sextius, duquel Seneque et Plutarque parlent auec si grande recommandation, s'estant ietté, toutes choses laissées, à l'estude de la philosophie, delibera de se precipiter en la mer, voyant le progrez de ses estudes trop tardif et trop long.

ENGLISH

That is what this ancient Greek line says, that there is great advantage in not being so wise: *For life is sweetest when one knows nothing.* And Ecclesiastes: "In much wisdom is much grief"; and "He who acquires knowledge acquires toil and torment."[70]

That very thing to which Philosophy generally consents, the last remedy it prescribes for every kind of necessity, which is to put an end to the life we cannot bear: *Does it please you? Bear it. Does it not? Leave by whatever way you like. Does pain sting you? Or even pierce you through? If you are naked, offer your throat; but if you are covered by the arms of Vulcan, that is, by fortitude, resist.* And that saying of the Greek drinking companions which they apply to it, *Let him drink or let him leave*—which sounds more apt on a Gascon's tongue than on Cicero's, since a Gascon readily changes B into V: If you do not know how to live rightly, make way for those who do.[71]

/ You have played enough, eaten enough and drunk enough:
it is time for you to leave, lest, having drunk more than your share,
you be laughed at and jostled by an age to which wantonness is more becoming. What is all this but a confession of Philosophy's impotence, and a referral not only to ignorance, to be sheltered there, but to stupidity itself, to not feeling and to not being?[72]

When ripe old age had warned Democritus
that the motions of his mind were growing feeble,
he went of his own accord to meet death and offered it his head. That is what Antisthenes said: one must lay in a supply either of sense to understand or of a halter to hang oneself. And Chrysippus cited on this subject the poet Tyrtaeus: *Either to virtue or to death draw near.* And Crates said that love was cured by hunger, or else by time, and for those who liked neither of these remedies, by the rope. That Sextius of whom Seneca and Plutarch speak with such high praise had left everything else and thrown himself into the study of philosophy. Seeing the progress of his studies too slow and too long, he resolved to throw himself into the sea.

70 Sophocles, Ajax; Ecclesiastes 1:18.
71 Gascons confused b and v, so bibat ("let him drink") could become vivat ("let him live"): "let him live or let him leave."
72 Horace, Epistles II.2.

FRENCH	ENGLISH
Il couroit à la mort, au deffault de la science. Voicy les mots de la loy, sur ce subject: Si d'auenture il suruient quelque grand inconuenient qui ne se puisse remedier, le port est prochain: et se peut-on sauuer à nage, hors du corps, comme hors d'vn esquif qui faict eau: car c'est la crainte de mourir, non pas le desir de viure, qui tient le fol attaché au corps.	He was running to death for lack of knowledge. Here are the words of the law on this subject: "If by chance some great trouble befalls that cannot be remedied, the harbor is near, and one may save oneself by swimming out of the body as out of a leaking skiff; for it is the fear of dying, not the desire to live, that keeps the fool attached to the body."
2.12.102 Comme la vie se rend par la simplicité plus plaisante, elle s'en rend aussi plus innocente et meilleure, comme ie commençois tantost à dire. Les simples, dit S. Paul, et les ignorans, s'esleuent et se saisissent du ciel; et nous, à tout nostre sçauoir, nous plongeons aux abismes infernaux.	As life becomes pleasanter through simplicity, so it also becomes more innocent and better, as I was beginning to say a while ago. The simple and the ignorant, says Saint Paul, rise up and take hold of heaven; and we, with all our learning, plunge into the abysses of hell.[73]
Ie ne m'arreste ny à Valentian, ennemy declaré de la science et des lettres, ny à Licinius, tous deux Empereurs Romains, qui les nommoient le venin et la peste de tout estat politique: ny à Mahumet, qui, comme i'ay entendu, interdict la science à ses hommes: mais l'exemple de ce grand Lycurgus et son authorité doit certes auoir grand poix, et la reuerence de cette diuine police Lacedemonienne, si grande, si admirable, et si long temps fleurissante en vertu et en bon heur, sans aucune institution ny exercice de lettres.	I do not dwell on Valentinian, a declared enemy of learning and letters, nor on Licinius, both Roman emperors, who called them the poison and plague of every body politic; nor on Muhammad, who, as I have heard, forbade learning to his followers. But the example and authority of the great Lycurgus must certainly carry great weight. So must the reverence due to that divine Spartan government, so great, so admirable, and flourishing so long in virtue and happiness without any teaching or practice of letters.
2.12.103 Ceux qui reuiennent de ce monde nouueau qui a esté descouuert du temps de nos peres, par les Espagnols, nous peuuent tesmoigner combien ces nations, sans magistrat, et sans loy, viuent plus legitimement et plus reglément que les nostres, où il y a plus d'officiers et de loix, qu'il n'y a d'autres hommes, et qu'il n'y a d'actions. *Di cittatorie piene e di libelli,* *D'esamine e di carte, di procure* *Hanno le mani e il seno, e gran fastelli* *Di chiose, di consigli e di letture,* *Per cui le facultà de pouerelli* *Non sono mai ne le citta sicure,* *Hanno dietro e dinanzi e d'ambi i lati,* *Notai, procuratori ed aduocati.*	Those who come back from that new world discovered by the Spaniards in our fathers' time can testify to us how much more lawfully and orderly those nations live, without magistrate and without law, than ours. Here there are more officers and laws than there are other men, and than there are actions. *With summonses and with writs,* *with examinations and papers and proxies* *their hands and bosoms are full, and great bundles* *of glosses, counsels and readings,* *through which the goods of poor folk* *are never safe in the cities;* *behind them, before them and on either side they have notaries, attorneys and advocates.*[74]
2.12.104 C'estoit ce que disoit vn Senateur Romain des derniers siecles, que leurs predecesseurs auoyent l'aleine puante à l'ail, et l'estomach musqué de bonne conscience: et qu'au rebours, ceux de son temps ne sentoient au dehors que le parfum, puans au dedans à toute sorte de vices: c'est à dire, comme ie pense, qu'ils auoyent beaucoup de sçauoir	That is what a Roman senator of the later centuries said: their forebears had breath stinking of garlic and stomachs perfumed with the musk of a good conscience; those of his own time, on the contrary, smelled outwardly only of perfume,

73 The words are in fact Saint Augustine's (Confessions VIII.8).
74 Ariosto, Orlando Furioso XIV.

FRENCH

et de suffisance, et grand faute de preud'hommie. L'inciuilité, l'ignorance, la simplesse, la rudesse s'accompagnent volontiers de l'innocence: la curiosité, la subtilité, le sçauoir trainent la malice à leur suite: l'humilité, la crainte, l'obéissance, la debonnaireté, qui sont les pieces principales pour la conseruation de la societé humaine, demandent vne ame vuide, docile et presumant peu de soy.

2.12.105 Les Chrestiens ont vne particuliere cognoissance, combien la curiosité est vn mal naturel et originel en l'homme. Le soing de s'augmenter en sagesse et en science, ce fut la premiere ruine du genre humain; c'est la voye, par où il s'est precipité à la damnation eternelle. L'orgueil est sa perte et sa corruption: c'est l'orgueil qui iette l'homme à quartier des voyes communes, qui luy fait embrasser les nouuelletez, et aymer mieux estre chef d'vne trouppe errante, et desuoyée, au sentier de perdition, aymer mieux estre regent et precepteur d'erreur et de mensonge, que d'estre disciple en l'eschole de verité, se laissant mener et conduire par la main d'autruy, à la voye battuë et droicturiere.

C'est à l'aduanture ce que dit ce mot Grec ancien, que la superstition suit l'orgueil, et luy obeit comme à son pere: ἡ δεισιδαιμονια χαταπερ πατρι τω τυφω πειτεται. O cuider, combien tu nous empesches! Apres que Socrates fut aduerty, que le Dieu de sagesse luy auoit attribué le nom de Sage, il en fut estonné: et se recherchant et secouant par tout, n'y trouuoit aucun fondement à cette diuine sentence. Il en sçauoit de iustes, temperants, vaillants, sçauants comme luy: et plus eloquents, et plus beaux, et plus vtiles au païs.

En fin il se resolut, qu'il n'estoit distingué des autres, et n'estoit sage que par ce qu'il ne se tenoit pas tel: et que son Dieu estimoit bestise singuliere à l'homme, l'opinion de science et de sagesse: et que sa meilleure doctrine estoit la doctrine de l'ignorance, et la simplicité sa meilleure sagesse. La saincte Parole declare miserables ceux d'entre nous, qui s'estiment: Bourbe et cendre, leur dit-elle, qu'as-tu à te glorifier? et ailleurs, Dieu a faict l'homme semblable à l'ombre, de laquelle qui iugera, quand par l'esloignement de la lumiere elle sera esuanouye? Ce n'est rien que de nous.

ENGLISH

while within they stank of every kind of vice. That is to say, I think, that they had much learning and ability and a great lack of integrity. Want of polish, ignorance, simplicity and roughness readily keep company with innocence. Curiosity, subtlety and learning bring malice in their train. Humility, fear, obedience and gentleness, which are the chief elements for preserving human society, require a soul that is empty, docile and presuming little of itself.

Christians have a special knowledge of how natural and original an evil curiosity is in man. The urge to increase in wisdom and knowledge was the first ruin of the human race; it is the road by which it hurled itself into eternal damnation. Pride is its downfall and corruption. It is pride that drives man off the common roads and makes him embrace novelties. It makes him prefer to be the leader of a wandering band gone astray on the path of perdition, prefer to be master and teacher of error and falsehood, rather than a pupil in the school of truth, letting himself be led and guided by another's hand along the beaten and righteous road.

That is perhaps what the ancient Greek saying means, that superstition follows pride and obeys it as its father: *Superstition obeys pride as a father.* O presumption, how you hamper us! When Socrates was told that the god of wisdom had given him the name of Wise, he was stunned. Searching and shaking himself through and through, he could find no ground for this divine pronouncement. He knew men as just, temperate, valiant and learned as he, and more eloquent, handsomer and more useful to the country.

At last he concluded that he was distinguished from others, and was wise, only because he did not consider himself so; that his god regarded the opinion of knowledge and wisdom as a singular stupidity in man; and that his best teaching was the teaching of ignorance, and simplicity his best wisdom. Holy Scripture declares wretched those of us who think highly of themselves: "Mire and ashes," it says to them, "what have you to glory in?" And elsewhere: "God has made man like the shadow"—and who will judge of the shadow when, the light having gone, it has vanished? We are nothing at all.

FRENCH

ENGLISH

2.12.106 Il s'en faut tant que nos forces conçoiuent la haulteur diuine, que des ouurages de nostre createur, ceux-là portent mieux sa marque, et sont mieux siens, que nous entendons le moins. C'est aux Chrestiens vne occasion de croire, que de rencontrer vne chose incroyable. Elle est d'autant plus selon raison, qu'elle est contre l'humaine raison. Si elle estoit selon raison, ce ne seroit plus miracle; et si elle estoit selon quelque exemple, ce ne seroit plus chose singuliere. *Melius scitur Deus nesciendo*, dit S. Augustin. Et Tacitus, *Sanctius est ac reuerentius de actis Deorum credere quàm scire*. Et Platon estime qu'il y ayt quelque vice d'impieté à trop curieusement s'enquerir et de Dieu, et du monde, et des causes premieres des choses.

Our powers are so far from conceiving the divine loftiness that, of our creator's works, those that bear his mark best and are most his own are the ones we understand least. For Christians, coming upon something incredible is a reason to believe. It is all the more in accordance with reason for being against human reason. If it were in accordance with reason, it would no longer be a miracle; and if it followed some precedent, it would no longer be singular. *God is better known by not knowing*, says Saint Augustine. And Tacitus: *It is holier and more reverent to believe in the deeds of the gods than to know them.* And Plato holds that there is some taint of impiety in inquiring too curiously into God, the world and the first causes of things.

Atque illum quidem parentem huius vniuersitatis inuenire difficile: et, quum iam inueneris, indicare in vulgus, nefas, dit Ciceron. Nous disons bien puissance, verité, iustice: ce sont parolles qui signifient quelque chose de grand: mais cette chose là, nous ne la voyons aucunement, ny ne la conceuons. Nous disons que Dieu craint, que Dieu se courrouce, que Dieu ayme. *Immortalia mortali sermone notantes.* Ce sont toutes agitations et esmotions, qui ne peuuent loger en Dieu selon nostre forme, ny nous l'imaginer selon la sienne: c'est à Dieu seul de se cognoistre et interpreter ses ouurages: et le fait en nostre langue, improprement, pour s'aualler et descendre à nous, qui sommes à terre couchez.

To find the father of this universe is difficult; and when you have found him, to reveal him to the multitude is a sin, says Cicero. We do say power, truth, justice: these are words that signify something great; but that thing we do not see at all, nor conceive. We say that God fears, that God grows angry, that God loves. *Marking immortal things with mortal words.* These are all agitations and emotions that cannot dwell in God in our form, nor can we imagine him in his. It is for God alone to know himself and interpret his works. He does it in our language, improperly, to lower himself and come down to us, who lie prostrate on the ground.

La prudence comment luy peut elle conuenir, qui est l'eslite entre le bien et le mal: veu que nul mal ne le touche? Quoy la raison et l'intelligence, desquelles nous nous seruons pour par les choses obscures arriuer aux apparentes: veu qu'il n'y a rien d'obscur à Dieu? La iustice, qui distribue à chacun ce qui luy appartient, engendrée pour la société et communauté des hommes, comment est-elle en Dieu? La temperance, comment? qui est la moderation des voluptez corporelles, qui n'ont nulle place en la diuinité. La fortitude à porter la douleur, le labeur, les dangers, luy appartiennent aussi peu: ces trois choses n'ayans nul accés pres de luy. Parquoy Aristote le tient egallement exempt de vertu et de vice.

How can prudence suit him, prudence being the choice between good and evil, seeing that no evil touches him? What of reason and intelligence, which we use to arrive at what is plain by way of what is obscure, seeing that nothing is obscure to God? Justice, which gives each his due and was born for the society and community of men—how is it in God? And temperance, how? It is the moderation of bodily pleasures, which have no place in the divinity. Fortitude in bearing pain, toil and dangers belongs to him just as little, since those three things have no access to him. That is why Aristotle holds him equally exempt from virtue and from vice.

Neque gratia neque ira teneri potest, quòd quæ talia essent, imbecilla essent omnia.

He can be held by neither favor nor anger, for all such things would be marks of weakness.[75]

2.12.107 La participation que nous auons à la cognoissance de la verité, quelle qu'elle soit, ce n'est point par nos propres

Whatever share we have in the knowledge of truth, it is not by our own strength that we have

75 Cicero, On the Nature of the Gods.

FRENCH

forces que nous l'auons acquise. Dieu nous a assez appris cela par les tesmoings, qu'il a choisi du vulgaire, simples et ignorans, pour nous instruire de ses admirables secrets. Nostre foy ce n'est pas nostre acquest, c'est vn pur present de la liberalité d'autruy. Ce n'est pas par discours ou par nostre entendement que nous auons receu nostre religion, c'est par authorité et par commandement estranger. La foiblesse de nostre iugement nous y aide plus que la force, et nostre aueuglement plus que nostre clair-voyance. C'est par l'entremise de nostre ignorance, plus que de nostre science, que nous sommes sçauans de diuin sçauoir.

Ce n'est pas merueille, si nos moyens naturels et terrestres ne peuuent conceuoir cette cognoissance supernaturelle et celeste: apportons y seulement du nostre, l'obeissance et la subiection: car comme il est escrit; Ie destruiray la sapience des sages, et abbattray la prudence des prudens. Où est le sage? où est l'escriuain? où est le disputateur de ce siecle? Dieu n'a-il pas abesty la sapience de ce monde? Car puis que le monde n'a point cogneu Dieu par sapience, il luy a pleu par la vanité de la predication, sauuer les croyans.

ENGLISH

acquired it. God has taught us this plainly enough through the witnesses he chose from among the common people, simple and ignorant men, to instruct us in his wonderful secrets. Our faith is not something we have earned; it is a pure gift from another's generosity. It is not by reasoning or by our own understanding that we have received our religion; it is by outside authority and command. The weakness of our judgment helps us to it more than its strength, and our blindness more than our clear sight. It is through the agency of our ignorance, more than of our knowledge, that we are learned in divine learning.

It is no wonder if our natural, earthly means cannot grasp that supernatural, heavenly knowledge. Let us bring to it only what is ours: obedience and submission. For, as it is written: "I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and bring down the prudence of the prudent. Where is the wise man? Where is the scribe? Where is the debater of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? For since the world did not know God through wisdom, it pleased him to save those who believe through the foolishness of preaching."[76]

WHAT THE PHILOSOPHERS FOUND

After long inquiry the wisest learned only their own ignorance.

FRENCH

2.12.108 Si me faut-il voir en fin, s'il est en la puissance de l'homme de trouuer ce qu'il cherche: et si cette queste, qu'il a employé depuis tant de siecles, l'a enrichy de quelque nouuelle force, et de quelque verité solide. Ie croy qu'il me confessera, s'il parle en conscience, que tout l'acquest qu'il a retiré d'vne si longue poursuite, c'est d'auoir appris à recognoistre sa foiblesse. L'ignorance qui estoit naturellement en nous, nous l'auons par longue estude confirmée et auerée.

Il est aduenu aux gens veritablement sçauans, ce qui aduient aux espics de bled: ils vont s'esleuant et se haussant la teste droite et fiere, tant qu'ils sont vuides; mais quand ils sont pleins et grossis de grain en leur maturité, ils commencent à s'humilier et baisser les cornes. Pareillement les hommes, ayans tout essayé, tout sondé, et n'ayans trouué en cet amas de science et prouision de tant de choses diuerses, rien de massif et de

ENGLISH

Still, I must see at last whether it is in man's power to find what he is looking for, and whether this quest, on which he has spent so many centuries, has enriched him with some new strength and some solid truth. I think he will admit to me, if he speaks in good conscience, that all the gain he has drawn from so long a pursuit is to have learned to recognize his own weakness. The ignorance that was naturally in us we have, by long study, confirmed and verified.

What has happened to the truly learned is what happens to ears of wheat: they keep rising and lifting their heads, straight and proud, as long as they are empty; but when they are full and swollen with grain at their ripeness, they begin to humble themselves and lower their horns. In the same way men, having tried everything and sounded everything, and having found in that heap of

76 Saint Paul, 1 Corinthians 1:19–21, quoting Isaiah 29:14.

FRENCH

ferme, et rien que vanité, ils ont renoncé à leur presumption, et recogneu leur condition naturelle. C'est ce que Velleius reproche à Cotta, et à Cicero, qu'ils ont appris de Philo, n'auoir rien appris.

Pherecydes, l'vn des sept sages, escriuant à Thales, comme il expiroit, I'ay, dit-il, ordonné aux miens, apres qu'ils m'auront enterré, de te porter mes escrits. S'ils contentent et toy et les autres sages, publie les: sinon, supprime les. Ils ne contiennent nulle certitude qui me satisface à moy-mesme. Aussi ne fay-ie pas profession de sçauoir la verité, ny d'y atteindre. I'ouure les choses plus que ie ne les descouure. Le plus sage homme qui fut onques, quand on luy demanda ce qu'il sçauoit, respondit, qu'il sçauoit cela, qu'il ne sçauoit rien.

Il verifioit ce qu'on dit, que la plus grand part de ce que nous sçauons, est la moindre de celles que nous ignorons: c'est à dire, que ce mesme que nous pensons sçauoir, c'est vne piece, et bien petite, de nostre ignorance.

2.12.109 Nous sçauons les choses en songe, dit Platon, et les ignorons en verité. *Omnes penè veteres, nihil cognosci, nihil percipi, nihil sciri posse dixerunt; angustos sensus, imbecilles animos, breuia curricula vitæ.* Cicero mesme, qui deuoit au sçauoir tout son vaillant, Valerius dit que, sur sa vieillesse, il commença à desestimer les lettres. Et pendant qu'il les traictoit, c'estoit sans obligation d'aucun party: suiuant ce qui luy sembloit probable, tantost en l'vne secte, tantost en l'autre: se tenant tousiours soubs la dubitation de l'Academie. *Dicendum est, sed ita vt nihil affirmem: quæram omnia, dubitans plerumque et mihi diffidens.*

2.12.110 I'auroy trop beau ieu, si ie vouloy considerer l'homme en sa commune façon et en gros: et le pourroy faire pourtant par sa regle propre; qui iuge la verité non par le poids des voix, mais par le nombre. Laissons là le peuple, *Qui vigilans stertit, / Mortua cui vita est propè iam viuo atque videnti,* qui ne se sent point, qui ne se iuge point, qui laisse la plus part de ses facultez naturelles oisiues. Ie veux prendre l'homme en sa plus haulte assiette.

ENGLISH

knowledge and store of so many different things nothing solid and firm, nothing but vanity, have given up their presumption and recognized their natural condition. That is what Velleius reproaches Cotta and Cicero with: that they had learned from Philo that they had learned nothing.[77]

Pherecydes, one of the seven sages, writing to Thales as he was dying, said: "I have ordered my people, after they have buried me, to bring you my writings. If they satisfy you and the other sages, publish them; if not, suppress them. They contain no certainty that satisfies even me. Nor do I profess to know the truth, or to reach it. I open things up more than I uncover them." The wisest man who ever lived, when asked what he knew, answered that he knew this much: that he knew nothing.[78]

He was bearing out the saying that the greatest part of what we know is the least of the parts we do not know; that is to say, the very thing we think we know is a piece, and a very small one, of our ignorance.

We know things in a dream, says Plato, and are ignorant of them in reality. *Almost all the ancients said that nothing can be known, nothing perceived, nothing understood; that the senses are narrow, minds weak, and the course of life short.* As for Cicero himself, who owed all his worth to learning, Valerius says that in his old age he began to think little of letters. And while he was engaged with them, it was without allegiance to any party: he followed what seemed probable to him, now in one school, now in another, always keeping within the doubt of the Academy. *I must speak, but in such a way as to affirm nothing; I will inquire into everything, mostly doubting and distrusting myself.*

I would have too easy a game if I chose to consider man in his ordinary state and in the mass; and yet I could do it by his own rule, which judges truth not by the weight of the votes but by their number. Let us leave aside the people, *Who snores while awake, / Whose life is all but dead while he still lives and sees,* who does not feel himself, does not judge

77 Velleius and Cotta are speakers in Cicero's On the Nature of the Gods; Philo of Larissa, head of the Academy, was Cicero's teacher.
78 Pherecydes of Syros, Greek thinker of the 6th century BC. The wisest man is Socrates.

FRENCH

Considerons-le en ce petit nombre d'hommes excellens et triez, qui ayants esté douez d'vne belle et particuliere force naturelle, l'ont encore roidie et aiguisée par soin, par estude et par art, et l'ont montée au plus hault poinct de sagesse, où elle puisse atteindre. Ils ont manié leur ame à tout sens, et à tout biais, l'ont appuyée et estançonnée de tout le secours estranger, qui luy a esté propre, et enrichie et ornée de tout ce qu'ils ont peu emprunter pour sa commodité, du dedans et dehors du monde: c'est en eux que loge la haulteur extreme de l'humaine nature. Ils ont reglé le monde de polices et de loix.

Ils l'ont instruit par arts et sciences, et instruit encore par l'exemple de leurs mœurs admirables. Ie ne mettray en compte, que ces gens-là, leur tesmoignage, et leur experience. Voyons iusques où ils sont allez, et à quoy ils se sont tenus. Les maladies et les desfauts que nous trouuerons en ce college-là, le monde les pourra hardiment bien aduouër pour siens.

ENGLISH

himself, and leaves most of his natural faculties idle. I want to take man at his highest station.

Let us consider him in that small number of excellent, select men who, endowed with a fine and singular natural power, have further stiffened and sharpened it by care, study and skill, and raised it to the highest point of wisdom it can reach. They have handled their minds in every direction and from every angle; they have propped and shored them up with every outside aid that suited them, and enriched and adorned them with all they could borrow for their benefit, from within the world and outside it. It is in them that the utmost height of human nature resides. They have regulated the world with governments and laws.

They have instructed it with arts and sciences, and instructed it further by the example of their admirable conduct. I shall take into account only these men, their testimony and their experience. Let us see how far they have gone and where they have stopped. Whatever ailments and defects we find in that company, the world may boldly own as its own.

THREE ANSWERS: FOUND, UNFINDABLE, STILL SEEKING

Dogmatists, Academics and Pyrrhonists; the Pyrrhonists suspend judgment and live by appearances.

FRENCH

2.12.111 Quiconque cherche quelque chose, il en vient à ce poinct, ou qu'il dit, qu'il l'a trouuée; ou qu'elle ne se peut trouuer; ou qu'il en est encore en queste. Toute la Philosophie est despartie en ces trois genres. Son dessein est de chercher la verité, la science, et la certitude. Les Peripateticiens, Epicuriens, Stoiciens, et autres, ont pensé l'auoir trouuée. Ceux-cy ont estably les sciences, que nous auons, et les ont traictées, comme notices certaines. Clitomachus, Carneades, et les Academiciens, ont desesperé de leur queste; et iugé que la verité ne se pouuoit conceuoir par nos moyens. La fin de ceux-cy, c'est la foiblesse et humaine ignorance. Ce party a eu la plus grande suitte, et les sectateurs les plus nobles.

Pyrrho et autres Sceptiques ou Epechistes, de qui les dogmes plusieurs anciens ont tenu tirez d'Homere, des sept sages, et d'Archilochus, et d'Eurypides, et y attachent Zeno, Democritus, Xenophanes, disent, qu'ils sont encore en cherche de la verité. Ceux-cy iugent, que

ENGLISH

Whoever is looking for something comes to this point: either he says he has found it, or that it cannot be found, or that he is still searching for it. All philosophy is divided into these three kinds. Its aim is to seek truth, knowledge and certainty. The Peripatetics, Epicureans, Stoics and others thought they had found it. These established the sciences we have and treated them as certain knowledge. Clitomachus, Carneades and the Academics despaired of their quest and judged that truth could not be grasped by our means. The end these men reach is weakness and human ignorance. This party had the largest following and the noblest adherents.[79]

Pyrrho and the other Skeptics or Ephectics—whose doctrines several ancients held to be drawn from Homer, the seven sages, Archilochus and Euripides, and to whom they attach Zeno, Demo-

79 Carneades (2nd century BC) led the skeptical New Academy; Clitomachus was his pupil and successor.

FRENCH

ceux-là qui pensent l'auoir trouuée, se trompent infiniement; et qu'il y a encore de la vanité trop hardie, en ce second degré, qui asseure que les forces humaines ne sont pas capables d'y atteindre. Car cela, d'establir la mesure de nostre puissance, de cognoistre et iuger la difficulté des choses, c'est vne grande et extreme science, de laquelle ils doubtent que l'homme soit capable. *Nil sciri quisquis putat, id quoque nescit, / An sciri possit, quo se nil scire fatetur.*

2.12.112 L'ignorance qui se sçait, qui se iuge, et qui se condamne, ce n'est pas vne entiere ignorance. Pour l'estre, il faut qu'elle s'ignore soy-mesme. De façon que la profession des Pyrrhoniens est, de bransler, doubter, et enquerir, ne s'asseurer de rien, de rien ne se respondre. Des trois actions de l'ame, l'imaginatiue, l'appetitiue, et la consentante, ils en reçoiuent les deux premieres: la derniere, ils la soustiennent, et la maintiennent ambigue, sans inclination, ny approbation d'vne part ou d'autre, tant soit-elle legere.

Zenon peignoit de geste son imagination sur cette partition des facultez de l'ame: La main espanduë et ouuerte, c'estoit apparence: la main à demy serrée, et les doigts vn peu croches, consentement: le poing fermé, comprehension: quand de la main gauche il venoit encore à clorre ce poing plus estroit, science. Or cette assiette de leur iugement droicte, et inflexible, receuant tous obiects sans application et consentement, les achemine à leur Ataraxie; qui est vne condition de vie paisible, rassise, exempte des agitations que nous receuons par l'impression de l'opinion et science, que nous pensons auoir des choses. D'où naissent la crainte, l'auarice, l'enuie, les desirs immoderez, l'ambition, l'orgueil, la superstition, l'amour de nouuelleté, la rebellion, la desobeyssance, l'opiniastreté, et la pluspart des maux corporels.

2.12.113 Voire ils s'exemptent par là, de la ialousie de leur discipline. Car ils debattent d'vne bien molle façon. Ils ne craignent point la reuenche à leur dispute. Quand ils disent que le poisant va contre-bas, ils seroient bien marris qu'on les en creust; et cherchent qu'on les contredie, pour engendrer la dubitation et surseance de

ENGLISH

critus and Xenophanes—say that they are still searching for the truth. They judge that those who think they have found it are infinitely mistaken, and that there is also too bold a vanity in the second degree, which asserts that human powers are not capable of reaching it. For that—establishing the measure of our power, knowing and judging the difficulty of things—is a great and supreme knowledge, of which they doubt that man is capable. *Whoever thinks nothing can be known does not know this either: / Whether it can be known, since he admits he knows nothing.*[80]

Ignorance that knows itself, judges itself and condemns itself is not complete ignorance. To be complete, it must be ignorant of itself. So the profession of the Pyrrhonists is to waver, doubt and inquire, to be sure of nothing, to vouch for nothing. Of the three actions of the soul—imagining, desiring and assenting—they accept the first two; the last they hold in suspense and keep ambiguous, without inclination or approval one way or the other, however slight.

Zeno used to depict by gesture his notion of this division of the faculties of the soul. The hand spread flat and open was appearance; the hand half closed, with the fingers a little curled, assent; the closed fist, comprehension; and when he went on to clench that fist still tighter with his left hand, knowledge. Now this stance of their judgment, straight and inflexible, receiving all objects without applying itself or assenting to them, leads them to their Ataraxy, which is a condition of life that is peaceful, settled and free from the agitations we receive from the impression of the opinion and knowledge we think we have of things. From these arise fear, avarice, envy, immoderate desires, ambition, pride, superstition, love of novelty, rebellion, disobedience, obstinacy, and most bodily ills.[81]

Indeed they thereby spare themselves any jealousy on behalf of their own school. For they argue in a very easygoing way. They do not fear retaliation in debate. When they say that heavy things go downward, they would be very sorry to be believed; they want to be contradicted, so as to pro-

80 Ephectics: "those who suspend judgment," from the Greek epechein, to hold back.
81 Ataraxy: Greek ataraxia, "freedom from disturbance."

FRENCH

iugement, qui est leur fin. Ils ne mettent en auant leurs propositions, que pour combattre celles qu'ils pensent, que nous ayons en nostre creance. Si vous prenez la leur, ils prendront aussi volontiers la contraire à soustenir: tout leur est vn: ils n'y ont aucun choix. Si vous establissez que la neige soit noire, ils argumentent au rebours, qu'elle est blanche.

Si vous dites qu'elle n'est ny l'vn, ny l'autre, c'est à eux à maintenir qu'elle est tous les deux. Si par certain iugement vous tenez, que vous n'en sçauez rien, ils vous maintiendront que vous le sçauez. Ouï, et si par vn axiome affirmatif vous asseurez que vous en doutez, ils vous iront debattant que vous n'en doutez pas; ou que vous ne pouuez iuger et establir que vous en doutez.

2.12.114 Et par cette extremité de doubte, qui se secoue soy-mesme, ils se separent et se diuisent de plusieurs opinions, de celles mesmes, qui ont maintenu en plusieurs façons, le doubte et l'ignorance. Pourquoy ne leur sera-il permis, disent-ils, comme il est entre les dogmatistes, à l'vn dire vert, à l'autre iaulne, à eux aussi de doubter? Est-il chose qu'on vous puisse proposer par l'aduouer ou refuser, laquelle il ne soit pas loisible de considerer comme ambigue?

Et où les autres sont portez, ou par la coustume de leur païs, ou par l'institution des parens, ou par rencontre, comme par vne tempeste, sans iugement et sans choix, voire le plus souuent auant l'aage de discretion, à telle ou telle opinion, à la secte ou Stoïque ou Epicurienne, à laquelle ils se treuuent hypothequez, asseruiz et collez, comme à vne prise qu'ils ne peuuent desmordre: *ad quamcumque disciplinam, velut tempestate, delati, ad eam, tanquam ad saxum, adhærescunt*: pourquoy, à ceux-cy, ne sera-il pareillement concedé, de maintenir leur liberté, et considerer les choses sans obligation et seruitude? *Hoc liberiores et solutiores, quòd integra illis est iudicandi potestas.* N'est-ce pas quelque aduantage, de se trouuer desengagé de la necessité, qui bride les autres?

Vaut-il pas mieux demeurer en suspens que de s'infrasquer en tant d'erreurs que l'humaine fantasie a produictes? Vaut-il pas mieux suspendre sa persuasion, que de se mesler à ces diuisions seditieuses et querelleuses? Qu'iray-ie choisir? Ce qu'il vous plaira, pourueu que vous choisissiez. Voila vne sotte responce: à laquelle il semble pourtant que tout le dogmatisme arriue: par qui il ne nous est pas permis d'ignorer ce que

ENGLISH

duce the doubt and suspension of judgment that is their goal. They put forward their propositions only to fight those they think we hold in our belief. If you take theirs, they will just as willingly take up the opposite to defend: it is all one to them; they have no preference. If you lay it down that snow is black, they argue on the contrary that it is white.

If you say it is neither one nor the other, it is up to them to maintain that it is both. If you hold, by a definite judgment, that you know nothing about it, they will maintain that you do know. Yes, and if by an affirmative axiom you assert that you doubt it, they will go on arguing that you do not doubt it, or that you cannot judge and establish that you doubt it.

And by this extreme of doubt, which shakes even itself, they separate and divide themselves from many opinions, even from those that have upheld doubt and ignorance in various ways. Why should they not be allowed, they say, to doubt as well—just as among the dogmatists one may say green and another yellow? Is there anything that can be put to you for you to accept or reject which it is not permissible to consider ambiguous?

Others are carried—by the custom of their country, or by their upbringing at their parents' hands, or by chance, as if by a storm, without judgment or choice, indeed most often before the age of discretion—to this or that opinion, to the Stoic or the Epicurean school, to which they find themselves mortgaged, enslaved and stuck fast, as to a prey they cannot let go of: *to whatever doctrine they have been carried, as by a storm, they cling to it as to a rock.* Why, then, should these men not likewise be granted the right to keep their freedom and to consider things without obligation and servitude? *Freer and less bound in this, that their power of judging is intact.* Is it not some advantage to find oneself released from the necessity that curbs others?

Is it not better to remain in suspense than to entangle oneself in all the errors human fancy has produced? Is it not better to suspend one's conviction than to get mixed up in these seditious and quarrelsome divisions? What shall I choose? "Whatever you like, as long as you choose." That is a foolish answer; and yet it seems that all dogmatism comes to it, since dogmatism does not allow

FRENCH

nous ignorons. Prenez le plus fameux party, iamais il ne sera si seur, qu'il ne vous faille pour le deffendre, attaquer et combattre cent et cent contraires partis. Vaut-il pas mieux se tenir hors de cette meslée?

Il vous est permis d'espouser comme vostre honneur et vostre vie, la creance d'Aristote sur l'eternité de l'ame, et desdire et desmentir Platon là dessus, et à eux il sera interdit d'en doubter? S'il est loisible à Panætius de soustenir son iugement autour des aruspices, songes, oracles, vaticinations, desquelles choses les Stoiciens ne doubtent aucunement: pourquoy vn sage n'osera-il en toutes choses, ce que cettuy-cy ose en celles qu'il a apprinses de ses maistres: establies du commun consentement de l'eschole, de laquelle il est sectateur et professeur? Si c'est vn enfant qui iuge, il ne sçait que c'est: si c'est vn sçauant, il est præoccuppé.

2.12.115 Ils se sont reseruez vn merueilleux aduantage au combat, s'estans deschargez du soin de se couurir. Il ne leur importe qu'on les frappe, pourueu qu'ils frappent; et font leurs besongnes de tout. S'ils vainquent, vostre proposition cloche; si vous, la leur: s'ils faillent, ils verifient l'ignorance; si vous faillez, vous la verifiez: s'ils prouuent que rien ne se sçache, il va bien; s'ils ne le sçauent pas prouuer, il est bon de mesmes: *Vt quum in eadem re paria contrariis in partibus momenta inueniuntur, facilius ab vtraque parte assertio sustineatur*.

Et font estat de trouuer bien plus facilement, pourquoy vne chose soit fausse, que non pas qu'elle soit vraye; et ce qui n'est pas, que ce qui est: et ce qu'ils ne croyent pas, que ce qu'ils croyent. Leurs façons de parler sont, Ie n'establis rien: Il n'est non plus ainsi qu'ainsin, ou que ny l'vn ny l'autre: Ie ne le comprens point. Les apparences sont egales par tout: la loy de parler, et pour et contre, est pareille. Rien ne semble vray qui ne puisse sembler faux. Leur mot sacramental, c'est επεχω; c'est à dire, ie soustiens, ie ne bouge. Voyla leurs refreins, et autres de pareille substance. Leur effect, c'est vne pure, entiere, et tres-parfaicte surceance et suspension de iugement.

Ils se seruent de leur raison, pour enquerir et pour debattre: mais non pas pour arrester et choisir. Quiconque imaginera vne perpetuelle confession

ENGLISH

us to be ignorant of what we are ignorant of. Take the most famous party: it will never be so secure that, to defend it, you will not have to attack and fight hundreds upon hundreds of opposing parties. Is it not better to stay out of this fray?

You are allowed to embrace, as you would your honor and your life, Aristotle's belief about the eternity of the soul, and to contradict and refute Plato on that point; and they are to be forbidden to doubt it? If Panaetius may withhold his judgment about haruspices, dreams, oracles and prophecies, things the Stoics do not doubt in the least, why should a wise man not dare in all things what this man dares in those he learned from his masters, established by the common consent of the school of which he is a follower and teacher? If it is a child who judges, he does not know what it is about; if it is a learned man, he is prejudiced.[82]

They have kept a marvelous advantage for themselves in combat, having relieved themselves of the trouble of guarding. It does not matter to them if they are struck, so long as they strike; and they turn everything to account. If they win, your proposition limps; if you win, theirs does. If they fail, they confirm ignorance; if you fail, you confirm it. If they prove that nothing is known, well and good; if they cannot prove it, that is just as good. *So that, when equal weights are found on opposite sides of the same question, it is easier to withhold assertion on both sides.*

And they claim to find far more easily why a thing is false than that it is true; what is not than what is; and what they do not believe than what they believe. Their ways of speaking are: "I establish nothing." "It is no more so than so, or than neither." "I do not grasp it." "Appearances are equal everywhere; the law of speaking for and against is the same." "Nothing seems true that cannot seem false." Their sacramental word is *epechō*, that is to say, "I hold back, I do not budge." Those are their refrains, and others of like substance. Their result is a pure, complete and most perfect deferral and suspension of judgment.

They use their reason to inquire and debate, but not to settle and choose. Whoever imagines a per-

82 Panaetius of Rhodes, Stoic philosopher of the 2nd century BC. Haruspices were diviners who read the entrails of sacrificed animals.

FRENCH

d'ignorance, vn iugement sans pente, et sans inclination, à quelque occasion que ce puisse estre, il conçoit le Pyrrhonisme. I'exprime cette fantasie autant que ie puis, par ce que plusieurs la trouuent difficile à conceuoir; et les autheurs mesmes la representent vn peu obscurement et diuersement.

2.12.116 Quant aux actions de la vie, ils sont en cela de la commune façon. Ils se prestent et accommodent aux inclinations naturelles, à l'impulsion et contrainte des passions, aux constitutions des loix et des coustumes, et à la tradition des arts: *non enim nos Deus ista scire, sed tantummodo vti voluit*. Ils laissent guider à ces choses là, leurs actions communes, sans aucune opination ou iugement. Qui fait que ie ne puis pas bien assortir à ce discours, ce qu'on dit de Pyrrho. Ils le peignent stupide et immobile, prenant vn train de vie farouche et inassociable, attendant le hurt des charrettes, se presentant aux precipices, refusant de s'accommoder aux loix. Cela est encherir sur sa discipline.

Il n'a pas voulu se faire pierre ou souche: il a voulu se faire homme viuant, discourant, et raisonnant, iouyssant de tous plaisirs et commoditez naturelles, embesoignant et se seruant de toutes ses pieces corporelles et spirituelles, en regle et droicture. Les priuileges fantastiques, imaginaires, et faulx, que l'homme s'est vsurpé, de regenter, d'ordonner, d'establir, il les a de bonne foy renoncez et quittez. Si n'est-il point de secte, qui ne soit contrainte de permettre à son sage de suiure assez de choses non comprinses, ny perceuës ny consenties, s'il veut viure.

Et quand il monte en mer, il suit ce dessein, ignorant s'il luy sera vtile: et se plie, à ce que le vaisseau est bon, le pilote experimenté, la saison commode: circonstances probables seulement. Apres lesquelles il est tenu d'aller, et se laisser remuer aux apparances, pourueu qu'elles n'ayent point d'expresse contrarieté. Il a vn corps, il a vne ame: les sens le poussent, l'esprit l'agite. Encore qu'il ne treuue point en soy cette propre et singuliere marque de iuger, et qu'il s'apperçoiue, qu'il ne doit engager son consentement, attendu qu'il peut estre quelque faulx pareil à ce vray: il ne laisse de conduire les offices de sa vie pleinement et commodement.

Combien y a il d'arts, qui font profession de consister en la coniecture, plus qu'en la science? qui ne decident pas du vray et du faulx, et suiuent seulement ce qu'il semble?

ENGLISH

petual confession of ignorance, a judgment without slant or inclination on any occasion whatever, conceives Pyrrhonism. I express this notion as well as I can, because many find it hard to conceive, and the authors themselves present it somewhat obscurely and in different ways.

As for the actions of life, in these they follow the common way. They lend and adapt themselves to natural inclinations, to the impulse and constraint of the passions, to the ordinances of laws and customs, and to the tradition of the arts. *For God did not want us to know these things, but only to use them.* They let these things guide their ordinary actions, without any opinion or judgment. That is why I cannot quite reconcile with this account what is said of Pyrrho. They portray him as stupid and immobile, adopting a wild, unsociable way of life, waiting for carts to run into him, walking up to precipices, refusing to conform to the laws. That is going beyond his doctrine.

He did not try to make himself a stone or a stump; he tried to make himself a living man, thinking and reasoning, enjoying all natural pleasures and comforts, employing and using all his bodily and mental parts in due order and rightness. The fantastic, imaginary and false privileges man has usurped—of ruling, ordering, establishing—he renounced and gave up in good faith. And yet there is no school that is not forced to allow its wise man to follow many things not grasped, nor perceived, nor assented to, if he wants to live.

And when he goes to sea, he follows that plan without knowing whether it will be useful to him, and relies on the ship being sound, the pilot experienced, the season favorable—probable circumstances only. He is bound to go by them and let himself be moved by appearances, provided they show no express contradiction. He has a body, he has a soul; the senses push him, the mind stirs him. Although he does not find in himself that proper and distinctive mark for judging, and realizes that he must not commit his assent, since there may be some falsehood resembling this truth, he still carries out the duties of his life fully and conveniently.

How many arts are there that profess to consist in conjecture more than in knowledge, that do not decide between true and false but merely follow

FRENCH	ENGLISH
Il y a, disent-ils, et vray et faulx, et y a en nous dequoy le chercher, mais non pas dequoy l'arrester à la touche. Nous en valons bien mieux, de nous laisser manier sans inquisition, à l'ordre du monde. Vne ame garantie de preiugé, a vn merueilleux auancement vers la tranquillité. Gents qui iugent et contrerollent leurs iuges, ne s'y soubsmettent iamais deuëment.	what seems to be so? There is, they say, both true and false, and there is in us the means to seek it, but not to try it on the touchstone. We are much the better for letting ourselves be handled by the order of the world without inquiring. A soul kept free of prejudice has come a marvelous way toward tranquility. People who judge and check up on their judges never submit to them as they should.
2.12.117 Combien et aux loix de la religion, et aux loix politiques se trouuent plus dociles et aisez à mener, les esprits simples et incurieux, que ces esprits surueillants et pedagogues des causes diuines et humaines? Il n'est rien en l'humaine inuention, où il y ait tant de verisimilitude et d'vtilité. Cette-cy presente l'homme nud et vuide, recognoissant sa foiblesse naturelle, propre à receuoir d'en hault quelque force estrangere, desgarni d'humaine science, et d'autant plus apte à loger en soy la diuine, aneantissant son iugement, pour faire plus de place à la foy: ny mescreant ny establissant aucun dogme contre les loix et obseruances communes, humble, obeïssant, disciplinable, studieux; ennemy iuré d'heresie, et s'exemptant par consequent des vaines et irreligieuses opinions introduites par les fauces sectes.	How much more docile and easy to lead, under the laws both of religion and of the state, are simple and incurious minds than those minds that keep watch over causes divine and human and lecture on them? There is nothing in human invention that has so much likelihood and usefulness. This one presents man naked and empty, acknowledging his natural weakness, fit to receive some outside strength from on high; stripped of human knowledge, and all the more apt to lodge divine knowledge within him; annihilating his judgment to make more room for faith; neither disbelieving nor establishing any dogma against common laws and observances; humble, obedient, teachable, eager to learn; a sworn enemy of heresy, and consequently free of the vain and irreligious opinions introduced by false sects.
C'est vne carte blanche preparée à prendre du doigt de Dieu telles formes qu'il luy plaira d'y grauer. Plus nous nous renuoyons et commettons à Dieu, et renonçons à nous, mieux nous en valons. Accepte, dit l'Ecclesiaste, en bonne part les choses au visage et au goust qu'elles se presentent à toy, du iour à la iournée: le demeurant est hors de ta cognoissance. *Dominus nouit cogitationes hominum, quoniam vanæ sunt.*	It is a blank page, prepared to take from the finger of God whatever forms he pleases to engrave on it. The more we refer and commit ourselves to God and renounce ourselves, the better off we are. "Accept in good part," says Ecclesiastes, "things in the aspect and taste with which they present themselves to you, from day to day; the rest is beyond your knowledge." *The Lord knows the thoughts of men, that they are vain.*[83]

DOGMATISTS WHO DOUBT

Even the dogmatists, Plato and Aristotle among them, wrote in a spirit of inquiry.

FRENCH	ENGLISH
2.12.118 Voila comment, des trois generales sectes de Philosophie, les deux font expresse profession de dubitation et d'ignorance: et en celle des dogmatistes, qui est troisiesme, il est aysé à descouurir, que la plus part n'ont pris le visage de l'asseurance que pour auoir meilleure mine. Ils n'ont pas tant pensé nous establir quelque	So it is that, of the three general schools of philosophy, two make express profession of doubt and ignorance; and in that of the dogmatists, which is the third, it is easy to discover that most of them put on a face of assurance only to look better. They did not so much think to establish some certainty

83 Psalm 94:11, quoted by Saint Paul in 1 Corinthians 3:20.

FRENCH

certitude, que nous montrer iusques où ils estoient allez en cette chasse de la verité, *quam docti fingunt magis quàm norunt*. Timæus ayant à instruire Socrates de ce qu'il sçait des Dieux, du monde, et des hommes, propose d'en parler comme vn homme à vn homme; et qu'il suffit, si ses raisons sont probables, comme les raisons d'vn autre: car les exactes raisons n'estre en sa main, ny en mortelle main.

Ce que l'vn de ses sectateurs a ainsin imité: *Vt potero, explicabo: nec tamen, vt Pythius Apollo, certa vt sint et fixa, quæ dixero: sed, vt homunculus, probabilia coniectura sequens*. Et cela sur le discours du mespris de la mort: discours naturel et populaire. Ailleurs il l'a traduit, sur le propos mesme de Platon. Si fortè, de Deorum natura ortúque mundi disserentes, minus id quod habemus in animo consequimur, haud erit mirum.

Æquum est enim meminisse, et me, qui disseram, hominem esse, et vos qui iudicetis: vt, si probabilia dicentur, nihil vltrà requiratis. Aristote nous entasse ordinairement vn grand nombre d'autres opinions, et d'autres creances, pour y comparer la sienne, et nous faire voir de combien il est allé plus outre, et combien il approche de plus pres la verisimilitude. Car la verité ne se iuge point par authorité et tesmoignage d'autruy. Et pourtant euita religieusement Epicurus d'en alleguer en ses escrits.

2.12.119 Cettuy-là est le prince des dogmatistes, et si nous apprenons de luy, que le beaucoup sçauoir apporte l'occasion de plus doubter. On le void à escient se couurir souuent d'obscurité si espesse et inextricable, qu'on n'y peut rien choisir de son aduis. C'est par effect vn Pyrrhonisme soubs vne forme resolutiue. Oyez la protestation de Cicero, qui nous explique la fantasie d'autruy par la sienne. Qui requirunt, quid de quaque re ipsi sentiamus: curiosius id faciunt, quàm necesse est. Hæc in philosophia ratio, contra omnia disserendi, nullamque rem apertè iudicandi, profecta à Socrate, repetita ab Arcesila, confirmata à Carneade, vsque ad nostram viget ætatem.

Hi sumus, qui omnibus veris falsa quædam adiuncta esse dicamus, tanta similitudine, vt in ijs nulla insit certè iudicandi et assentiendi nota. Pourquoy, non Aristote

ENGLISH

for us as to show us how far they had gone in this hunt for truth, *which the learned imagine rather than know*. Timaeus, having to instruct Socrates in what he knows of the gods, the world and men, proposes to speak of it as a man to a man, and says it is enough if his reasons are probable, like another man's; for exact reasons are not in his hands, nor in any mortal hands.[84]

One of his followers imitated this as follows: *I will explain as best I can; yet not like Pythian Apollo, so that what I say is certain and fixed, but like a mere man, following probabilities by conjecture.* And that on the subject of contempt for death, a natural and popular subject. Elsewhere he translated it, on the very words of Plato: If perhaps, in discussing the nature of the gods and the origin of the world, we do not attain what we have in mind, it will be no wonder.[85]

For it is right to remember that both I who discuss and you who judge are men; so that, if probable things are said, you should ask for nothing further. Aristotle usually heaps up for us a great number of other opinions and other beliefs, to compare his own with them and show us how much further he has gone and how much closer he comes to likelihood. For truth is not judged by the authority and testimony of others. And that is why Epicurus scrupulously avoided citing any in his writings.

Aristotle is the prince of the dogmatists; and yet we learn from him that knowing much brings occasion for doubting more. He can be seen deliberately wrapping himself, often, in a darkness so thick and inextricable that one cannot make out his opinion in it. It is in effect Pyrrhonism in an affirmative form. Hear the declaration of Cicero, who explains another's notion to us by his own: Those who ask what we ourselves think about each thing show more curiosity than is necessary. This method in philosophy, of arguing against everything and judging nothing openly, begun by Socrates, taken up again by Arcesilaus, confirmed by Carneades, flourishes down to our own time.

We are those who say that some falsehoods are joined to all truths, with such a likeness that there

84 Timaeus is the main speaker in Plato's dialogue of that name.
85 Cicero, Tusculan Disputations I.9; the second passage is from his Latin translation of Plato's Timaeus.

FRENCH

seulement, mais la plus part des philosophes, ont ils affecté la difficulté, si ce n'est pour faire valoir la vanité du subject, et amuser la curiosité de nostre esprit, luy donnant où se paistre, à ronger cet os creuz et descharné? Clytomachus affermoit n'auoir iamais sçeu, par les escrits de Carneades, entendre de quelle opinion il estoit. Pourquoy a euité aux siens Epicurus, la facilité, et Heraclytus en a esté surnommé σχοτεινος?

La difficulté est vne monoye que les sçauans employent, comme les joueurs de passe-passe pour ne descouurir la vanité de leur art: et de laquelle l'humaine bestise se paye aysément. *Clarus ob obscuram linguam, magis inter inanes:*
Omnia enim stolidi magis admirantur amántque,
Inuersis quæ sub verbis latitantia cernunt.

2.12.120 Cicero reprend aucuns de ses amis d'auoir accoustumé de mettre à l'astrologie, au droit, à la dialectique, et à la geometrie, plus de temps, que ne meritoyent ces arts: et que cela les diuertissoit des deuoirs de la vie, plus vtiles et honnestes. Les philosophes Cyrenaïques mesprisoyent esgalement la physique et la dialectique. Zenon tout au commencement des liures de la republique, declaroit inutiles toutes les liberales disciplines. Chrysippus disoit, que ce que Platon et Aristote auoyent escrit de la logique, ils l'auoyent escrit par ieu et par exercice: et ne pouuoit croire qu'ils eussent parlé à certes d'vne si vaine matiere.

2.12.121 Plutarque le dit de la metaphysique, Epicurus l'eust encores dict de la rhetorique, de la grammaire, poësie, mathematique, et hors la physique, de toutes les autres sciences: et Socrates de toutes, sauf celle des mœurs et de la vie. De quelque chose qu'on s'enquist à luy, il ramenoit en premier lieu tousiours l'enquerant à rendre compte des conditions de sa vie, presente et passée, lesquelles il examinoit et iugeoit: estimant tout autre apprentissage subsecutif à celuy-la et supernumeraire. *Parum mihi placeant eæ litteræ quæ ad virtutem doctoribus nihil profuerunt.* La plus part des arts ont esté ainsi mesprisés par le mesme sçauoir. Mais ils n'ont pas pensé qu'il fust hors de propos, d'exercer leur esprit és choses mesmes, où il n'y auoit nulle solidité profitable.

ENGLISH

is no sure mark in them for judging and assenting. Why have not only Aristotle but most philosophers affected difficulty, if not to enhance the worth of the vanity of the subject and to keep our mind's curiosity busy, giving it something to feed on by gnawing at this hollow, fleshless bone? Clitomachus asserted that he had never been able to understand from Carneades' writings what his opinion was. Why did Epicurus avoid ease in his writings, and why was Heraclitus nicknamed "the Obscure"?

Difficulty is a coin that the learned use, like conjurers, so as not to reveal the vanity of their art, and one with which human stupidity is easily paid. *Famous for his obscure speech, especially among the empty-headed:*
For fools admire and love above all
What they see hidden beneath twisted words.[86]

Cicero rebukes some of his friends for habitually spending more time on astrology, law, dialectic and geometry than these arts deserved, saying that this diverted them from the duties of life, which are more useful and honorable. The Cyrenaic philosophers despised physics and dialectic alike. Zeno, at the very beginning of his books on the Republic, declared all the liberal disciplines useless. Chrysippus said that what Plato and Aristotle had written on logic they had written in play and as an exercise, and he could not believe they had spoken in earnest about so vain a subject.

Plutarch says this of metaphysics; Epicurus would have said it also of rhetoric, grammar, poetry, mathematics and, apart from physics, of all the other sciences; and Socrates of all of them except the science of morals and of life. Whatever anyone asked him about, he always first brought the questioner back to giving an account of the conditions of his life, present and past, which he examined and judged, considering all other learning subordinate to that and superfluous. *I would care little for those letters that did their teachers no good toward virtue.* Most of the arts have thus been despised by learning itself. But they did not think it out of place to exercise their minds even on things in which there was no profitable solidity.

86 Lucretius, On the Nature of Things, speaking of Heraclitus.

FRENCH

2.12.122 Au demeurant, les vns ont estimé Plato dogmatiste, les autres dubitateur, les autres en certaines choses l'vn, et en certaines choses l'autre. Le conducteur de ses dialogismes, Socrates, va tousiours demandant et esmouuant la dispute, iamais l'arrestant, iamais satisfaisant: et dit n'auoir autre science, que la science de s'opposer. Homere leur autheur a planté egalement les fondements à toutes les sectes de philosophie, pour montrer, combien il estoit indifferent par où nous allassions. De Platon nasquirent dix sectes diuerses, dit-on. Aussi, à mon gré, iamais instruction ne fut titubante, et rien asseuerante, si la sienne ne l'est.

2.12.123 Socrates disoit, que les sages femmes en prenant ce mestier de faire engendrer les autres, quittent le mestier d'engendrer elles. Que luy par le tiltre de sage homme, que les Dieux luy auoyent deferé, s'estoit aussi desfaict en son amour virile et mentale, de la faculté d'enfanter: se contentant d'ayder et fauorir de son secours les engendrants: ouurir leur nature; graisser leurs conduits: faciliter l'yssue de leur enfantement: iuger d'iceluy: le baptizer: le nourrir: le fortifier: l'emmaillotter, et circoncir: exerçant et maniant son engin, aux perils et fortunes d'autruy.

2.12.124 Il est ainsi de la plus part des autheurs de ce tiers genre, comme les anciens ont remerqué des escripts d'Anaxagoras, Democritus, Parmenides, Xenophanes, et autres. Ils ont vne forme d'escrire douteuse en substance et en dessein, enquerant plustost qu'instruisant: encore qu'ils entresement leur stile de cadances dogmatistes. Cela se voit il pas aussi bien en Seneque et en Plutarque? combien disent ils tantost d'vn visage, tantost d'vn autre, pour ceux qui y regardent de prez? Et les reconciliateurs des iurisconsultes deuoyent premierement les concilier chacun à soy. Platon me semble auoir aymé cette forme de philosopher par dialogues, à escient, pour loger plus decemment en diuerses bouches la diuersité et variation de ses propres fantasies.

Diuersement traitter les matieres, est aussi bien les traitter, que conformement, et mieux: à sçauoir plus copieusement et vtilement. Prenons exemple de nous. Les arrests font le point extreme du parler dogmatiste et resolutif: si est ce que ceux que noz parlements presentent au peuple, les plus exemplaires, propres à

ENGLISH

For the rest, some have considered Plato a dogmatist, others a doubter, others one in certain things and the other in others. The leader of his dialogues, Socrates, is always asking questions and stirring up the debate, never settling it, never satisfying; and he says he has no other knowledge than the knowledge of how to oppose. Homer, their author, laid the foundations equally for all the schools of philosophy, to show how little it mattered which way we went. From Plato sprang ten different schools, they say. And indeed, to my mind, no teaching was ever wavering and noncommittal if his is not.

Socrates used to say that midwives, in taking up the trade of making others give birth, give up the trade of giving birth themselves; that he, by the title of wise man that the gods had conferred on him, had likewise rid himself, in his manly and mental love, of the faculty of bearing children, content to help and favor with his aid those who were begetting: to open their nature, grease their passages, ease the issue of their delivery, judge it, baptize it, feed it, strengthen it, swaddle it and circumcise it—exercising and handling his wits at the risks and fortunes of others.[87]

So it is with most authors of this third kind, as the ancients noted of the writings of Anaxagoras, Democritus, Parmenides, Xenophanes and others. They have a way of writing that is doubtful in substance and intent, inquiring rather than teaching, even though they sprinkle their style with dogmatic cadences. Is this not seen just as clearly in Seneca and Plutarch? How much do they say now with one face, now with another, for those who look closely? And the reconcilers of the jurists ought first to reconcile each of them with himself. Plato seems to me to have liked this form of philosophizing in dialogues deliberately, so as to lodge more fittingly in different mouths the diversity and variation of his own notions.

To treat subjects in different ways is just as much treating them as to treat them uniformly, and better: that is, more abundantly and usefully. Let us take an example from ourselves. Court rulings are the extreme point of dogmatic and decisive

87 The French sage-femme, midwife, means literally "wise woman," hence Montaigne's play on sage homme, "wise man."

FRENCH

nourrir en luy la reuerence qu'il doit à cette dignité, principalement par la suffisance des personnes qui l'exercent, prennent leur beauté, non de la conclusion, qui est à eux quotidienne, et qui est commune à tout iuge, tant comme de la disceptation et agitation des diuerses et contraires ratiocinations, que la matiere du droit souffre.

Et le plus large champ aux reprehensions des vns philosophes à l'encontre des autres, se tire des contradictions et diuersitez, en quoy chacun d'eux se trouue empestré: ou par dessein, pour montrer la vacillation de l'esprit humain autour de toute matiere, ou forcé ignoramment, par la volubilité et incomprehensibilité de toute matiere. Que signifie ce refrein? en vn lieu glissant et coulant suspendons nostre creance: car, comme dit Eurypides, *Les œuures de Dieu en diuerses / Façons, nous donnent des trauerses.* Semblable à celuy qu'Empedocles semoit souuent en ses liures, comme agité d'vne diuine fureur, et forcé de la verité.

Non non, nous ne sentons rien, nous ne voyons rien, toutes choses nous sont occultes, il n'en est aucune de laquelle nous puissions establir quelle elle est: reuenant à ce mot diuin, *Cogitationes mortalium timidæ, et incertæ adinuentiones nostræ, et providentiæ.*

2.12.125 Il ne faut pas trouuer estrange, si gens desesperez de la prise n'ont pas laissé d'auoir plaisir à la chasse, l'estude estant de soy vne occupation plaisante: et si plaisante, que parmy les voluptez, les Stoïciens defendent aussi celle qui vient de l'exercitation de l'esprit, y veulent de la bride, et trouuent de l'intemperance à trop sçauoir.

Democritus ayant mangé à sa table des figues, qui sentoient le miel, commença soudain à chercher en son esprit, d'où leur venoit cette douceur inusitee, et pour s'en esclaircir, s'alloit leuer de table, pour voir l'assiette du lieu où ces figues auoyent esté cueillies: sa chambriere, ayant entendu la cause de ce remuëment, luy dit en riant, qu'il ne se penast plus pour cela, car c'estoit qu'elle les auoit mises en vn vaisseau, où il y auoit eu du miel. Il se despita, dequoy elle luy auoit osté l'occasion de cette recherche, et desrobé matiere à sa curiosité. Va, luy dit-il, tu m'as faict desplaisir, ie ne lairray pourtant d'en chercher la cause, comme si elle estoit naturelle.

ENGLISH

speech; and yet the most exemplary ones that our parlements present to the people, those fit to nourish in them the reverence they owe to that dignity, chiefly through the ability of the persons who hold it, draw their beauty not so much from the conclusion, which is their daily business and common to every judge, as from the debate and agitation of the various and contrary reasonings that the matter of law admits.

And the widest field for the criticisms of some philosophers against others comes from the contradictions and inconsistencies in which each of them finds himself entangled—either by design, to show how the human mind wavers about every subject, or forced to it unwittingly by the fluidity and incomprehensibility of every subject. What is the meaning of this refrain: "In a slippery and flowing place, let us suspend our belief"? For, as Euripides says, *The works of God in diverse / Ways keep thwarting us.* It is like the refrain Empedocles often scattered through his books, as if stirred by a divine frenzy and compelled by the truth.

No, no, we feel nothing, we see nothing; all things are hidden from us; there is not one of which we can establish what it is. This comes back to that divine saying: *The thoughts of mortals are timid, and our devices and our foresight uncertain.*[88]

We should not find it strange if people who despaired of the catch have not stopped enjoying the hunt, study being in itself a pleasant occupation—so pleasant that among the pleasures the Stoics forbid also the one that comes from exercising the mind; they want it bridled, and find intemperance in knowing too much.

Democritus, having eaten at his table some figs that tasted of honey, at once began to search his mind for the source of this unusual sweetness; and to clear the matter up he was getting up from the table to go and see the lie of the place where the figs had been picked. His maidservant, having learned the reason for this stir, told him with a laugh not to trouble himself any more about it, for it was because she had put them in a vessel that had held honey. He was annoyed that she had taken away the occasion for this research and robbed his curiosity of its material. "Go," he said,

88 Wisdom of Solomon 9:14.

FRENCH

Et volontiers n'eust failly de trouuer quelque raison vraye, à vn effect faux et supposé. Cette histoire d'vn fameux et grand philosophe, nous represente bien clairement cette passion studieuse, qui nous amuse à la poursuyte des choses, de l'acquest desquelles nous sommes desesperez. Plutarque recite vn pareil exemple de quelqu'vn, qui ne vouloit pas estre esclaircy de ce, dequoy il estoit en doute, pour ne perdre le plaisir de le chercher: comme l'autre, qui ne vouloit pas que son medecin luy ostast l'alteration de la fieure, pour ne perdre le plaisir de l'assouuir en beuuant.

Satius est superuacua discere, quàm nihil. Tout ainsi qu'en toute pasture il y a le plaisir souuent seul, et tout ce que nous prenons, qui est plaisant, n'est pas tousiours nutritif, ou sain: pareillement ce que nostre esprit tire de la science, ne laisse pas d'estre voluptueux, encore qu'il ne soit ny alimentant ny salutaire.

2.12.126 Voicy comme ils disent: La consideration de la nature est vne pasture propre à nos esprits, elle nous esleue et enfle, nous fait desdaigner les choses basses et terriennes, par la comparaison des superieures et celestes: la recherche mesme des choses occultes et grandes est tresplaisante, voire à celuy qui n'en acquiert que la reuerence, et crainte d'en iuger. Ce sont des mots de leur profession. La vaine image de cette maladiue curiosité, se voit plus expressement encores en cet autre exemple, qu'ils ont par honneur si souuent en la bouche. Eudoxus souhaittoit et prioit les Dieux, qu'il peust vne fois voir le soleil de pres, comprendre sa forme, sa grandeur, et sa beauté, à peine d'en estre bruslé soudainement.

Il veut au prix de sa vie, acquerir vne science, de laquelle l'vsage et possession luy soit quand et quand ostée. Et pour cette soudaine et volage cognoissance, perdre toutes autres cognoissances qu'il a, et qu'il peut acquerir par apres.

2.12.127 Ie ne me persuade pas aysement, qu'Epicurus, Platon, et Pythagoras nous ayent donné pour argent contant leurs Atomes, leurs Idées, et leurs Nombres. Ils estoyent trop sages pour establir leurs articles de foy, de chose si incertaine, et si debattable. Mais en cette obscurité et ignorance du monde, chacun de ces grands personnages, s'est trauaillé d'apporter vne telle quelle image de

ENGLISH

"you have displeased me; I shall look for the cause all the same, as if it were natural."

And he would very likely have found some true reason for a false and supposed effect. This story of a famous and great philosopher shows us very clearly that studious passion which keeps us busy pursuing things we despair of acquiring. Plutarch tells a similar example of someone who did not want to be enlightened about what he was in doubt of, so as not to lose the pleasure of looking for it; like the other man who did not want his doctor to take away the thirst of his fever, so as not to lose the pleasure of quenching it by drinking.

It is better to learn superfluous things than nothing. Just as in all eating there is often pleasure alone, and not everything pleasant that we take is always nourishing or healthy, so what our mind draws from knowledge does not cease to be pleasurable even though it is neither nourishing nor wholesome.

This is how they put it: the contemplation of nature is food suited to our minds; it lifts us up and swells us, and makes us disdain low and earthly things by comparison with the higher and heavenly ones; the very search for hidden and great things is most pleasant, even to one who gains from it only reverence and fear of judging them. These are the words of their profession. The vain image of this sickly curiosity is seen more expressly still in this other example, which they cite so often and with honor. Eudoxus wished and prayed to the gods that he might once see the sun up close and grasp its form, its size and its beauty, even at the cost of being burned up by it at once.[89]

He wants, at the price of his life, to acquire a knowledge whose use and possession would be taken from him at the same instant; and for this sudden and fleeting knowledge, to lose all the other knowledge he has and could acquire afterward.

I am not easily persuaded that Epicurus, Plato and Pythagoras handed us their Atoms, their Ideas and their Numbers as ready cash. They were too wise to make their articles of faith out of something so uncertain and so debatable. But in this darkness and ignorance of the world, each of these great figures strove to bring some sort of image of light,

89 Eudoxus of Cnidus, Greek astronomer and mathematician of the 4th century BC.

FRENCH

lumiere: et ont promené leur ame à des inuentions, qui eussent au moins vne plaisante et subtile apparence, pourueu que toute fausse, elle se peust maintenir contre les oppositions contraires: *Vnicuique ista pro ingenio finguntur, non ex scientiæ vi.*

Vn ancien, à qui on reprochoit, qu'il faisoit profession de la Philosophie, de laquelle pourtant en son iugement, il ne tenoit pas grand compte, respondit que cela, c'estoit vrayement philosopher.

2.12.128 Ils ont voulu considerer tout, balancer tout, et ont trouué cette occupation propre à la naturelle curiosité qui est en nous. Aucunes choses, ils les ont escrites pour le besoin de la societé publique, comme leurs religions: et a esté raisonnable pour cette consideration, que les communes opinions, ils n'ayent voulu les esplucher au vif, aux fins de n'engendrer du trouble en l'obeyssance des loix et coustumes de leur pays.

2.12.129 Platon traitte ce mystere d'vn ieu assez descouuert. Car où il escrit selon soy, il ne prescrit rien à certes. Quand il fait le legislateur, il emprunte vn style regentant et asseuerant: et si y mesle hardiment les plus fantastiques de ses inuentions: autant vtiles à persuader à la commune, que ridicules à persuader à soy-mesme: sçachant combien nous sommes propres à receuoir toutes impressions, et sur toutes, les plus farouches et enormes.

Et pourtant en ses loix, il a grand soing, qu'on ne chante en publiq que des poësies, desquelles les fabuleuses feintes tendent à quelque vtile fin: estant si facile d'imprimer touts fantosmes en l'esprit humain, que c'est iniustice de ne le paistre plustost de mensonges profitables, que de mensonges ou inutiles ou dommageables. Il dit tout destrousseement en sa Republique, que pour le profit des hommes, il est souuent besoin de les piper. Il est aisé à distinguer, les vnes sectes auoir plus suiuy la verité, les autres l'vtilité, par où celles cy ont gaigné credit.

C'est la misere de nostre condition, que souuent ce qui se presente à nostre imagination pour le plus vray, ne s'y presente pas pour le plus vtile à nostre vie. Les plus hardies sectes, Epicurienne, Pyrrhonienne, nouuelle Academique, encore sont elles contrainctes de se plier à la loy ciuile, au bout du compte.

2.12.130

ENGLISH

and they walked their minds through inventions that would at least have a pleasing and subtle appearance, provided that, false as it was, it could hold up against opposing objections. *These things are imagined by each according to his wit, not by the power of knowledge.*

An ancient, who was reproached for professing philosophy when in his own judgment he took no great account of it, replied that this was truly philosophizing.

They wanted to consider everything and weigh everything, and found this occupation suited to the natural curiosity that is in us. Some things they wrote for the needs of public society, such as their religions; and it was reasonable, for that consideration, that they did not want to strip common opinions to the quick, so as not to breed trouble in the obedience owed to the laws and customs of their country.

Plato handles this mystery with a fairly open hand. For where he writes on his own account, he prescribes nothing in earnest. When he plays the legislator, he borrows a domineering and assertive style, and boldly mixes into it the most fantastic of his inventions, as useful for persuading the common people as they are ridiculous for persuading himself, knowing how apt we are to receive any impression, and above all the wildest and most monstrous.

And so in his Laws he takes great care that nothing be sung in public but poems whose fabulous fictions tend to some useful end; it being so easy to imprint any phantoms on the human mind that it is unjust not to feed it on profitable lies rather than on lies that are useless or harmful. He says quite bluntly in his Republic that for men's benefit it is often necessary to deceive them. It is easy to see that some schools have followed truth more, others usefulness, and that the latter have gained credit by it.

It is the misery of our condition that often what presents itself to our imagination as truest does not present itself as most useful to our life. The boldest schools—Epicurean, Pyrrhonian, New Academic—are still compelled, when all is said and done, to bow to civil law.

FRENCH

Il y a d'autres subiects qu'ils ont belutez, qui à gauche, qui à dextre, chacun se trauaillant d'y donner quelque visage, à tort ou à droit. Car n'ayans rien trouué de si caché, dequoy ils n'ayent voulu parler, il leur est souuent force de forger des coniectures foibles et foles: non qu'ils les prinssent eux mesmes pour fondement, ne pour establir quelque verité, mais pour l'exercice de leur estude. *Non tam id sensisse quod dicerent, quàm exercere ingenia materiæ difficultate videntur voluisse.* Et si on ne le prenoit ainsi, comme couuririons nous vne si grande inconstance, varieté, et vanité d'opinions, que nous voyons auoir esté produites par ces ames excellentes et admirables?

ENGLISH

There are other subjects they have sifted, some to the left, some to the right, each striving to give it some face, rightly or wrongly. For since they found nothing so hidden that they did not want to speak of it, they are often forced to forge weak and foolish conjectures—not that they themselves took them as a foundation, or to establish some truth, but as an exercise for their study. *They seem not so much to have believed what they said as to have wished to exercise their wits on the difficulty of the subject.* And if we did not take it so, how would we cover up so great an inconstancy, variety and vanity of opinions as we see produced by those excellent and admirable minds?

MEASURING GOD BY OURSELVES

Human opinions about God, from the philosophers to the myths, show only our own image.

FRENCH

2.12.131 Car pour exemple, qu'est-il plus vain, que de vouloir deuiner Dieu par nos analogies et coniectures: le regler, et le monde, à nostre capacité et à nos loix? et nous seruir aux despens de la diuinité, de ce petit eschantillon de suffisance qu'il luy a pleu despartir à nostre naturelle condition? et par ce que nous ne pouuons estendre nostre veuë iusques en son glorieux siege, l'auoir ramené ça bas à nostre corruption et à nos miseres?

2.12.132 De toutes les opinions humaines et anciennes touchant la religion, celle là me semble auoir eu plus de vray-semblance et plus d'excuse, qui recognoissoit Dieu comme vne puissance incomprehensible, origine et conseruatrice de toutes choses, toute bonté, toute perfection, receuant et prenant en bonne part l'honneur et la reuerence, que les humains luy rendoient soubs quelque visage, soubs quelque nom et en quelque maniere que ce fust. *Iupiter omnipotens, rerum, regúmque, Deûmque, / Progenitor, genitrixque.* Ce zele vniuersellement a esté veu du ciel de bon œil. Toutes polices ont tiré fruit de leur deuotion. Les hommes, les actions impies, ont eu par tout les euenements sortables.

Les histoires payennes recognoissent de la dignité, ordre, iustice, et des prodiges et oracles employez à leur profit et instruction, en leurs religions fabuleuses: Dieu par sa misericorde daignant à l'aduenture fomenter par ces

ENGLISH

For example, what is more vain than trying to divine God by our analogies and conjectures, to regulate him and the world to our capacity and our laws? And to use, at the expense of the divinity, that little sample of ability that it has pleased him to dispense to our natural condition? And, because we cannot extend our sight as far as his glorious throne, to have brought him down here to our corruption and our miseries?

Of all the human and ancient opinions concerning religion, the one that seems to me to have had the most likelihood and the most excuse is the one that recognized God as an incomprehensible power, origin and preserver of all things, all goodness, all perfection, receiving and taking in good part the honor and reverence that humans paid him under whatever face, whatever name and in whatever manner it might be. *Almighty Jupiter, of things, of kings and of gods / The father and the mother.* This zeal has everywhere been looked on with favor by heaven. All states have reaped fruit from their devotion. Impious men and impious actions have everywhere met with fitting outcomes.[90]

Pagan histories recognize dignity, order and justice in their fabulous religions, and prodigies and oracles employed for their benefit and instruction: God in his mercy perhaps deigning to

90 Lines of Valerius Soranus, quoted by Saint Augustine, City of God VII.9.

FRENCH

benefices temporels, les tendres principes d'vne telle quelle brute cognoissance, que la raison naturelle leur donnoit de luy, au trauers des fausses images de leurs songes. Non seulement fausses, mais impies aussi et iniurieuses, sont celles que l'homme a forgé de son inuention. Et de toutes les religions, que Sainct Paul trouua en credit à Athenes, celle qu'ils auoyent dediée à vne diuinité cachée et incognue, luy sembla la plus excusable.

2.12.133 Pythagoras adombra la verité de plus pres: iugeant que la cognoissance de cette cause premiere, et estre des estres, deuoit estre indefinie, sans prescription, sans declaration: que ce n'estoit autre chose, que l'extreme effort de nostre imagination, vers la perfection: chacun en amplifiant l'idée selon sa capacité.

2.12.134 Mais si Numa entreprint de conformer à ce proiect la deuotion de son peuple: l'attacher à vne religion purement mentale, sans obiect prefix, et sans meslange materiel: il entreprint chose de nul vsage. L'esprit humain ne se sçauroit maintenir vaguant en cet infini de pensées informes: il les luy faut compiler à certaine image à son modelle. La majesté diuine s'est ainsi pour nous aucunement laissé circonscrire aux limites corporels. Ses sacrements supernaturels et celestes, ont des signes de nostre terrestre condition. Son adoration s'exprime par offices et paroles sensibles: car c'est l'homme, qui croid et qui prie. Ie laisse à part les autres arguments qui s'employent à ce subiect.

Mais à peine me feroit on accroire, que la veuë de noz crucifix, et peinture de ce piteux supplice, que les ornements et mouuements ceremonieux de noz eglises, que les voix accommodées à la deuotion de nostre pensée, et cette esmotion des sens n'eschauffent l'ame des peuples, d'vne passion religieuse, de tres-vtile effect.

2.12.135 De celles ausquelles on a donné corps comme la necessité l'a requis, parmy cette cecité vniuerselle, ie me fusse, ce me semble, plus volontiers attaché à ceux qui adoroient le soleil, La lumiere commune,
L'œil du monde: et si Dieu au chef porte des yeux,
Les rayons du soleil sont ses yeux radieux,
Qui donnent vie à tous, nous maintiennent et gardent,

ENGLISH

foster, by these temporal benefits, the tender beginnings of the crude sort of knowledge of him that natural reason gave them through the false images of their dreams. Not only false, but impious and insulting too, are those that man has forged by his own invention. And of all the religions that Saint Paul found in favor at Athens, the one they had dedicated to a hidden and unknown divinity seemed to him the most excusable.[91]

Pythagoras outlined the truth more closely, judging that the knowledge of this first cause and being of beings must be undefined, without prescription, without declaration; that it was nothing else than the utmost effort of our imagination toward perfection, each man enlarging the idea according to his capacity.

But if Numa undertook to shape the devotion of his people to this plan—to attach it to a purely mental religion, with no set object and no material admixture—he undertook something of no use. The human mind cannot keep itself wandering in this infinity of formless thoughts; it must compile them into some image on its own model. Thus the divine majesty has in some measure let itself be confined for us within bodily limits. Its supernatural and heavenly sacraments bear signs of our earthly condition. Its worship is expressed in rites and words perceptible to the senses, for it is man who believes and prays. I leave aside the other arguments used on this subject.[92]

But it would be hard to make me believe that the sight of our crucifixes and the painting of that piteous torment, that the ornaments and ceremonial movements of our churches, that the voices attuned to the devotion of our thought, and this stirring of the senses do not warm the souls of the people with a religious passion of very useful effect.

Of those religions to which a body has been given, as necessity required, amid this universal blindness, I would, it seems to me, have more willingly attached myself to those who worshiped the sun,
The common light,
The eye of the world; and if God has eyes in his head,

91 Acts 17:23, the altar "to an unknown god."
92 Numa Pompilius, the legendary second king of Rome, credited with founding its religious institutions.

FRENCH	ENGLISH
Et les faicts des humains en ce monde regardent: Ce beau, ce grand soleil, qui nous faict les saisons, Selon qu'il entre ou sort de ses douze maisons: Qui remplit l'vniuers de ses vertus cognues:	The rays of the sun are his radiant eyes, Which give life to all, maintain and guard us, And watch over the deeds of humans in this world: This fine, this great sun, which makes the seasons for us, As it enters or leaves its twelve houses: Which fills the universe with its known powers:[93]
/ Qui d'vn traict de ses yeux nous dissipe les nuës: L'esprit, l'ame du monde, ardant et flamboyant, En la course d'vn iour tout le ciel tournoyant, Plein d'immense grandeur, rond, vagabond et ferme: Lequel tient dessoubs luy tout le monde pour terme: En repos sans repos, oysif, et sans seiour, Fils aisné de nature, et le pere du iour. D'autant qu'outre cette sienne grandeur et beauté, c'est la piece de cette machine, que nous descouurons la plus esloignée de nous: et par ce moyen si peu cognuë, qu'ils estoyent pardonnables, d'en entrer en admiration et reuerence.	/ Which with one glance of its eyes scatters the clouds for us: The spirit, the soul of the world, burning and blazing, In the course of one day circling the whole sky, Full of immense greatness, round, wandering and fixed: Which holds the whole world beneath it as its bound: At rest without rest, idle, and never pausing, Eldest son of nature, and the father of day. For besides its grandeur and beauty, it is the part of this machine that we find farthest from us, and therefore so little known that they were pardonable for falling into admiration and reverence of it.
2.12.136 Thales, qui le premier s'enquesta de telle matiere, estima Dieu vn esprit, qui fit d'eau toutes choses. Anaximander, que les Dieux estoyent mourants et naissants à diuerses saisons: et que c'estoyent des mondes infinis en nombre. Anaximenes, que l'air estoit Dieu, qu'il estoit produit et immense, tousiours mouuant. Anaxagoras le premier a tenu, la description et maniere de toutes choses, estre conduitte par la force et raison d'vn esprit infini. Alcmæon a donné la diuinité au soleil, à la lune, aux astres, et à l'ame. Pythagoras a faict Dieu, vn esprit espandu par la nature de toutes choses, d'où noz ames sont déprinses. Parmenide, vn cercle entournant le ciel, et maintenant le monde par l'ardeur de la lumiere.	Thales, who was the first to inquire into such matters, considered God a mind that made all things out of water. Anaximander held that the gods were dying and being born at different seasons, and that they were worlds infinite in number. Anaximenes, that air was God, that it was produced and immense, always moving. Anaxagoras was the first to hold that the design and manner of all things was directed by the power and reason of an infinite mind. Alcmaeon gave divinity to the sun, the moon, the stars and the soul. Pythagoras made God a mind spread through the nature of all things, from which our souls are detached. Parmenides, a circle encircling the sky and sustaining the world by the heat of its light.[94]
Empedocles disoit estre des Dieux, les quatre natures, desquelles toutes choses sont faittes. Protagoras, n'auoir rien que dire, s'ils sont ou non, ou quels ils sont. Democritus, tantost que les images et leurs circuitions sont Dieux: tantost cette nature, qui eslance ces images: et puis, nostre science et intelligence. Platon dissipe sa creance à diuers visages. Il dit au Timée, le pere du monde ne se pouuoir nommer. Aux Loix, qu'il ne se faut	Empedocles said that the gods were the four natures of which all things are made. Protagoras, that he had nothing to say about whether they exist or not, or what they are. Democritus said sometimes that images and their revolutions are gods; sometimes that the nature which sends forth these images is; and then, that our knowledge and understanding are. Plato scatters his belief among

93 Pierre de Ronsard, Remonstrance to the People of France (1563). The twelve houses are the signs of the zodiac.
94 This catalogue of opinions on the gods is drawn largely from Cicero, On the Nature of the Gods, Book I.

FRENCH

enquerir de son estre. Et ailleurs en ces mesmes liures il fait le monde, le ciel, les astres, la terre, et nos ames Dieux, et reçoit en outre ceux qui ont esté receuz par l'ancienne institution en chasque republique. Xenophon rapporte vn pareil trouble de la discipline de Socrates.

Tantost qu'il ne se faut enquerir de la forme de Dieu: et puis il luy fait establir que le soleil est Dieu, et l'ame Dieu: qu'il n'y en a qu'vn, et puis qu'il y en a plusieurs. Speusippus neueu de Platon, fait Dieu certaine force gouuernant les choses, et qu'elle est animale. Aristote, à cette heure, que c'est l'esprit, à cette heure le monde: à cette heure il donne vn autre maistre à ce monde, et à cette heure fait Dieu l'ardeur du ciel. Xenocrates en fait huict. Les cinq nommez entre les planetes, le sixiesme composé de toutes les estoiles fixes, comme de ses membres: le septiesme et huictiesme, le soleil et la lune.

Heraclides Ponticus ne fait que vaguer entre ses aduis, et en fin priue Dieu de sentiment: et le fait remuant de forme à autre, et puis dit que c'est le ciel et la terre. Theophraste se promeine de pareille irresolution entre toutes ses fantasies: attribuant l'intendance du monde tantost à l'entendement, tantost au ciel, tantost aux estoilles. Strato, que c'est Nature ayant la force d'engendrer, augmenter et diminuer, sans forme et sentiment. Zeno, la loy naturelle, commandant le bien et prohibant le mal: laquelle loy est vn animant: et oste les Dieux accoustumez, Iupiter, Iuno, Vesta, Diogenes Apolloniates, que c'est l'aage. Xenophanes faict Dieu rond, voyant, oyant, non respirant, n'ayant rien de commun auec l'humaine nature.

Aristo estime la forme de Dieu incomprenable, le priue de sens, et ignore s'il est animant ou autre chose. Cleanthes, tantost la raison, tantost le monde, tantost l'ame de Nature, tantost la chaleur supreme entourant et enuelopant tout. Perseus auditeur de Zenon, a tenu, qu'on a surnommé Dieux, ceux qui auoyent apporté quelque notable vtilité à l'humaine vie, et les choses mesmes profitables. Chrysippus faisoit vn amas confus de toutes les precedentes sentences, et compte entre mille formes de Dieux qu'il fait, les hommes aussi, qui sont

ENGLISH

various guises. In the Timaeus he says that the father of the world cannot be named; in the Laws, that we must not inquire into his being. And elsewhere in these same books he makes the world, the sky, the stars, the earth and our souls gods, and accepts besides those that have been accepted by ancient custom in each state. Xenophon reports a similar confusion in the teaching of Socrates.

Sometimes he says we must not inquire into the form of God; and then Xenophon has him lay down that the sun is God, and the soul is God; that there is only one, and then that there are several. Speusippus, Plato's nephew, makes God a certain force that governs things, and says that it is a living being. Aristotle says now that it is mind, now the world; now he gives this world another master, and now he makes God the fire of the heavens. Xenocrates makes eight: the five that are named among the planets; the sixth composed of all the fixed stars, as its members; the seventh and eighth, the sun and the moon.

Heraclides Ponticus does nothing but wander among his opinions, and in the end deprives God of feeling, and makes him shift from one form to another, and then says that he is the sky and the earth. Theophrastus strolls with the same irresolution among all his notions, attributing the governance of the world now to the understanding, now to the sky, now to the stars. Strato, that it is Nature, having the power to beget, increase and diminish, without form or feeling. Zeno, that it is natural law, commanding good and forbidding evil, which law is a living being; and he does away with the customary gods, Jupiter, Juno, Vesta. Diogenes of Apollonia, that it is age. Xenophanes makes God round, seeing, hearing, not breathing, having nothing in common with human nature.[95]

Aristo considers the form of God incomprehensible, deprives him of the senses, and does not know whether he is a living being or something else. Cleanthes says sometimes reason, sometimes the world, sometimes the soul of Nature, sometimes the supreme heat that surrounds and envelops everything. Perseus, a pupil of Zeno, held that the name of gods was given to those who had brought some notable benefit to human life, and to the useful things themselves. Chrysippus made

95 Cicero, Montaigne's source, has Diogenes say that God is air.

FRENCH

immortalisez. Diagoras et Theodorus nioyent tout sec, qu'il y eust des Dieux.

Epicurus faict les Dieux luisants, transparents, et perflables, logez, comme entre deux forts, entre deux mondes, à couuert des coups: reuestus d'vne humaine figure et de nos membres, lesquels membres leur sont de nul vsage. *Ego Deùm genus esse semper dixi, et dicam cælitum, / Sed eos non curare opinor, quid agat humanum genus.*

2.12.137 Fiez vous à vostre philosophie: vantez vous d'auoir trouué la feue au gasteau, à voir ce tintamarre de tant de ceruelles philosophiques. Le trouble des formes mondaines, a gaigné sur moy, que les diuerses mœurs et fantaisies aux miennes, ne me desplaisent pas tant, comme elles m'instruisent; ne m'enorgueillissent pas tant comme elles m'humilient en les conferant. Et tout autre choix que celuy qui vient de la main expresse de Dieu, me semble choix de peu de prerogatiue. Les polices du monde ne sont pas moins contraires en ce subiect, que les escholes: par où nous pouuons apprendre, que la Fortune mesme n'est pas plus diuerse et variable, que nostre raison, ny plus aueugle et inconsiderée.

Les choses les plus ignorées sont plus propres à estre deifiées. Parquoy de faire de nous des Dieux, comme l'ancienneté, cela surpasse l'extreme foiblesse de discours. I'eusse encore plustost suyuy ceux qui adoroient le serpent, le chien et le bœuf: d'autant que leur nature et leur estre nous est moins cognu; et auons plus de loy d'imaginer ce qu'il nous plaist de ces bestes-là, et leur attribuer des facultez extraordinaires.

Mais d'auoir faict des Dieux de nostre condition, de laquelle nous deuons cognoistre l'imperfection, leur auoir attribué le desir, la cholere, les vengeances, les mariages, les generations, et les parenteles, l'amour, et la ialousie, nos membres et nos os, nos fieures et nos plaisirs, nos morts et sepultures, il faut que cela soit party d'vne merueilleuse yuresse de l'entendement humain. Quæ procul vsque adeo diuino ab numine distant, / Inque Deûm numero quæ sint indigna videri.

ENGLISH

a confused heap of all the foregoing views, and among the thousand forms of gods he creates he counts also men who have been immortalized. Diagoras and Theodorus flatly denied that there were any gods.

Epicurus makes the gods shining, transparent and open to the passage of air, lodged, as between two forts, between two worlds, sheltered from blows; clothed in human shape and with our limbs, which limbs are of no use to them. *I have always said, and will say, that there is a race of heavenly gods, / But I do not think they care what the human race does.*[96]

Trust in your philosophy! Boast that you have found the bean in the cake, when you see this din from so many philosophical brains! The confusion of worldly forms has won this much from me: that customs and notions different from mine do not so much displease me as instruct me, and do not so much make me proud as humble me when I compare them. And any choice other than the one that comes from the express hand of God seems to me a choice with little claim to preference. The governments of the world are no less at odds on this subject than the schools; from which we can learn that Fortune herself is no more diverse and changeable than our reason, nor more blind and heedless.[97]

The things we know least are the fittest to be deified. Therefore to make gods of ourselves, as antiquity did, goes beyond the utmost feebleness of reasoning. I would sooner have followed those who worshipped the serpent, the dog and the ox, since their nature and their being are less known to us, and we have more license to imagine what we please about those beasts and to attribute extraordinary faculties to them.

But to have made gods of our own condition, whose imperfection we ought to know; to have attributed to them desire, anger, vengeance, marriages, procreation and kinship, love and jealousy, our limbs and our bones, our fevers and our pleasures, our deaths and burials—that must have come from an astonishing drunkenness of the human understanding. Things so very far removed from

96 Ennius, quoted by Cicero in On Divination.
97 Whoever found the bean baked into the Twelfth Night cake was crowned king of the feast.

FRENCH

Formæ, ætates, vestitus, ornatus noti sunt: genera, coniugia, cognationes, omniáque traducta ad similitudinem imbecillitatis humanæ: nam et perturbatis animis inducuntur: accipimus enim Deorum cupiditates, ægritudines, iracundias. *Comme d'auoir attribué la diuinité non seulement à la foy, à la vertu, à l'honneur, concorde, liberté, victoire, pieté: mais aussi à la volupté, fraude, mort, enuie, vieillesse, misere: à la peur, à la fieure, et à la male fortune, et autres iniures de nostre vie, fresle et caduque.* Quid iuuat hoc, templis nostros inducere mores? / O curuæ in terris animæ et cælestium inanes!

2.12.138 Les Ægyptiens d'vne impudente prudence, defendoyent sur peine de la hart, que nul eust à dire que Serapis et Isis leurs Dieux, eussent autres fois esté hommes: et nul n'ignoroit, qu'ils ne l'eussent esté. Et leur effigie representée le doigt sur la bouche, signifioit, dit Varro, cette ordonnance mysterieuse à leurs prestres, de taire leur origine mortelle, comme par raison necessaire anullant toute leur veneration. Puis que l'homme desiroit tant de s'apparier à Dieu, il eust mieux faict, dit Cicero, de ramener à soy les conditions diuines, et les attirer çà bas, que d'envoyer là haut sa corruption et sa misere: mais à le bien prendre, il a fait en plusieurs façons, et l'vn, et l'autre, de pareille vanité d'opinion.

2.12.139 Quand les philosophes espeluchent la hierarchie de leurs Dieux, et font les empressez à distinguer leurs alliances, leurs charges, et leur puissance, ie ne puis pas croire qu'ils parlent à certes. Quand Platon nous dechiffre le verger de Pluton, et les commoditez ou peines corporelles, qui nous attendent encore apres la ruine et aneantissement de nos corps, et les accommode au ressentiment, que nous auons en cette vie: *Secreti celant calles, et myrtea circùm / Sylua tegit; curæ non ipsa in morte relinquunt.* Quand Mahumet promet aux siens vn paradis tapissé, paré d'or et de pierreries, peuplé de garses d'excellente beauté, de vins, et de viures singuliers, ie voy bien que ce sont des moqueurs qui se plient à nostre bestise, pour nous emmieller et attirer par ces opinions et esperances, conuenables à nostre mortel appetit.

ENGLISH

the divine power, / And unworthy to be seen among the number of the gods.

Their forms, ages, clothing and ornaments are known; their lineages, marriages, kinships, and everything else has been made to resemble human weakness; for they are even portrayed with troubled minds: we hear of the lusts, the sorrows, the rages of the gods. *It is like having attributed divinity not only to faith, virtue, honor, concord, liberty, victory and piety, but also to pleasure, fraud, death, envy, old age and misery; to fear, to fever and to ill fortune, and to the other injuries of our frail and perishable life.* What good is it to bring our ways into the temples? / O souls bent down to earth and empty of heavenly things![98]

The Egyptians, with shameless prudence, forbade on pain of hanging that anyone should say that Serapis and Isis, their gods, had once been human; and no one was unaware that they had been. And their image, shown with a finger to the lips, signified, says Varro, this mysterious command to their priests to keep silent about their mortal origin, since by necessary reason that would annul all veneration for them. Since man so desired to make himself God's equal, he would have done better, says Cicero, to bring the divine qualities down to himself and draw them here below, than to send his corruption and misery up there. But rightly considered, he has done both, in several ways, with equal vanity of opinion.

When philosophers pick apart the hierarchy of their gods and bustle about distinguishing their alliances, their offices and their power, I cannot believe they are speaking in earnest. When Plato deciphers for us Pluto's orchard, and the bodily comforts or pains that still await us after the ruin and annihilation of our bodies, and fits them to the feelings we have in this life: *Hidden paths conceal them, and a myrtle wood / Surrounds them; their cares do not leave them even in death.* When Muhammad promises his followers a paradise hung with tapestries, adorned with gold and precious stones, peopled with girls of surpassing beauty, with wines and choice foods, I see clearly that these are mockers who bend to our stupidity,

98 The prose is from Cicero, On the Nature of the Gods; the verse is from Persius, Satires II.

FRENCH

ENGLISH

to sweeten us with honey and lure us with these notions and hopes suited to our mortal appetite.[99]

Si sont aucuns des nostres tombez en pareil erreur, se promettants apres la resurrection vne vie terrestre et temporelle, accompagnée de toutes sortes de plaisirs et commoditez mondaines. Croyons nous que Platon, luy qui a eu ses conceptions si celestes, et si grande accointance à la diuinité, que le surnom luy en est demeuré, ait estimé que l'homme, cette pauure creature, eust rien en luy d'applicable à cette incomprehensible puissance? et qu'il ait creu que nos prises languissantes fussent capables, ny la force de nostre sens assez robuste, pour participer à la beatitude, ou peine eternelle?

Indeed some of our own have fallen into the same error, promising themselves after the resurrection an earthly and temporal life, accompanied by every kind of worldly pleasure and comfort. Do we believe that Plato—he whose conceptions were so heavenly, and whose acquaintance with divinity was so close that the surname has stayed with him—thought that man, that poor creature, had anything in him applicable to that incomprehensible power? And that he believed our feeble grasp capable, or the strength of our senses robust enough, to share in eternal bliss or eternal pain?[100]

2.12.140 Il faudroit luy dire de la part de la raison humaine: Si les plaisirs que tu nous promets en l'autre vie, sont de ceux que i'ay senti çà bas, cela n'a rien de commun auec l'infinité. Quand tous mes cinq sens de nature, seroient combles de liesse, et cette ame saisie de tout le contentement qu'elle peut desirer et esperer, nous sçauons ce qu'elle peut: cela, ce ne seroit encore rien. S'il y a quelque chose du mien, il n'y a rien de diuin: si cela n'est autre, que ce qui peut appartenir à cette nostre condition presente, il ne peut estre mis en compte. Tout contentement des mortels est mortel.

One would have to tell him, on behalf of human reason: If the pleasures you promise us in the other life are of the kind I have felt here below, that has nothing in common with infinity. Even if all five of my natural senses were filled to the brim with joy, and this soul seized with all the contentment it can desire and hope for—and we know what it is capable of—that would still be nothing. If there is anything of mine in it, there is nothing divine in it; if it is nothing other than what can belong to this present condition of ours, it cannot be taken into account. All the contentment of mortals is mortal.

La recognoissance de nos parens, de nos enfans, et de nos amis, si elle nous peut toucher et chatouïller en l'autre monde, si nous tenons encores à vn tel plaisir, nous sommes dans les commoditez terrestres et finies. Nous ne pouuons dignement conceuoir la grandeur de ces hautes et diuines promesses, si nous les pouuons aucunement conceuoir. Pour dignement les imaginer, il les faut imaginer inimaginables, indicibles et incomprehensibles, et parfaictement autres, que celles de nostre miserable experience. Oeuil ne sçauroit voir, dit Sainct Paul: et ne peut monter en cœur d'homme, l'heur que Dieu prepare aux siens.

If recognizing our parents, our children and our friends can touch and tickle us in the other world, if we still cling to such a pleasure, then we are among earthly and finite comforts. We cannot worthily conceive the greatness of those lofty and divine promises, if we can conceive them at all. To imagine them worthily, we must imagine them unimaginable, unspeakable and incomprehensible, and wholly different from those of our wretched experience. Eye cannot see, says Saint Paul, nor can it enter into the heart of man, the happiness that God prepares for his own.[101]

Et si pour nous en rendre capables, on reforme et rechange nostre estre, comme tu dis Platon par tes purifications, ce doit estre d'vn si extreme changement et si vniuersel, que par la doctrine physique, ce ne sera plus nous: *Hector erat tunc cùm bello certabat, at ille Tractus ab Æmonio non erat Hector equo;* ce sera quelque

And if, to make us capable of them, our being is reshaped and changed, as you say, Plato, by your purifications, it must be by so extreme and so universal a change that, by the teaching of physics, it will no longer be us: *Hector he was while he fought in war; but the one*

99 Virgil, Aeneid VI, on the lovers in the underworld.
100 Plato was traditionally called "the divine Plato."
101 1 Corinthians 2:9.

FRENCH

autre chose qui receura ces recompenses. *Quod mutatur, dissoluitur, interit ergo:*
Traiiciuntur enim partes atque ordine migrant.

2.12.141 Car en la Metempsycose de Pythagoras, et changement d'habitation qu'il imaginoit aux ames, pensons nous que le lyon, dans lequel est l'ame de Cæsar, espouse les passions, qui touchoient Cæsar, ny que ce soit luy? Si c'estoit encore luy, ceux là auroyent raison, qui combattants cette opinion contre Platon, luy reprochent que le fils se pourroit trouuer à cheuaucher sa mere, reuestuë d'vn corps de mule, et semblables absurditez. Et pensons nous qu'és mutations qui se font des corps des animaux en autres de mesme espece, les nouueaux venus ne soyent autres que leurs predecesseurs? Des cendres d'vn phœnix s'engendre, dit-on, vn ver, et puis vn autre phœnix: ce second phœnix, qui peut imaginer, qu'il ne soit autre que le premier?

Les vers qui font nostre soye, on les void comme mourir et assecher, et de ce mesme corps se produire vn papillon, et de là vn autre ver, qu'il seroit ridicule estimer estre encores le premier. Ce qui a cessé vne fois d'estre, n'est plus: *Nec si materiam nostram collegerit ætas*
Post obitum, rursúmque redegerit, vt sita nunc est,
Atque iterum nobis fuerint data lumina vitæ,
Pertineat quidquam tamen ad nos id quoque factum,
Interrupta semel cùm sit repetentia nostra. Et quand tu dis ailleurs Platon, que ce sera la partie spirituelle de l'homme, à qui il touchera de iouyr des recompenses de l'autre vie, tu nous dis chose d'aussi peu d'apparence.

Scilicet auolsus radicibus vt nequit vllam
Dispicere ipse oculus rem seorsum corpore toto. Car à ce compte ce ne sera plus l'homme, ny nous par consequent, à qui touchera cette iouyssance. Car nous sommes bastis de deux pieces principales essentielles, desquelles la separation, c'est la mort et ruyne de nostre estre. *Inter enim iacta est vitaï pausa, vagèque*
Deerrarunt passim motus ab sensibus omnes. Nous ne disons pas que l'homme souffre, quand les vers luy rongent ses membres, dequoy il viuoit, et que la terre les consomme: *Et nihil hoc ad nos, qui coitu coniugióque*
Corporis atque animæ consistimus vniter apti.

ENGLISH

Dragged behind the Thessalian horses was not Hector; it will be something else that receives those rewards. *What is changed is dissolved, and therefore perishes;*
For its parts are shifted and move out of their order.[102]

For in the metempsychosis of Pythagoras, the change of dwelling he imagined for souls, do we think that the lion in which Caesar's soul dwells takes on the passions that moved Caesar, or that it is he? If it were still he, those would be right who, attacking this opinion in Plato, reproach him that a son might find himself riding his mother, clothed in the body of a mule, and similar absurdities. And do we think that in the changes made from the bodies of animals into others of the same species, the newcomers are no different from their predecessors? From the ashes of a phoenix, they say, is born a worm, and then another phoenix: who can imagine that this second phoenix is no other than the first?

The worms that make our silk—we see them, as it were, die and dry up, and from that same body a moth come forth, and from that another worm, which it would be ridiculous to think is still the first. What has once ceased to be is no more: *Nor, if time should gather up our matter after death*
And put it back again as it is now arranged,
And the light of life were given to us once more,
Would that event concern us in the least,
Once the thread of our memory had been broken. And when you say elsewhere, Plato, that it will be the spiritual part of man that is to enjoy the rewards of the other life, you tell us something just as improbable.

Just as the eye, torn out by its roots,
Cannot see anything when separated from the whole body. For on that reckoning it will no longer be the man, nor consequently us, to whom that enjoyment will fall. For we are built of two principal, essential parts, whose separation is the death and ruin of our being. *For a break in life has been thrust between, and all the motions*
Have wandered off, scattered far and wide, away from the senses. We do not say that the man suffers when the worms gnaw the limbs he lived by, and the earth consumes them: *And this is nothing to us, who*

102 The first quotation is from Ovid, Tristia III; the second from Lucretius.

FRENCH

ENGLISH

exist as one whole
Formed by the union and marriage of body and soul.

2.12.142 D'auantage, sur quel fondement de leur iustice peuuent les Dieux recognoistre et recompenser à l'homme apres sa mort ses actions bonnes et vertueuses: puis que ce sont eux mesmes, qui les ont acheminées et produites en luy? Et pourquoy s'offencent ils et vengent sur luy les vitieuses, puis qu'ils l'ont eux-mesmes produict en cette condition fautiue, et que d'vn seul clin de leur volonté, ils le peuuent empescher de faillir? Epicurus opposeroit-il pas cela à Platon, auec grand'apparence de l'humaine raison, s'il ne se couuroit souuent par cette sentence. Qu'il est impossible d'establir quelque chose de certain, de l'immortelle nature, par la mortelle? Elle ne fait que fouruoyer par tout, mais specialement quand elle se mesle des choses diuines.

Moreover, on what foundation of their justice can the gods recognize and reward man after his death for his good and virtuous actions, since it was they themselves who set them going and produced them in him? And why are they offended by his vicious actions and why do they avenge them on him, since they themselves produced him in this faulty condition, and with a single wink of their will they could keep him from going wrong? Would not Epicurus set this against Plato, with great plausibility in human reason, if he did not often shelter behind this maxim: that it is impossible to establish anything certain about immortal nature by means of mortal nature? Mortal nature does nothing but go astray everywhere, but especially when it meddles with divine things.

Qui le sent plus euidemment que nous? Car encores que nous luy ayons donné des principes certains et infallibles, encore que nous esclairions ses pas par la saincte lampe de la verité, qu'il a pleu à Dieu nous communiquer: nous voyons pourtant iournellement, pour peu qu'elle se démente du sentier ordinaire, et qu'elle se destourne ou escarte de la voye tracée et battuë par l'Eglise, comme tout aussi tost elle se perd, s'embarrasse et s'entraue, tournoyant et flotant dans cette mer vaste, trouble, et ondoyante des opinions humaines, sans bride et sans but. Aussi tost qu'elle pert ce grand et commun chemin, elle se va diuisant et dissipant en mille routes diuerses.

Who feels this more plainly than we do? For although we have given it certain and infallible principles, although we light its steps with the holy lamp of truth that it has pleased God to impart to us, we nevertheless see every day that as soon as it strays ever so little from the ordinary path, and turns aside or wanders from the road traced and trodden by the Church, at once it loses itself, entangles and fetters itself, whirling and drifting on this vast, troubled and billowing sea of human opinions, without bridle and without goal. As soon as it loses that great common highway, it goes dividing and scattering into a thousand different routes.

2.12.143 L'homme ne peut estre que ce qu'il est, ny imaginer que selon sa portée. C'est plus grande presomption, dit Plutarque, à ceux qui ne sont qu'hommes, d'entreprendre de parler et discourir des Dieux, et des demy-Dieux, que ce n'est à vn homme ignorant de musique, vouloir iuger de ceux qui chantent: ou à vn homme qui ne fut iamais au camp, vouloir disputer des armes et de la guerre, en presumant comprendre par quelque legere coniecture, les effects d'vn art qui est hors de sa cognoissance.

Man can be only what he is, and imagine only according to his reach. It is greater presumption, says Plutarch, for those who are only men to undertake to speak and reason about gods and demigods than it is for a man ignorant of music to try to judge singers, or for a man who was never in an army camp to try to argue about arms and war, presuming to understand by some slight conjecture the workings of a skill that lies outside his knowledge.

2.12.144 L'ancienneté pensa, ce croy-ie, faire quelque chose pour la grandeur diuine, de l'apparier à l'homme, la vestir de ses facultez, et estrener de ses belles humeurs et plus honteuses necessitez: luy offrant de nos viandes à manger, de nos danses, mommeries et farces à la resiouïr: de nos vestemens à se couurir, et maisons à loger, la

Antiquity thought, I believe, that it was doing something for the divine greatness by likening it to man, clothing it with his faculties, and presenting it with his fine moods and his most shameful necessities: offering it our foods to eat, our dances,

FRENCH

caressant par l'odeur des encens et sons de la musique, festons et bouquets, et pour l'accommoder à noz vicieuses passions, flatant sa iustice d'vne inhumaine vengeance: l'esiouïssant de la ruine et dissipation des choses par elle creées et conseruées.

Comme Tiberius Sempronius, qui fit brusler pour sacrifice à Vulcan, les riches despouilles et armes qu'il auoit gaigné sur les ennemis en la Sardeigne: et Paul Æmyle, celles de Macedoine, à Mars et à Minerue. Et Alexandre, arriué à l'Ocean Indique, ietta en mer en faueur de Thetis, plusieurs grands vases d'or: remplissant en outre ses autels d'vne boucherie non de bestes innocentes seulement, mais d'hommes aussi: ainsi que plusieurs nations, et entre autres la nostre, auoyent en vsage ordinaire. Et croy qu'il n'en est aucune exempte d'en auoir faict essay. *Sulmone creatos*
Quattuor hic iuuenes totidem, quos educat Vfens,
Viuentes rapit, inferias quos immolet vmbris. Les Getes se tiennent immortels, et leur mourir n'est que s'acheminer vers leur Dieu Zamolxis.

De cinq en cinq ans ils depeschent vers luy quelqu'vn d'entre eux, pour le requerir des choses necessaires. Ce deputé est choisi au sort. Et la forme de le depescher apres l'auoir de bouche informé de sa charge, est, que de ceux qui l'assistent, trois tiennent debout autant de iauelines, sur lesquelles les autres le lancent à force de bras. S'il vient à s'enferrer en lieu mortel, et qu'il trespasse soudain, ce leur est certain argument de faueur diuine: s'il en eschappe, ils l'estiment meschant et execrable, et en deputent encore vn autre de mesmes.

Amestris mere de Xerxes, deuenuë vieille, fit pour vne fois enseuelir touts vifs quatorze iouuenceaux des meilleures maisons de Perse, suyuant la religion du pays, pour gratifier à quelque Dieu sousterrain. Encore auiourd'huy les idoles de Themixtitan se cimentent du sang des petits enfants: et n'aiment sacrifice que de ces pueriles et pures ames: iustice affamée du sang de l'innocence. *Tantum religio potuit suadere malorum!* Les Carthaginois immoloient leurs propres enfans à Saturne:

ENGLISH

mummeries and farces to amuse it, our clothes to cover itself and our houses to live in; caressing it with the scent of incense and the sound of music, with garlands and nosegays; and, to fit it to our vicious passions, flattering its justice with an inhuman vengeance, delighting it with the ruin and destruction of the things it had created and preserved.

Like Tiberius Sempronius, who had the rich spoils and arms he had won from the enemy in Sardinia burned as a sacrifice to Vulcan; and Paulus Aemilius those of Macedonia, to Mars and Minerva. And Alexander, having reached the Indian Ocean, threw several great golden vessels into the sea in honor of Thetis, filling his altars besides with a slaughter not only of innocent beasts but of men too—as several nations, and among others our own, commonly practiced. And I believe there is none that has not tried it. *Four young men born at Sulmo,*
And as many reared by the Ufens, he seizes here
Alive, to sacrifice them as offerings to the shades. The Getae consider themselves immortal, and for them dying is merely setting out toward their god Zamolxis.[103]

Every five years they dispatch one of their number to him, to ask him for the things they need. This envoy is chosen by lot. And the manner of dispatching him, after he has been told his errand by word of mouth, is this: of those attending him, three hold up as many javelins, onto which the others hurl him with all the strength of their arms. If he happens to be pierced in a mortal spot and dies at once, that is a sure sign to them of divine favor; if he survives, they consider him wicked and accursed, and send off yet another in the same way.

Amestris, mother of Xerxes, having grown old, once had fourteen young men from the best families of Persia buried alive at one time, following the religion of the country, to gratify some underground god. Even today the idols of Temixtitan are cemented with the blood of little children, and they like no sacrifice but these young and pure souls: a justice starved for the blood of innocence. *So many evils could religion prompt!* The Carthagini-

103 The verse is Virgil, Aeneid X, on Aeneas taking captives to sacrifice at Pallas's funeral; the Getae, a Thracian people, are described by Herodotus.

FRENCH	ENGLISH
et qui n'en auoit point, en achetoit, estant cependant le pere et la mere tenus d'assister à cet office, auec contenance gaye et contente.	ans sacrificed their own children to Saturn, and anyone who had none bought some; the father and mother, meanwhile, were obliged to attend this rite with a cheerful and contented face.[104]
2.12.145 C'estoit vne estrange fantasie, de vouloir payer la bonté diuine, de nostre affliction. Comme les Lacedemoniens qui mignardoient leur Diane, par bourrellement des ieunes garçons, qu'ils faisoyent fouëter en sa faueur, souuent iusques à la mort.	It was a strange notion, to want to pay divine goodness with our affliction. Like the Lacedaemonians, who pampered their Diana by tormenting young boys, whom they had whipped in her honor, often to death.
C'estoit vne humeur farouche, de vouloir gratifier l'architecte de la subuersion de son bastiment: et de vouloir garentir la peine deuë aux coulpables, par la punition des non coulpables: et que la pauure Iphigenia au port d'Aulide, par sa mort et par son immolation deschargeast enuers Dieu l'armée des Grecs des offences qu'ils auoyent commises: *Et casta incestè nubendi tempore in ipso / Hostia concideret mactatu mœsta parentis:* et ces deux belles et genereuses ames des deux Decius, pere et fils, pour propitier la faueur des Dieux enuers les affaires Romaines, s'allassent ietter à corps perdu à trauers le plus espez des ennemis. *Quæ fuit tanta Deorum iniquitas, vt placari populo Romano non possent, nisi tales viri occidissent?*	It was a ferocious notion, to want to gratify the architect by overthrowing his building; and to want to spare the guilty their due penalty by punishing the guiltless; and that poor Iphigenia, at the port of Aulis, should by her death and sacrifice absolve the Greek army before God of the offenses they had committed: *And that, a chaste victim, at the very time of her marriage, she should fall unchastely, / A sorrowing sacrifice, slain by her father's stroke;* and that those two fine and noble souls, the two Decii, father and son, to win the gods' favor for Roman affairs, should go and hurl themselves headlong into the thickest of the enemy. *What great injustice was it in the gods that they could not be appeased toward the Roman people unless such men had died?*[105]
2.12.146 Ioint que ce n'est pas au criminel de se faire fouëter à sa mesure, et à son heure: c'est au iuge, qui ne met en compte de chastiment, que la peine qu'il ordonne: et ne peut attribuer à punition ce qui vient à gré à celuy qui le souffre. La vengeance diuine presuppose nostre dissentiment entier, pour sa iustice, et pour nostre peine. Et fut ridicule l'humeur de Polycrates tyran de Samos, lequel pour interrompre le cours de son continuel bon heur, et le compenser, alla ietter en mer le plus cher et precieux ioyau qu'il eust, estimant que par ce malheur aposté, il satisfaisoit à la reuolution et vissicitude de la Fortune.	Besides, it is not for the criminal to have himself whipped by his own measure and at his own time; it is for the judge, who counts as chastisement only the penalty he orders, and cannot regard as punishment what is welcome to the one who suffers it. Divine vengeance presupposes our complete unwillingness, for its justice and for our penalty. And ridiculous was the whim of Polycrates, tyrant of Samos, who, to interrupt the course of his continual good fortune and make up for it, went and threw into the sea the dearest and most precious jewel he had, thinking that by this staged misfortune he was paying his due to the turns and vicissitudes of Fortune.
Et elle pour se moquer de son ineptie, fit que ce mesme ioyau reuinst encore en ses mains, trouué au ventre d'vn poisson. Et puis à quel vsage, les deschirements et desmembrements des Corybantes, des Menades, et en noz temps des Mahometans, qui s'esbalaffrent le visage, l'estomach, les membres, pour gratifier leur prophete:	And she, to mock his foolishness, made that same jewel come back into his hands, found in the belly of a fish. And then, what is the use of the tearings and dismemberings of the Corybantes, of the Maenads, and in our own times of the Muslims who slash their faces, chests and limbs to gratify

104 Temixtitan is Tenochtitlan, the Aztec capital (now Mexico City); the Latin line is Lucretius, On the Nature of Things I.
105 Publius Decius Mus, father and son, each vowed himself to death in battle (340 and 295 BC) to win victory for Rome; the prose quotation is from Cicero, On the Nature of the Gods III.

FRENCH

veu que l'offence consiste en la volonté, non en la poictrine, aux yeux, aux genitoires, en l'embonpoinct, aux espaules, et au gosier?

Tantus est perturbatæ mentis et sedibus suis pulsæ furor, vt sic Dij placentur, quemadmodum ne homines quidem sæuiunt. Cette contexture naturelle regarde par son vsage, non seulement nous, mais aussi le seruice de Dieu et des autres hommes: c'est iniustice de l'affoler à notre escient, comme de nous tuer pour quelque pretexte que ce soit. Ce semble estre grand lascheté et trahison, de mastiner et corrompre les functions du corps, stupides et serues, pour espargner à l'ame, la solicitude de les conduire selon raison. *Vbi iratos Deos timent, qui sic propitios habere merentur? In regiæ libidinis voluptatem castrati sunt quidam; sed nemo sibi, ne vir esset, iubente Domino, manus intulit.* Ainsi remplissoyent ils leur religion de plusieurs mauuais effects.

Sæpius olim / Religio peperit scelerosa atque impia facta.

ENGLISH

their prophet—seeing that the offense lies in the will, not in the breast, the eyes, the genitals, the fleshiness, the shoulders or the throat?[106]

Such is the frenzy of the mind when it is disturbed and driven from its seat that the gods are appeased in ways in which not even men rage. This natural fabric of ours, by its use, concerns not only ourselves but also the service of God and of other men; it is injustice to damage it knowingly, as it is to kill ourselves on any pretext whatever. It seems great cowardice and treachery to maul and corrupt the functions of the body, dull and servile as they are, in order to spare the soul the trouble of directing them according to reason. *Where do they fear the gods' anger, who think they earn their favor in this way? Some men have been castrated for the pleasure of a king's lust; but no one, at a master's command, has laid hands on himself so as not to be a man.* Thus they filled their religion with many evil effects.[107]

All too often in the past / Religion has given birth to criminal and impious deeds.

SETTING BOUNDS TO GOD

We tie God to our laws of nature and our grammar, though nothing of ours fits him.

FRENCH

2.12.147 Or rien du nostre ne se peut apparier ou raporter en quelque façon que ce soit, à la nature diuine, qui ne la tache et marque d'autant d'imperfection. Cette infinie beauté, puissance, et bonté, comment peut elle souffrir quelque correspondance et similitude à chose si abiecte que nous sommes, sans vn extreme interest et dechet de sa diuine grandeur? *Infirmum Dei fortius est hominibus: et stultum Dei sapientius est hominibus.* Stilpon le philosophe interrogé si les Dieux s'esiouïssent de nos honneurs et sacrifices: Vous estes indiscret, respondit il: retirons nous à part, si vous voulez parler de cela.

Toutesfois nous luy prescriuons des bornes, nous tenons sa puissance assiegée par nos raisons (i'appelle raison nos resueries et nos songes, auec la dispense de la philosophie, qui dit, le fol mesme et le meschant, forcener par raison: mais que c'est vne raison de particuliere forme) nous le voulons asseruir aux apparences vaines et foibles de nostre entendement, luy

ENGLISH

Now nothing of ours can be likened or related in any way whatsoever to the divine nature without staining and marking it with just so much imperfection. How can that infinite beauty, power and goodness admit any correspondence and likeness to so abject a thing as we are, without extreme injury and loss to its divine greatness? *The weakness of God is stronger than men, and the foolishness of God is wiser than men.* Stilpo the philosopher, asked whether the gods rejoice in our honors and sacrifices, replied: "You are indiscreet; let us step aside if you want to talk about that."[108]

Yet we prescribe limits to him, we hold his power besieged by our reasons (I call reason our ravings and our dreams, with the dispensation of philosophy, which says that even the fool and the wicked man rave by reason, but that it is a reason of a particular kind); we want to subject him to the vain and feeble appearances of our understanding

106 The Corybantes were the frenzied priests of Cybele; the Maenads, the ecstatic women followers of Bacchus.
107 Both Latin passages are from Saint Augustine, City of God VI, quoting Seneca.
108 1 Corinthians 1:25.

FRENCH

qui a faict et nous et nostre cognoissance. Par ce que rien ne se fait de rien, Dieu n'aura sçeu bastir le monde sans matiere. Quoy, Dieu nous a-il mis en main les clefs et les derniers ressorts de sa puissance? S'est-il obligé à n'outrepasser les bornes de nostre science?

Mets le cas, ô homme, que tu ayes peu remarquer icy quelques traces de ses effects: penses-tu qu'il y ayt employé tout ce qu'il a peu, et qu'il ayt mis toutes ses formes et toutes ses idées, en cet ouurage? Tu ne vois que l'ordre et la police de ce petit caueau où tu és logé, au moins si tu la vois: sa diuinité a vne iurisdiction infinie au delà: cette piece n'est rien au prix du tout: *Omnia cùm cœlo terráque marique, / Nil sunt ad summam summaï totius omnem.* C'est vne loy municipale que tu allegues, tu ne sçays pas quelle est l'vniuerselle.

Attache toy à ce à quoy tu és subiect, mais non pas luy: il n'est pas ton confraire, ou concitoyen, ou compaignon. S'il s'est aucunement communiqué à toy, ce n'est pas pour se raualer à ta petitesse, ny pour te donner le contrerolle de son pouuoir. Le corps humain ne peut voler aux nuës, c'est pour toy: le soleil bransle sans seiour sa course ordinaire: les bornes des mers et de la terre ne se peuuent confondre: l'eau est instable et sans fermeté: vn mur est sans froissure impenetrable à un corps solide; l'homme ne peut conseruer sa vie dans les flammes: il ne peut estre et au ciel et en la terre, et en mille lieux ensemble corporellement.

C'est pour toy qu'il a faict ces regles: c'est toy qu'elles attaquent. Il a tesmoigné aux Chrestiens qu'il les a toutes franchies quand il luy a pleu. De vray pourquoy tout puissant, comme il est, auroit il restreint ses forces à certaine mesure? en faueur de qui auroit il renoncé son priuilege?

2.12.148 Ta raison n'a en aucune autre chose plus de verisimilitude et de fondement, qu'en ce qu'elle te persuade la pluralité des mondes, *Terrámque, et solem, lunam, mare, cætera quæ sunt,*
Non esse vnica, sed numero magis innumerali. Les plus fameux esprits du temps passé, l'ont creuë; et aucuns des nostres mesmes, forcez par l'apparence de la raison humaine. D'autant qu'en ce bastiment, que nous voyons, il n'y a rien seul et vn, *Cùm in summa res nulla sit vna,*
Vnica quæ gignatur, et vnica soláque crescat: et que toutes les especes sont multipliées en quelque nombre. Par où il

ENGLISH

—him who made both us and our knowledge. Because nothing is made from nothing, God will not have been able to build the world without matter. What! Has God put into our hands the keys and the ultimate springs of his power? Has he bound himself not to go beyond the limits of our knowledge?

Suppose, O man, that you have been able to make out a few traces of his works here: do you think he has spent on this work all that he could, and put into it all his forms and all his ideas? You see only the order and government of this little cell in which you are lodged—at least if you see that much; his divinity has an infinite jurisdiction beyond it; this piece is nothing compared to the whole: *All things, with sky and earth and sea, / Are nothing beside the total sum of the whole sum.* It is a local bylaw that you cite; you do not know what the universal law is.

Bind yourself to what you are subject to, but do not bind him: he is not your colleague, or fellow citizen, or companion. If he has revealed himself to you in some degree, it is not to lower himself to your littleness, nor to give you oversight of his power. The human body cannot fly to the clouds: that is for you. The sun moves ceaselessly on its ordinary course; the boundaries of sea and land cannot be confounded; water is unstable and without firmness; a wall without a breach is impenetrable to a solid body; man cannot preserve his life in flames; he cannot be bodily in heaven and on earth and in a thousand places at once.

It is for you that he made these rules; it is you they bind. He has shown Christians that he has overstepped them all whenever it pleased him. Indeed, why, all-powerful as he is, would he have restricted his strength to a certain measure? In whose favor would he have renounced his privilege?

There is nothing in which your reason has more probability and foundation than when it persuades you of the plurality of worlds: *That the earth and the sun, the moon, the sea, and all the rest that exist,*
Are not unique, but rather numberless in number. The most famous minds of the past believed it, and even some of our own, compelled by the appearance of human reason. For in this structure that we see there is nothing single and alone, *Since in the sum of things there is no one thing*

FRENCH

semble n'estre pas vray-semblable, que Dieu ait faict ce seul ouurage sans compaignon?

et que la matiere de cette forme ayt esté toute espuisée en ce seul indiuidu. *Quare etiam atque etiam tales fateare necesse est,*
Esse alios alibi congressus materiaï,
Qualis hic est auido complexu quem tenet æther. Notamment si c'est vn animant, comme ses mouuemens le rendent si croyable, que Platon l'asseure, et plusieurs des nostres ou le confirment, ou ne l'osent infirmer: non plus que cette ancienne opinion, que le ciel, les estoilles, et autres membres du monde, sont creatures composées de corps et ame: mortelles, en consideration de leur composition: mais immortelles par la determination du createur.

Or s'il y a plusieurs mondes, comme Democritus, Epicurus et presque toute la philosophie a pensé, que sçauons nous si les principes et les regles de cestuy-cy touchent pareillement les autres? Ils ont à l'auanture autre visage et autre police. Epicurus les imagine ou semblables, ou dissemblables. Nous voyons en ce monde vne infinie difference et varieté, pour la seule distance des lieux. Ny le bled ny le vin se voit, ny aucun de nos animaux, en ce nouueau coin du monde, que nos peres ont descouuert: tout y est diuers. Et au temps passé, voyez en combien de parties du monde on n'auoit cognoissance ny de Bacchus, ny de Ceres.

Qui en voudra croire Pline et Herodote, il y a des especes d'hommes en certains endroits, qui ont fort peu de ressemblance à la nostre. Et y a des formes mestisses et ambigues, entre l'humaine nature et la brutale.

Il y a des contrées où les hommes naissent sans teste, portant les yeux et la bouche en la poitrine: où ils sont tous androgynes: où ils marchent de quatre pates: où ils n'ont qu'vn œil au front, et la teste plus semblable à celle d'vn chien qu'à la nostre: où ils sont moitié poisson par embas, et viuent en l'eau: où les femmes accouchent à cinq ans, et n'en viuent que huict: où ils ont la teste si dure et la peau du front, que le fer n'y peut mordre, et rebouche contre: où les hommes sont sans barbe: des nations, sans vsage de feu: d'autres qui rendent le sperme de couleur noire.

ENGLISH

That is born unique and grows unique and alone, and all species are multiplied in some number. From which it seems improbable that God made this one work without a companion?

and that the matter of this form has been entirely used up in this single individual. *Wherefore you must admit again and again*
That there are elsewhere other gatherings of matter
Like this one, which the ether holds in its greedy embrace. Especially if it is a living being, as its movements make so credible that Plato affirms it, and many of our own either confirm it or dare not deny it; no more than they deny that ancient opinion that the sky, the stars and the other members of the world are creatures composed of body and soul: mortal by reason of their composition, but immortal by the decree of the creator.

Now if there are several worlds, as Democritus, Epicurus and almost all philosophy have thought, how do we know whether the principles and rules of this one apply likewise to the others? Perhaps they have a different face and a different order. Epicurus imagines them either similar or dissimilar. We see in this world an infinite difference and variety merely from distance of place. Neither wheat nor wine is to be seen, nor any of our animals, in that new corner of the world which our fathers discovered; everything there is different. And in times past, see in how many parts of the world people had no knowledge of either Bacchus or Ceres.

If you will believe Pliny and Herodotus, there are species of men in certain places that bear very little resemblance to ours. And there are mixed and ambiguous forms between human nature and that of beasts.

There are regions where men are born without heads, with their eyes and mouth in their chests; where they are all androgynous; where they walk on all fours; where they have only one eye, in the forehead, and a head more like a dog's than ours; where they are half fish from the waist down and live in the water; where the women give birth at five years old and live only to eight; where their heads and the skin of their foreheads are so hard that iron cannot bite into them but is blunted against them; where the men are beardless; nations without the use of fire; others that emit black sperm.

FRENCH

Quoy ceux qui naturellement se changent en loups, en iumens, et puis encore en hommes? Et s'il est ainsi, comme dit Plutarque, qu'en quelque endroit des Indes, il y aye des hommes sans bouche, se nourrissans de la senteur de certaines odeurs, combien y a il de nos descriptions faulces? Il n'est plus risible, ny à l'aduanture capable de raison et de societé. L'ordonnance et la cause de nostre bastiment interne, seroyent pour la plus part hors de propos.

2.12.149 Dauantage, combien y a il de choses en nostre cognoissance, qui combattent ces belles regles que nous auons taillées et prescriptes à Nature? Et nous entreprendrons d'y attacher Dieu mesme! Combien de choses appellons nous miraculeuses, et contre Nature? Cela se fait par chaque homme, et par chasque nation, selon la mesure de son ignorance. Combien trouuons nous de proprietez occultes et de quint'essences? car aller selon Nature pour nous, ce n'est qu'aller selon nostre intelligence, autant qu'elle peut suiure, et autant que nous y voyons: ce qui est audelà, est monstrueux et desordonné.

Or à ce compte, aux plus aduisez et aux plus habiles tout sera donc monstrueux: car à ceux là, l'humaine raison a persuadé, qu'elle n'auoit ny pied, ny fondement quelconque: non pas seulement pour asseurer si la neige est blanche: et Anaxagoras la disoit noire: s'il y a quelque chose, ou s'il n'y a nulle chose: s'il y a science, ou ignorance: ce que Metrodorus Chius nioit l'homme pouuoir dire. Ou si nous viuons; comme Eurypides est en doubte, si la vie que nous viuons est vie, ou si c'est ce que nous appellons mort, qui soit vie: Τις δ' οιδεν ει ζην τουθ' ο κεκληται θανειν, / Το ζην δε θνεισκειν εστι? Et non sans apparence.

Car pourquoy prenons nous tiltre d'estre, de cet instant, qui n'est qu'vne eloise dans le cours infini d'vne nuict eternelle, et vne interruption si briefue de nostre perpetuelle et naturelle condition? la mort occupant tout le deuant et tout le derriere de ce moment, et encore vne bonne partie de ce moment. D'autres iurent qu'il n'y a point de mouuement, que rien ne bouge: comme les suiuants de Melissus. Car s'il n'y a qu'vn, ny ce mouuement sphærique ne luy peut seruir, ny le mouuement de lieu à autre, comme Platon preuue. Qu'il n'y a ny generation ny corruption en Nature. Protagoras dit qu'il n'y a rien en Nature, que le doubte.

ENGLISH

What about those who naturally change into wolves, into mares, and then back into men? And if it is true, as Plutarch says, that in some part of the Indies there are men without mouths who feed on the smell of certain scents, how many of our descriptions are false? Man is no longer capable of laughter, nor perhaps of reason and society. The arrangement and purpose of our inner structure would for the most part be beside the point.[109]

Moreover, how many things are there within our knowledge that run counter to these fine rules we have cut out and prescribed for Nature? And we will undertake to tie God himself to them! How many things do we call miraculous and contrary to Nature? Every man and every nation does so according to the measure of its ignorance. How many occult properties and quintessences do we find? For to go according to Nature, for us, is only to go according to our understanding, as far as it can follow and as far as we can see; whatever lies beyond is monstrous and disordered.

Now on that reckoning, to the most perceptive and the ablest, everything will be monstrous; for human reason has persuaded them that it had no footing or foundation whatsoever—not even to determine whether snow is white (and Anaxagoras said it was black); whether there is something or nothing; whether there is knowledge or ignorance, which Metrodorus of Chios denied man could say; or whether we are alive—as Euripides is in doubt whether the life we live is life, or whether it is what we call death that is life: *Who knows whether living is what is called dying, / And dying is living?* And not without plausibility.

For why do we claim the title of being on the strength of this instant, which is but a flash of lightning in the infinite course of an eternal night, and so brief an interruption of our perpetual and natural condition—death occupying all that comes before and all that comes after this moment, and a good part of the moment as well? Others swear that there is no movement, that nothing stirs, like the followers of Melissus. For if there is only One, neither spherical motion can serve it, nor movement from one place to another, as Plato proves. Others, that there is neither generation nor cor-

109 The schools defined man as the animal capable of laughter, reason and society.

FRENCH

ENGLISH

ruption in Nature. Protagoras says there is nothing in Nature but doubt.

Que de toutes choses on peut esgalement disputer: et de cela mesme, si on peut egalement disputer de toutes choses. Mansiphanes, que des choses, qui semblent, rien est non plus que non est. Qu'il n'y a autre certain que l'incertitude. Parmenides, que de ce qu'il semble, il n'est aucune chose en general. Qu'il n'est qu'vn. Zenon, qu'vn mesme n'est pas. Et qu'il n'y a rien. Si vn estoit, il seroit ou en vn autre, ou en soy-mesme. S'il est en vn autre, ce sont deux. S'il est en soy-mesme, ce sont encore deux, le comprenant, et le comprins. Selon ces dogmes, la nature des choses n'est qu'vne ombre ou fausse ou vaine.

That one can argue equally about everything, and about that very point, whether one can argue equally about everything. Nausiphanes, that of the things that seem to be, none is any more than it is not; that nothing is certain but uncertainty. Parmenides, that of what seems to be, nothing exists in general; that there is only One. Zeno, that not even One exists, and that there is nothing. If One existed, it would be either in another or in itself. If it is in another, there are two. If it is in itself, there are still two, the container and the contained. According to these doctrines, the nature of things is nothing but a shadow, either false or empty.[110]

2.12.150 Il m'a tousiours semblé qu'à vn homme Chrestien cette sorte de parler est pleine d'indiscretion et d'irreuerence: Dieu ne peut mourir, Dieu ne se peut desdire, Dieu ne peut faire cecy, ou cela. Ie ne trouue pas bon d'enfermer ainsi la puissance diuine soubs les loix de nostre parolle. Et l'apparence qui s'offre à nous, en ces propositions, il la faudroit representer plus reueremment et plus religieusement.

It has always seemed to me that for a Christian this way of speaking is full of indiscretion and irreverence: God cannot die, God cannot go back on his word, God cannot do this or that. I do not think it right to confine the divine power in this way under the laws of our speech. And the appearance that presents itself to us in these propositions ought to be expressed more reverently and more religiously.

2.12.151 Nostre parler a ses foiblesses et ses deffaults, comme tout le reste. La plus part des occasions des troubles du monde sont Grammariens. Noz procez ne naissent que du debat de l'interpretation des loix; et la plus part des guerres, de cette impuissance de n'auoir sçeu clairement exprimer les conuentions et traictez d'accord des Princes. Combien de querelles et combien importantes a produit au monde le doubte du sens de cette syllabe, *Hoc*? Prenons la clause que la logique mesmes nous presentera pour la plus claire. Si vous dictes, Il faict beau temps, et que vous dissiez verité, il faict donc beau temps. Voyla pas vne forme de parler certaine? Encore nous trompera elle.

Our speech has its weaknesses and its defects, like everything else. Most of the occasions of the world's troubles are grammatical. Our lawsuits arise only from debate over the interpretation of laws, and most wars from the inability to express clearly the conventions and treaties of agreement between princes. How many quarrels, and how momentous, have been produced in the world by doubt about the meaning of that one syllable, *Hoc*? Let us take the clause that logic itself will present to us as the clearest. If you say, "The weather is fine," and you are telling the truth, then the weather is fine. Is that not a sure form of speech? Yet even it will deceive us.[111]

Qu'il soit ainsi, suyuons l'exemple: si vous dites, Ie ments, et que vous dissiez vray, vous mentez donc. L'art, la raison, la force de la conclusion de cette-cy, sont pareilles à l'autre, toutesfois nous voyla embourbez. Ie voy les philosophes Pyrrhoniens qui ne peuuent exprimer leur generale conception en aucune maniere de parler: car il leur faudroit vn nouueau langage. Le nostre est tout

To show that this is so, let us follow the example: if you say, "I am lying," and you are telling the truth, then you are lying. The method, the reasoning and the force of the conclusion are the same in this one as in the other; and yet here we are stuck in the mud. I see that the Pyrrhonist philosophers cannot express their general conception in any

110 The French has "Mansiphanes," a slip for Nausiphanes, a teacher of Epicurus; these views come from Seneca, Letters 88.
111 Hoc ("this") opens the words of consecration, "This is my body," whose meaning Catholics and Protestants disputed.

FRENCH

formé de propositions affirmatiues, qui leur sont du tout ennemies. De façon que quand ils disent, Ie doubte, on les tient incontinent à la gorge, pour leur faire auouër, qu'aumoins assurent et sçauent ils cela, qu'ils doubtent. Ainsin on les a contraints de se sauuer dans cette comparaison de la medecine, sans laquelle leur humeur seroit inexplicable.

Quand ils prononcent, I'ignore, ou, Ie doubte, ils disent que cette proposition s'emporte elle mesme quant et quant le reste: ny plus ny moins que la rubarbe, qui pousse hors les mauuaises humeurs, et s'emporte hors quant et quant elle mesmes. Cette fantasie est plus seurement conceuë par interrogation: Que sçay-ie? comme ie la porte à la deuise d'vne balance.

2.12.152 Voyez comment on se preuault de cette sorte de parler pleine d'irreuerence. Aux disputes qui sont à present en nostre religion, si vous pressez trop les aduersaires, ils vous diront tout destroussément, qu'il n'est pas en la puissance de Dieu de faire que son corps soit en paradis et en la terre, et en plusieurs lieux ensemble. Et ce mocqueur ancien comment il en faict son profit.

Au moins, dit-il, est-ce vne non legere consolation à l'homme, de ce qu'il voit Dieu ne pouuoir pas toutes choses: car il ne se peut tuer quand il le voudroit, qui est la plus grande faueur que nous ayons en nostre condition: il ne peut faire les mortels immortels, ny reuiure les trespassez, ny que celuy qui a vescu n'ait point vescu, celuy qui a eu des honneurs, ne les ait point eus, n'ayant autre droit sur le passé que de l'oubliance. Et afin que cette societé de l'homme à Dieu, s'accouple encore par des exemples plaisans, il ne peut faire que deux fois dix ne soyent vingt. Voyla ce qu'il dit, et qu'vn Chrestien deuroit euiter de passer par sa bouche.

Là où au rebours, il semble que les hommes recherchent cette folle fierté de langage pour ramener Dieu à leur mesure. *Cras vel atra*
Nube polum Pater occupato,
Vel sole puro, non tamen irritum
Quodcumque retro est efficiet, neque
Diffinget infectúmque reddet,
Quod fugiens semel hora vexit. Quand nous disons que l'infinité des siecles tant passez qu'auenir n'est à Dieu

ENGLISH

manner of speech, for they would need a new language. Ours is made up entirely of affirmative propositions, which are wholly hostile to them. So that when they say "I doubt," they are at once seized by the throat and made to admit that at least they affirm and know this: that they doubt. Thus they have been forced to take refuge in this comparison from medicine, without which their attitude would be inexplicable.

When they pronounce "I do not know" or "I doubt," they say that this proposition carries itself away along with the rest, no more and no less than rhubarb, which expels the bad humors and carries itself out along with them. This notion is more surely grasped in the form of a question: "What do I know?"—as I bear it as my motto, with a pair of scales.[112]

See how people take advantage of this irreverent way of speaking. In the disputes now going on in our religion, if you press your opponents too hard, they will tell you point-blank that it is not in God's power to make his body be in paradise and on earth and in several places at once. And see how that ancient mocker makes use of it.[113]

At least, he says, it is no slight consolation to man to see that God cannot do everything: for he cannot kill himself when he wishes, which is the greatest favor we have in our condition; he cannot make mortals immortal, nor bring the dead back to life, nor make one who has lived not to have lived, nor one who has had honors not to have had them, having no other power over the past than forgetfulness. And so that this fellowship between man and God may be coupled further by amusing examples, he cannot make twice ten not be twenty. That is what he says, and what a Christian ought to avoid letting pass his lips.

Whereas, on the contrary, it seems that men seek out this mad arrogance of language to bring God down to their measure. *Tomorrow let the Father fill the sky*
With black cloud,
Or with pure sunlight; yet he will not make void
Whatever lies behind us, nor
Reshape and render undone

112 In 1576 Montaigne had a medal struck showing a balance with the motto "Que sais-je?"
113 The Protestants denied Christ's bodily presence in the Eucharist; the "ancient mocker" is Pliny the Elder, Natural History II.

FRENCH

qu'vn instant: que sa bonté, sapience, puissance sont mesme chose auecques son essence; nostre parole le dit, mais nostre intelligence ne l'apprehende point.

2.12.153 Et toutesfois nostre outrecuidance veut faire passer la diuinité par nostre estamine. Et de là s'engendrent toutes les resueries et erreurs, desquelles le monde se trouue saisi, ramenant et poisant à sa balance, chose si esloignée de son poix. *Mirum quò procedat improbitas cordis humani, paruulo aliquo inuitata successu.* Combien insolemment rabroüent Epicurus les Stoiciens, sur ce qu'il tient l'estre veritablement bon et heureux, n'appartenir qu'à Dieu, et l'homme sage n'en auoir qu'vn ombrage et similitude? Combien temerairement ont ils attaché Dieu à la destinée! (à la mienne volonté qu'aucuns du surnom de Chrestiens ne le facent pas encore) et Thales, Platon, et Pythagoras, l'ont asseruy à la necessité.

Cette fierté de vouloir descouurir Dieu par nos yeux, a faict qu'vn grand personnage des nostres a attribué à la diuinité vne forme corporelle. Et est cause de ce qui nous aduient tous les iours, d'attribuer à Dieu, les euenements d'importance, d'vne particuliere assignation. Par ce qu'ils nous poisent, il semble qu'ils luy poisent aussi, et qu'il y regarde plus entier et plus attentif, qu'aux euenemens qui nous sont legers, ou d'vne suitte ordinaire. *Magna Dij curant, parua negligunt.* Escoutez son exemple: il vous esclaircira de sa raison: *Nec in regnis quidem reges omnia minima curant.*

Comme si à ce Roy là, c'estoit plus et moins de remuer vn empire, ou la feuille d'vn arbre: et si sa prouidence s'exerçoit autrement, inclinant l'euenement d'vne battaille, que le sault d'vne puce. La main de son gouuernement, se preste à toutes choses de pareille teneur, mesme force, et mesme ordre: nostre interest n'y apporte rien: noz mouuements et noz mesures ne le touchent pas. *Deus ita artifex magnus in magnis, vt minor non sit in paruis.* Nostre arrogance nous remet tousiours en auant cette blasphemeuse appariation. Par ce que noz

ENGLISH

What the fleeting hour has once carried off. When we say that the infinity of ages, past as well as to come, is but an instant to God; that his goodness, wisdom and power are one and the same thing as his essence—our speech says it, but our understanding does not grasp it.[114]

And yet our presumption insists on passing the divinity through our sieve. And from this arise all the ravings and errors that have taken hold of the world, as it brings down and weighs on its own scales a thing so far removed from its weight. *It is wonderful how far the wickedness of the human heart will go, when lured on by the slightest success.* How insolently the Stoics rebuke Epicurus for holding that being truly good and happy belongs only to God, and that the wise man has only a shadow and likeness of it? How rashly they have bound God to destiny! (Would to God that some who bear the name of Christians did not still do so.) And Thales, Plato and Pythagoras have enslaved him to necessity.[115]

This arrogance of wanting to discover God with our eyes led a great man of our faith to attribute a bodily form to the divinity. And it is the cause of what happens to us every day: attributing important events to God by special assignment. Because they weigh on us, it seems they weigh on him too, and that he watches them more fully and attentively than events that are light to us or follow an ordinary course. *The gods attend to great things and neglect small ones.* Listen to his example; it will make his reasoning clear to you: *Nor indeed do kings attend to all the smallest matters in their kingdoms.*[116]

As if, to that King, moving an empire or moving the leaf of a tree were more or less of a task; and as if his providence worked differently in tipping the outcome of a battle than in the leap of a flea. The hand of his government lends itself to all things with the same tenor, the same force and the same order; our interest adds nothing to it; our motions and our measures do not touch it. *God is so great an artificer in great things that he is no lesser one in small.* Our arrogance always brings this blasphemous comparison back to the fore. Because our oc-

114 Horace, Odes III.29.
115 Pliny the Elder, Natural History II.
116 The "great man" is Tertullian; the Latin is from Cicero, On the Nature of the Gods II.

FRENCH

occupations nous chargent, Straton a estreiné les Dieux de toute immunité d'offices, comme sont leurs prestres.

Il fait produire et maintenir toutes choses à Nature: et de ses poids et mouuements construit les parties du monde: deschargeant l'humaine nature de la crainte des iugements diuins. *Quod beatum æternúmque sit, id nec habere negotij quicquam, nec exhibere alteri.* Nature veut qu'en choses pareilles il y ait relation pareille. Le nombre donc infini des mortels conclud vn pareil nombre d'immortels: les choses infinies, qui tuent et ruinent, en presupposent autant qui conseruent et profitent.

Comme les ames des Dieux, sans langue, sans yeux, sans oreilles, sentent entre elles chacune, ce que l'autre sent, et iugent noz pensées: ainsi les ames des hommes, quand elles sont libres et déprinses du corps, par le sommeil, ou par quelque rauissement, deuinent, prognostiquent, et voyent choses, qu'elles ne sçauroyent veoir meslées aux corps. Les hommes, dit Sainct Paul, sont deuenus fols cuidans estre sages, et ont mué la gloire de Dieu incorruptible, en l'image de l'homme corruptible.

2.12.154 Voyez vn peu ce bastelage des deifications anciennes. Apres la grande et superbe pompe de l'enterrement, comme le feu venoit à prendre au hault de la pyramide, et saisir le lict du trespassé, ils laissoient en mesme temps eschapper vn aigle, lequel s'en volant à mont, signifioit que l'ame s'en alloit en paradis. Nous auons mille medailles, et notamment de cette honneste femme de Faustine, où cet aigle est representé, emportant à la cheuremorte vers le ciel ces ames deifiées. C'est pitié que nous nous pippons de nos propres singeries et inuentions, *Quod finxere timent;* comme les enfans qui s'effrayent de ce mesme visage qu'ils ont barbouillé et noircy à leur compagnon.

Quasi quicquam infelicius sit homine, cui sua figmenta dominantur. C'est bien loin d'honorer celuy qui nous a faicts, que d'honorer celuy que nous auons faict. Auguste eut plus de temples que Iupiter, seruis auec autant de religion et creance de miracles. Les Thasiens en recompense des biensfaicts qu'ils auoyent receuz d'Agesilaus, luy vindrent dire qu'ils l'auoyent canonisé: Vostre nation, leur dit-il, a elle ce pouuoir de faire Dieu

ENGLISH

cupations burden us, Strato granted the gods complete exemption from duties, as their priests have.[117]

He has Nature produce and maintain all things, and constructs the parts of the world out of its weights and motions, relieving human nature of the fear of divine judgments. *What is blessed and eternal neither has any trouble itself nor causes any to another.* Nature wills that in like things there should be like proportion. The infinite number of mortals therefore implies an equal number of immortals; the infinite things that kill and destroy presuppose as many that preserve and benefit.

Just as the souls of the gods, without tongues, without eyes, without ears, each feel among themselves what the other feels, and judge our thoughts, so the souls of men, when they are free and released from the body by sleep or by some trance, divine, foretell and see things they could not see when mingled with bodies. Men, says Saint Paul, have become fools thinking themselves wise, and have changed the glory of the incorruptible God into the image of corruptible man.[118]

Just look at the trickery of the ancient deifications. After the grand and splendid pomp of the funeral, as the fire began to catch the top of the pyramid and seize the bier of the deceased, they released at that same moment an eagle, which, flying upward, signified that the soul was going to paradise. We have a thousand medals, notably of that respectable woman Faustina, on which this eagle is shown carrying these deified souls up to heaven piggyback. It is a pity that we fool ourselves with our own monkey tricks and inventions, *They fear what they have invented,* like children who are frightened by the very face they have daubed and blackened on their playmate.[119]

As if anything could be more wretched than man, ruled by his own fictions. Honoring the one we have made is a far cry from honoring the one who made us. Augustus had more temples than Jupiter, served with as much devotion and belief in miracles. The Thasians, in return for the benefits they had received from Agesilaus, came to tell him that they had canonized him. "Has your nation," he said to

117 Saint Augustine, City of God XI.
118 Romans 1:22–23.
119 Faustina, wife of Marcus Aurelius, was reputed to be unfaithful; the Latin is from Lucan, Pharsalia I.

FRENCH

qui bon luy semble? Faictes en pour voir l'vn d'entre vous, et puis quand i'auray veu comme il s'en sera trouué, ie vous diray grand-mercy de vostre offre. L'homme est bien insensé: il ne sçauroit forger vn ciron, et forge des Dieux à douzaines.

Oyez Trismegiste louant nostre suffisance: De toutes les choses admirables a surmonté l'admiration, que l'homme ayt peu trouuer la diuine nature, et la faire.

2.12.155 Voicy des arguments de l'escole mesme de la philosophie. *Nosse cui Diuos et cœli numina soli, / Aut soli nescire, datum.* Si Dieu est, il est animal, s'il est animal, il a sens, et s'il a sens, il est subject à corruption. S'il est sans corps, il est sans ame, et par consequent sans action: et s'il a corps, il est perissable. Voyla pas triomphé? Nous sommes incapables d'auoir faict le monde: il y a donc quelque nature plus excellente, qui y a mis la main. Ce seroit vne sotte arrogance de nous estimer la plus parfaicte chose de cet vniuers. Il y a donc quelque chose de meilleur. Cela c'est Dieu.

Quand vous voyez vne riche et pompeuse demeure, encore que vous ne sçachiez qui en est le maistre; si ne direz vous pas qu'elle soit faicte pour des rats. Et cette diuine structure, que nous voyons du palais celeste, n'auons nous pas à croire, que ce soit le logis de quelque maistre plus grand que nous ne sommes? Le plus hault est-il pas tousiours le plus digne? Et nous sommes placez au plus bas. Rien sans ame et sans raison ne peut produire vn animant capable de raison. Le monde nous produit: il a donc ame et raison. Chasque part de nous est moins que nous. Nous sommes part du monde.

Le monde est donc fourny de sagesse et de raison, et plus abondamment que nous ne sommes. C'est belle chose que d'auoir vn grand gouuernement. Le gouuernement du monde appartient donc à quelque heureuse nature. Les astres ne nous font pas de nuisance: ils sont donc pleins de bonté. Nous auons besoing de nourriture, aussi ont donc les Dieux, et se paissent des vapeurs de ça bas. Les biens mondains ne sont pas biens à Dieu: ce ne sont donc pas biens à nous. L'offenser, et l'estre offencé sont egalement tesmoignages d'imbecillité: c'est donc follie de

ENGLISH

them, "the power to make a god of whomever it pleases? Make one of one of yourselves, by way of trial, and then, when I have seen how he fares, I will thank you heartily for your offer." Man is truly out of his mind: he could not make a mite, and he makes gods by the dozen.[120]

Hear Trismegistus praising our ability: Of all wonderful things, the one that has surpassed all wonder is that man should have been able to find the divine nature and to make it.[121]

Here are some arguments from the school of philosophy itself. *To whom alone it is given to know the gods and the powers of heaven, / or alone not to know them.* If God exists, he is a living being; if he is a living being, he has senses; and if he has senses, he is subject to corruption. If he is without a body, he is without a soul, and therefore without action; and if he has a body, he is perishable. Isn't that a triumph? We are incapable of having made the world; so there is some more excellent nature that put its hand to it. It would be foolish arrogance to think ourselves the most perfect thing in this universe. So there is something better. That is God.

When you see a rich and magnificent dwelling, even if you do not know who its master is, you will still not say that it was built for rats. And this divine structure that we see of the celestial palace—must we not believe that it is the home of some master greater than we are? Is the highest not always the most worthy? And we are placed at the very bottom. Nothing without soul and reason can produce a living being capable of reason. The world produces us; so it has soul and reason. Each part of us is less than we are. We are part of the world.

So the world is endowed with wisdom and reason, and more abundantly than we are. It is a fine thing to hold great power of government. So the government of the world belongs to some blessed nature. The stars do us no harm; so they are full of goodness. We need nourishment; so the gods need it too, and they feed on the vapors from down here. Worldly goods are not goods to God; so they are not goods to us. To offend and to be offended are

120 Pliny the Elder, Natural History II.
121 Hermes Trismegistus, the legendary author of the Hermetic writings; the passage is from the Asclepius.

FRENCH

craindre Dieu. Dieu est bon par sa nature: l'homme par son industrie, qui est plus. La sagesse diuine, et l'humaine sagesse n'ont autre distinction, sinon que celle-la est eternelle.

Or la durée n'est aucune accession à la sagesse. Parquoy nous voyla compagnons. Nous auons vie, raison et liberté, estimons la bonté, la charité, et la iustice: ces qualitez sont donc en luy. Somme le bastiment et le desbastiment, les conditions de la diuinité, se forgent par l'homme selon la relation à soy. Quel patron et quel modele! Estirons, esleuons, et grossissons les qualitez humaines tant qu'il nous plaira. Enfle toy pauure homme, et encore, et encore, et encore, *Non, si te ruperis, inquit. Profectò non Deum, quem cogitare non possunt, sed semetipsos pro illo cogitantes, non illum, sed seipsos, non illi, sed sibi comparant.*

2.12.156 Es choses naturelles les effects ne rapportent qu'à demy leurs causes. Quoy cette-cy? elle est au dessus de l'ordre de Nature, sa condition est trop hautaine, trop esloignée, et trop maistresse, pour souffrir que noz conclusions l'attachent et la garottent. Ce n'est par nous qu'on y arriue, cette routte est trop basse. Nous ne sommes non plus pres du ciel sur le mont Senis, qu'au fond de la mer: consultez en pour voir auec vostre astrolabe.

2.12.157 Ils ramenent Dieu iusques à l'accointance charnelle des femmes, à combien de fois, à combien de generations. Paulina femme de Saturninus, matrone de grande reputation à Rome, pensant coucher auec le Dieu Serapis, se trouue entre les bras d'vn sien amoureux, par le macquerellage des prestres de ce temple. Varro le plus subtil et le plus sçauant autheur Latin, en ses liures de la Theologie, escrit, que le secrestin de Hercules, iectant au sort d'vne main pour soy, de l'autre, pour Hercules, ioüa contre luy vn soupper et vne garse: s'il gaignoit, aux despens des offrandes: s'il perdoit, aux siens. Il perdit, paya son soupper et sa garse.

Son nom fut Laurentine, qui veid de nuict ce Dieu entre ses bras, luy disant au surplus, que le lendemain, le premier qu'elle rencontreroit, la payeroit celestement de

ENGLISH

equally signs of weakness; so it is folly to fear God. God is good by his nature, man by his own effort, which is more. Divine wisdom and human wisdom differ in nothing except that the former is eternal.

Now duration adds nothing to wisdom. So there we are, partners. We have life, reason and liberty, and we value goodness, charity and justice; so these qualities are in him. In short, the building up and the pulling down of divinity, its very conditions, are forged by man according to their relation to himself. What a pattern, what a model! Let us stretch, raise and swell human qualities as much as we please. Puff yourself up, poor man, and more, and more, and more: *"Not even if you burst," he said. Surely it is not God, whom they cannot conceive, but themselves, conceiving themselves in his place; it is not him but themselves that they compare, and not with him but with themselves.*[122]

In natural things, effects only half reflect their causes. What about this cause? It is above the order of Nature; its condition is too lofty, too remote and too sovereign to allow our conclusions to bind and fetter it. It is not through ourselves that we reach it; that road runs too low. We are no nearer to heaven on Mont Cenis than at the bottom of the sea: just check it with your astrolabe.[123]

They bring God down even to carnal intercourse with women—how many times over, how many generations of offspring! Paulina, wife of Saturninus, a matron of high repute in Rome, thinking she was sleeping with the god Serapis, found herself in the arms of one of her admirers, through the pandering of the priests of that temple. Varro, the subtlest and most learned of Latin authors, writes in his books on theology that the sacristan of Hercules, casting lots with one hand for himself and with the other for Hercules, played the god for a supper and a girl: if he won, at the expense of the offerings; if he lost, at his own. He lost, and paid for his supper and his girl.[124]

Her name was Larentia, and at night she saw this god in her arms; he told her besides that the first

122 The first words echo Horace's fable of the frog who puffed herself up to rival an ox (Satires II.3); the rest is from Augustine, City of God XII.15.
123 Mont Cenis: a high Alpine pass between Savoy and Italy.
124 The story of Paulina is told by the Jewish historian Josephus (Jewish Antiquities XVIII).

FRENCH

son salaire. Ce fut Taruncius, ieune homme riche, qui la mena chez luy, et auec le temps la laissa heritiere. Elle à son tour, esperant faire chose aggreable à ce Dieu, laissa heritier le peuple Romain. Pourquoy on luy attribua des honneurs diuins. Comme s'il ne suffisoit pas, que par double estoc Platon fust originellement descendu des Dieux, et auoir pour autheur commun de sa race, Neptune: il estoit tenu pour certain à Athenes, qu'Ariston ayant voulu iouïr de la belle Perictyone, n'auoit sçeu.

Et fut aduerti en songe par le Dieu Apollo, de la laisser impollue et intacte, iusques à ce qu'elle fust accouchée. C'estoient les pere et mere de Platon. Combien y a il és histoires, de pareils cocuages, procurez par les Dieux, contre les pauures humains? et des maris iniurieusement descriez en faueur des enfants? En la religion de Mahomet, il se trouue par la croyance de ce peuple, assés de Merlins: assauoir enfants sans pere, spirituels, nays diuinement au ventre des pucelles: et portent vn nom, qui le signifie en leur langue.

2.12.158 Il nous faut noter, qu'à chasque chose, il n'est rien plus cher, et plus estimable que son estre (le lyon, l'aigle, le daulphin, ne prisent rien au dessus de leur espece) et que chacune rapporte les qualitez de toutes autres choses à ses propres qualitez. Lesquelles nous pouuons bien estendre et racourcir, mais c'est tout; car hors de ce rapport, et de ce principe, nostre imagination ne peut aller, ne peut rien diuiner autre, et est impossible qu'elle sorte de là, et qu'elle passe au delà. D'où naissent ces anciennes conclusions. De toutes les formes, la plus belle est celle de l'homme: Dieu donc est de cette forme.

Nul ne peut estre heureux sans vertu: ny la vertu estre sans raison: et nulle raison loger ailleurs qu'en l'humaine figure: Dieu est donc reuestu de l'humaine figure. *Ita est informatum anticipatumque mentibus nostris, vt homini, quum de Deo cogitet, forma occurrat humana.* Pourtant disoit plaisamment Xenophanes, que si les animaux se forgent des Dieux, comme il est vray-semblable qu'ils facent, ils les forgent certainement de mesme eux, et se glorifient, comme nous.

ENGLISH

man she met the next day would pay her wages on heaven's behalf. It was Taruncius, a rich young man, who took her home with him and in time left her his heir. She in turn, hoping to do something pleasing to the god, left the Roman people her heir. For which she was granted divine honors. As if it were not enough that Plato was descended from the gods on both sides of his family, and had Neptune as the common founder of his line, it was held for certain in Athens that Ariston, wanting to enjoy the beautiful Perictione, had been unable to.[125]

And he was warned in a dream by the god Apollo to leave her unsullied and untouched until she had given birth. These were Plato's father and mother. How many such cuckoldings are there in the histories, contrived by the gods against poor human beings? And how many husbands insultingly disparaged to glorify the children? In the religion of Muhammad, according to the belief of that people, there are plenty of Merlins: that is, children without fathers, spiritual, born divinely in the wombs of virgins; and they bear a name that means this in their language.[126]

We must note that to each thing nothing is dearer or more estimable than its own being (the lion, the eagle, the dolphin prize nothing above their own species), and that each relates the qualities of all other things to its own qualities. These we can certainly stretch or shorten, but that is all; for outside this relation and this principle our imagination cannot go, cannot divine anything else, and it is impossible for it to get out of there and pass beyond. Hence these ancient conclusions. Of all forms, the most beautiful is that of man; so God has this form.

No one can be happy without virtue, nor can virtue exist without reason, and no reason can lodge anywhere but in human shape; so God is clothed in human shape. *So firmly is it shaped and fixed beforehand in our minds that when a man thinks of God, a human form comes to him.* That is why Xenophanes said wittily that if animals forge gods for themselves, as it is likely they do, they surely forge them in their own image, and glorify themselves as we do.[127]

125 Acca Larentia, honored at the Roman festival of the Larentalia; Montaigne follows Augustine's account (City of God VI.7).
126 Merlin, the enchanter of Arthurian romance, was said to have been fathered by a spirit on a mortal woman.

FRENCH

Car pourquoy ne dira un oyson ainsi: Toutes les pieces de l'vniuers me regardent, la terre me sert à marcher, le soleil à m'esclairer, les estoilles à m'inspirer leurs influances: i'ay telle commodité des vents, telle des eaux: il n'est rien que cette voute regarde si fauorablement que moy: ie suis le mignon de Nature? Est-ce pas l'homme qui me traicte, qui me loge, qui me sert: C'est pour moy qu'il fait et semer et moudre: s'il me mange, aussi fait-il bien l'homme son compagnon; et si fay-ie moy les vers qui le tuent, et qui le mangent. Autant en diroit une gruë; et plus magnifiquement encore pour la liberté de son vol, et la possession de cette belle et haulte region.

Tam blanda conciliatrix, et tam sui est Iena ipsa natura.

2.12.159 Or donc par ce mesme train, pour nous sont les destinées, pour nous le monde, il luict, il tonne pour nous; et le createur, et les creatures, tout est pour nous. C'est le but et le poinct où vise l'vniuersité des choses. Regardés le registre que la philosophie a tenu deux mille ans, et plus, des affaires celestes: les Dieux n'ont agi, n'ont parlé, que pour l'homme: elle ne leur attribue autre consultation, et autre vacation. Les voyla contre nous en guerre.

Domitósque Herculea manu
Telluris iuuenes, vnde periculum
Fulgens contremuit domus
Saturni veteris. Les voicy partisans de noz troubles, pour nous rendre la pareille de ce que tant de fois nous sommes partisans des leurs: *Neptunus muros magnóque emula tridenti*
Fundamenta quatit, totámque à sedibus vrbem
Eruit: hîc Iuno Scæas sæuissima portas
Prima tenet. Les Cauniens, pour la ialousie de la domination de leurs Dieux propres, prennent armes en dos, le iour de leur deuotion, et vont courant toute leur banlieue, frappant l'air par-cy par-là, à tout leurs glaiues, pourchassant ainsin à outrance, et bannissant les Dieux estrangers de leur territoire. Leurs puissances sont retranchées selon nostre necessité.

Qui guerit les cheuaux, qui les hommes, qui la peste, qui la teigne, qui la toux, qui vne sorte de gale, qui vne autre:

ENGLISH

For why should a gosling not say this: "All the parts of the universe look to me; the earth serves me to walk on, the sun to light my way, the stars to breathe their influences into me; I get such-and-such a benefit from the winds, such-and-such from the waters; there is nothing this vault looks on so favorably as me; I am Nature's darling. Is it not man who tends me, houses me, serves me? It is for me that he has the sowing and the milling done. If he eats me, so too does man eat his fellow man; and so do I eat the worms that kill and eat him"? A crane would say as much, and still more grandly, because of the freedom of its flight and its possession of that fine high region.

So flattering a go-between, and so much her own procuress, is nature herself.

Well then, by this same line of reasoning, the fates are for us, the world is for us; it shines, it thunders for us; creator and creatures alike, everything is for us. That is the goal and the target at which the whole universe of things aims. Look at the record of heavenly affairs that philosophy has kept for two thousand years and more: the gods have acted, have spoken, only for man; philosophy gives them no other deliberation and no other occupation. Here they are at war against us.

And the sons of Earth tamed
by Hercules' hand, a peril at which
the shining house of old Saturn
trembled. Here they are taking sides in our troubles, to pay us back for the many times we have taken sides in theirs: *Neptune shakes the walls and the foundations loosened*
by his great trident, and tears the whole city from its seat
and overturns it; here Juno, most cruel, is first to seize the Scaean gates. The Caunians, jealous for the dominion of their own gods, put on their armor on their feast day and go running all over their surrounding district, striking the air here and there with their swords, thus hunting the foreign gods down to the last and driving them out of their territory. The gods' powers are cut down to suit our needs.[128]

One heals horses, another men, one the plague, one ringworm, one the cough, one one kind of

127 Xenophanes: Greek poet and philosopher of the 6th century BC, a critic of gods made in human likeness.

FRENCH

adeo minimis etiam rebus praua religio inserit Deos: qui fait naistre les raisins, qui les aux: qui a la charge de la paillardise, qui de la marchandise: à chasque race d'artisans, vn Dieu: qui a sa prouince en Orient, et son credit, qui en Ponant, Hîc illius arma,
Hîc currus fuit.
O Sancte Apollo, qui vmbilicum certum terrarum obtines!

/ Pallada Cecropidæ, Minoïa Creta Dianam,
Vulcanum tellus Hipsipylæa colit,
Iunonem Sparte, Pelopeïadèsque Micenæ;
Pinigerum Fauni Mænalis ora caput,
Mars Latio venerandus. *Qui n'a qu'vn bourg ou vne famille en sa possession: qui loge seul, qui en compagnie, ou volontaire ou necessaire.* Iunctáque sunt magno templa nepotis auo. Il en est de si chetifs et populaires, car le nombre s'en monte iusques à trente six mille, qu'il en faut entasser bien cinq ou six à produire vn espic de bled, et en prennent leurs noms diuers. Trois à vne porte: celuy de l'ais, celuy du gond, celuy du seuil. Quatre à vn enfant, protecteurs de son maillot, de son boire, de son manger, de son tetter.

Aucuns certains, aucuns incertains et doubteux. Aucuns, qui n'entrent pas encore en paradis. *Quos, quoniam cœli nondum dignamur honore, / Quas dedimus, certè terras habitare sinamus.* Il en est de physiciens, de poëtiques, de ciuils. Aucuns, moyens entre la diuine et humaine nature, mediateurs, entremetteurs de nous à Dieu. Adorez par certain second ordre d'adoration, et diminutif. Infinis en tiltres et offices: les vns bons, les autres mauuais. Il en est de vieux et cassez, et en est de mortels. Car Chrysippus estimoit qu'en la derniere conflagration du monde tous les Dieux auroyent à finir, sauf Iuppiter. L'homme forge mille plaisantes societez entre Dieu et luy. Est-il pas son compatriote? *Iouis incunabula Creten.*

2.12.160 Voicy l'excuse, que nous donnent, sur la consideration de ce subject, Sceuola grand pontife, et Varron grand

ENGLISH

itch, another another: *so far does perverse religion thrust gods even into the smallest things*; one makes grapes grow, another garlic; one is in charge of lechery, another of trade; for each kind of craftsman a god; one has his province and his authority in the East, another in the West: Here were her arms,
here her chariot.
O holy Apollo, who hold the sure navel of the earth!

/ The sons of Cecrops worship Pallas, Minoan Crete Diana,
the land of Hypsipyle Vulcan,
Sparta and Pelops' Mycenae Juno;
the land of Maenalus the pine-crowned head of Faunus;
Mars is to be revered in Latium. *One has only a village or a family in his possession; one lives alone, another in company, by choice or by necessity.* And the grandson's temple is joined to his great-grandfather's. Some are so puny and plebeian (for their number rises to thirty-six thousand) that five or six of them have to be heaped together to produce one ear of wheat, and they take their various names from it. Three for a door: the god of the panel, the god of the hinge, the god of the threshold. Four for a child: protectors of its swaddling clothes, its drinking, its eating, its suckling.

Some certain, some uncertain and doubtful. Some who are not yet admitted to paradise: *Since we do not yet deem them worthy of the honor of heaven, / let us at least allow them to dwell in the lands we have given them.* There are gods of the natural philosophers, gods of the poets, gods of the state. Some are midway between divine and human nature, mediators, go-betweens between us and God, worshiped with a certain secondary, lesser order of worship. Endless in titles and offices: some good, others bad. There are old, broken-down ones, and there are mortal ones. For Chrysippus held that in the final conflagration of the world all the gods would come to an end except Jupiter. Man forges a thousand amusing partnerships between God and himself. Is God not his fellow countryman? *Crete, the cradle of Jove.*

Here is the excuse given us, on reflecting about this subject, by Scaevola, the high pontiff, and

FRENCH

theologien, en leur temps: Qu'il est besoin que le peuple ignore beaucoup de choses vrayes, et en croye beaucoup de fausses. *Quum veritatem, qua liberetur, inquirat: credatur ei expedire, quod fallitur.* Les yeux humains ne peuuent apperceuoir les choses que par les formes de leur cognoissance. Et ne nous souuient pas quel sault print le miserable Phaëthon pour auoir voulu manier les renes des cheuaux de son pere, d'vne main mortelle. Nostre esprit retombe en pareille profondeur, se dissipe et se froisse de mesme, par sa temerité.

Si vous demandez à la philosophie de quelle matiere est le soleil, que vous respondra elle, sinon, de fer, et de pierre, ou autre estoffe de son vsage? S'enquiert-on à Zenon que c'est que Nature? Vn feu, dit-il, artiste, propre à engendrer, procedant reglément. Archimedes maistre de cette science qui s'attribue la presseance sur toutes les autres en verité et certitude: Le soleil, dit-il, est vn Dieu de fer enflammé. Voyla pas vne belle imagination produicte de l'ineuitable necessité des demonstrations geometriques?

Non pourtant si ineuitable et vtile, que Socrates n'ayt estimé, qu'il suffisoit d'en sçauoir, iusques à pouuoir arpenter la terre qu'on donnoit et receuoit: et que Polyænus, qui en auoit esté fameux et illustre docteur, ne les ayt prises à mespris, comme pleines de fauceté, et de vanité apparente, après qu'il eut gousté les doux fruicts des iardins poltronesques d'Epicurus. Socrates en Xenophon sur ce propos d'Anaxagoras, estimé par l'antiquité entendu au dessus de touts autres, és choses celestes et diuines, dit, qu'il se troubla du cerueau, comme font tous hommes, qui perscrutent immoderément les cognoissances, qui ne sont de leur appartenance.

Sur ce qu'il faisoit le soleil vne pierre ardente, il ne s'aduisoit pas, qu'vne pierre ne luit point au feu, et, qui pis est, qu'elle s'y consomme. En ce qu'il faisoit vn, du soleil et du feu, que le feu ne noircit pas ceux qu'il regarde: que nous regardons fixement le feu: que le feu tue les plantes et les herbes. C'est à l'aduis de Socrates, et au mien aussi, le plus sagement iugé du ciel, que n'en iuger point. Platon ayant à parler des daimons au Timée: C'est entreprinse, dit-il, qui surpasse nostre portée: il en faut croire ces anciens, qui se sont dicts engendrez d'eux.

ENGLISH

Varro, the great theologian of their day: that the people must be ignorant of many true things and believe many false ones. *Since he seeks the truth that would set him free, let us believe it is good for him to be deceived.* Human eyes can perceive things only through the forms of their own knowledge. And we do not remember what a fall wretched Phaethon took for trying to handle the reins of his father's horses with a mortal hand. Our mind falls back into a like abyss, and is scattered and shattered in the same way, by its rashness.[129]

If you ask philosophy what the sun is made of, what will it answer, if not iron and stone, or some other stuff it is used to? Ask Zeno what Nature is: "A fire," he says, "artful, fit for generating, proceeding methodically." Archimedes, master of that science which claims precedence over all others in truth and certainty, says: "The sun is a god of red-hot iron." Isn't that a fine notion, produced by the inescapable necessity of geometrical demonstrations?

Not so inescapable and useful, however, that Socrates did not think it enough to know as much of it as would let one survey the land one gave and received; or that Polyaenus, who had been a famous and illustrious teacher of it, did not come to scorn these demonstrations as full of falsity and obvious vanity, once he had tasted the sweet fruits of Epicurus' idle gardens. Socrates, in Xenophon, speaking of Anaxagoras, whom antiquity considered more expert than anyone else in heavenly and divine matters, says that he went wrong in the head, as do all men who pry immoderately into kinds of knowledge that are not their business.[130]

When he made the sun a burning stone, he did not notice that a stone does not shine in fire and, what is worse, is consumed by it. When he made the sun and fire one and the same, he did not notice that fire does not blacken those it looks upon; that we can stare at fire; that fire kills plants and grasses. In the opinion of Socrates, and in mine too, the wisest judgment about heaven is to make none. Plato, having to speak of daimons in the Timaeus, says: "It is an undertaking beyond our

128 The Caunians lived at Caunus in Caria, in Asia Minor; the custom is reported by Herodotus (I.172).
129 Quintus Mucius Scaevola, Roman jurist and chief pontiff; Montaigne takes both opinions from Augustine, City of God IV.
130 Polyaenus: a mathematician who became a disciple and friend of Epicurus.

FRENCH

ENGLISH

reach; we must believe those ancients who said they were begotten by them.

C'est contre raison de refuser foy aux enfants des Dieux, encore que leur dire ne soit estably par raisons necessaires, ny vray-semblables: puis qu'ils nous respondent, de parler de choses domestiques et familieres.

It is against reason to refuse belief to the children of the gods, even though what they say is not established by necessary or even probable reasons, since they assure us they are speaking of domestic, family matters."

THE HEAVENS AND THE BODY

Our sciences of the stars and of man are poetic fictions built on guesses.

FRENCH

ENGLISH

2.12.161 Voyons si nous auons quelque peu plus de clarté en la cognoissance des choses humaines et naturelles. N'est-ce pas vne ridicule entreprinse, à celles ausquelles par nostre propre confession nostre science ne peut atteindre, leur aller forgeant vn autre corps, et prestant vne forme faulce de nostre inuention: comme il se void au mouuement des planetes, auquel d'autant que nostre esprit ne peut arriuer, ny imaginer sa naturelle conduite, nous leur prestons du nostre, des ressors materiels, lourds, et corporels: *Temo aureus, aurea summæ / Curuatura rotæ, radiorum argenteus ordo.* Vous diriez que nous auons eu des cochers, des charpentiers, et des peintres, qui sont allez dresser là hault des engins à diuers mouuemens, et ranger les roüages et entrelassemens des corps celestes bigarrez en couleur, autour du fuseau de la necessité, selon Platon.

Let us see whether we have a little more clarity in our knowledge of human and natural things. Is it not a ridiculous undertaking, for things that by our own admission our knowledge cannot reach, to go forging them another body and lending them a false form of our own invention? We see this in the movement of the planets: since our mind cannot reach it or imagine how it naturally proceeds, we lend them something of our own—material springs, heavy and corporeal: *Golden was the pole, golden the curve / of the wheel's rim, silver the row of spokes.* You would think we had had coachmen, carpenters and painters who went up there to set up machines with various motions, and to arrange the wheelwork and interlacings of the heavenly bodies, painted in many colors, around the spindle of Necessity, as Plato has it.

Mundus domus est maxima rerum,
Quam quinque altitonæ fragmine zonæ
Cingunt, per quam limbus pictus bis sex signis
Stellimicantibus, altus in obliquo æthere, lunæ
Bigas acceptat. Ce sont tous songes et fanatiques folies. Que ne plaist-il vn iour à Nature nous ouurir son sein, et nous faire voir au propre, les moyens et la conduicte de ses mouuements, et y preparer nos yeux? O Dieu quels abus, quels mescomtes nous trouuerions en nostre pauure science! Ie suis trompé, si elle tient vne seule chose, droictement en son poinct: et m'en partiray d'icy plus ignorant toute autre chose, que mon ignorance.

The world is the greatest house of all things,
which five high-thundering zones in their segments
gird, and through which a band painted with twice six
star-glittering signs, high in the slanting ether,
receives the moon's two-horse chariot. These are all dreams and frenzied follies. Why will Nature not be pleased one day to open her bosom to us, show us exactly the means and workings of her movements, and prepare our eyes for it? O God, what errors, what miscalculations we would find in our poor science! I am much mistaken if it holds a single thing exactly right; and I shall leave this place more ignorant of everything else than of my ignorance.[131]

2.12.162 Ay-ie pas veu en Platon ce diuin mot, que Nature n'est rien qu'vne poësie ainigmatique? Comme, peut estre, qui diroit, vne peinture voilée et tenebreuse, entreluisant

Did I not see in Plato that divine saying, that Nature is nothing but an enigmatic poem? As one might say, perhaps, a veiled and shadowy paint-

131 Lines attributed to Varro.

FRENCH

d'vne infinie varieté de faux iours à exercer noz coniectures. *Latent ista omnia crassis occultata et circumfusa tenebris: vt nulla acies humani ingenij tanta sit, quæ penetrare in cœlum, terram intrare possit.* Et certes la philosophie n'est qu'vne poësie sophistiquée. D'où tirent ces autheurs anciens toutes leurs authoritez, que des poëtes? Et les premiers furent poetes eux mesmes, et la traicterent en leur art. Platon n'est qu'vn poete descousu. Toutes les sciences sur-humaines s'accoustrent du stile poetique.

Tout ainsi que les femmes employent des dents d'yuoire, où les leurs naturelles leur manquent, et au lieu de leur vray teint, en forgent vn de quelque matiere estrangere: comme elles font des cuisses de drap et de feutre, et de l'embonpoinct de coton: et au veu et sçeu d'vn chacun s'embellissent d'vne beauté fauce et empruntée: ainsi fait la science (et nostre droict mesme a, dit-on, des fictions legitimes sur lesquelles il fonde la verité de sa iustice) elle nous donne en payement et en presupposition, les choses qu'elle mesmes nous apprend estre inuentées: car ces epicycles, excentriques, concentriques, dequoy l'astrologie s'aide à conduire le bransle de ses estoilles, elle nous les donne, pour le mieux qu'elle ait sçeu inuenter en ce subject: comme aussi au reste, la philosophie nous presente, non pas ce qui est, ou ce qu'elle croit, mais ce qu'elle forge ayant plus d'apparence et de gentillesse.

Platon sur le discours de l'estat de nostre corps et de celuy des bestes: Que ce, que nous auons dict, soit vray, nous en asseurerions, si nous auions sur cela confirmation d'vn oracle. Seulement nous asseurons, que c'est le plus vray-semblablement, que nous ayons sçeu dire.

2.12.163 Ce n'est pas au ciel seulement qu'elle enuoye ses cordages, ses engins et ses rouës: considerons vn peu ce qu'elle dit de nous mesmes et de nostre contexture. Il n'y a pas plus de retrogradation, trepidation, accession, reculement, rauissement, aux astres et corps celestes, qu'ils en ont forgé en ce pauure petit corps humain. Vrayement ils ont eu par là, raison de l'appeller le petit monde, tant ils ont employé de pieces, et de visages à le maçonner et bastir. Pour accommoder les mouuemens qu'ils voyent en l'homme, les diuerses functions et facultez que nous sentons en nous, en combien de parties ont ils diuisé nostre ame? en combien de sieges logée?

ENGLISH

ing, glimmering with an infinite variety of false lights to exercise our conjectures. *All these things lie hidden, concealed and wrapped in thick darkness, so that no human intellect is keen enough to penetrate heaven or to enter the earth.* And certainly philosophy is nothing but adulterated poetry. Where do those ancient authors get all their authorities, if not from the poets? And the first philosophers were poets themselves, and treated philosophy in their art. Plato is nothing but a rambling poet. All the superhuman sciences dress themselves up in the poetic style.

Women use ivory teeth where their natural ones are missing, and instead of their true complexion forge one out of some foreign material; they make thighs of cloth and felt, and plumpness out of cotton, and in full view and knowledge of everyone embellish themselves with a false and borrowed beauty. Science does just the same. (Even our law, they say, has legitimate fictions on which it founds the truth of its justice.) Science hands us, as payment and as premises, the very things it tells us are invented. For those epicycles, eccentrics and concentrics with which astronomy helps itself to steer the motion of its stars—it gives them to us as the best it has been able to invent on that subject; just as, for the rest, philosophy presents us not with what is, or with what it believes, but with what it forges as having the most plausibility and charm.

Plato, discussing the state of our body and that of beasts, says: "That what we have said is true, we would affirm if we had confirmation of it from an oracle. We affirm only that it is the most probable thing we have been able to say."

It is not only to the heavens that philosophy sends its ropes, its machines and its wheels; let us consider a little what it says about ourselves and our makeup. There is no more retrogradation, trepidation, accession, recession and rapture in the stars and heavenly bodies than they have forged in this poor little human body. Truly they had good reason to call it the little world, so many pieces and facets did they use to build and put it together. To account for the movements they see in man, and the various functions and faculties we feel in ourselves, into how many parts have they divided our soul? In how many seats have they lodged it?

FRENCH

à combien d'ordres et d'estages ont-ils departy ce pauure homme, outre les naturels et perceptibles? et à combien d'offices et de vacations? Ils en font vne chose publique imaginaire. C'est vn subject qu'ils tiennent et qu'ils manient: on leur laisse toute puissance de le descoudre, renger, rassembler, et estoffer, chacun à sa fantasie; et si ne le possedent pas encore. Non seulement en verité, mais en songe mesmes, ils ne le peuuent regler, qu'il ne s'y trouue quelque cadence, ou quelque son, qui eschappe à leur architecture, toute enorme qu'elle est, et rapiecée de mille lopins faux et fantastiques. Et ce n'est pas raison de les excuser.

Car aux peintres, quand ils peignent le ciel, la terre, les mers, les monts, les isles escartées, nous leur condonons, qu'ils nous en rapportent seulement quelque marque legere: et comme de choses ignorées, nous contentons d'vn tel quel ombrage et feint. Mais quand ils nous tirent apres le naturel, ou autre subject, qui nous est familier et cognu, nous exigeons d'eux vne parfaicte et exacte representation des lineaments, et des couleurs: et les mesprisons, s'ils y faillent.

2.12.164 Ie sçay bon gré à la garce Milesienne, qui voyant le philosophe Thales s'amuser continuellement à la contemplation de la voute celeste, et tenir tousiours les yeux esleuez contre-mont, luy mit en son passage quelque chose à le faire broncher, pour l'aduertir, qu'il seroit temps d'amuser son pensement aux choses qui estoient dans les nues, quand il auroit pourueu à celles qui estoient à ses pieds. Elle luy conseilloit certes bien, de regarder plustost à soy qu'au ciel.

Car, comme dit Democritus par la bouche de Cicero, *Quod est ante pedes, nemo spectat: cœli scrutantur plagas.* Mais nostre condition porte, que la cognoissance de ce que nous auons entre mains, est aussi esloignée de nous, et aussi bien au dessus des nuës, que celle des astres. Comme dit Socrates en Platon, qu'à quiconque se mesle de la philosophie, on peut faire le reproche que fait cette femme à Thales, qu'il ne void rien de ce qui est deuant luy. Car tout philosophe ignore ce que fait son voisin: ouï et ce qu'il fait luy-mesme, et ignore ce qu'ils sont tous deux, ou bestes, ou hommes.

2.12.165 Ces gens icy, qui trouuent les raisons de Sebonde trop foibles, qui n'ignorent rien, qui gouuernent le monde, qui sçauent tout: *Quæ mare compescant causæ, quid temperet annum,*

ENGLISH

Into how many orders and stories have they divided up this poor man, beyond the natural and perceptible ones? And into how many offices and occupations? They make him an imaginary commonwealth. He is a subject they hold and handle; they are given full power to unstitch him, arrange him, reassemble him and stuff him, each according to his fancy; and still they do not master him. Not only in reality but even in dreams, they cannot regulate him without some cadence or some sound escaping their architecture, enormous as it is, and patched together from a thousand false and fantastic scraps. And it is not right to excuse them.

For with painters, when they paint the sky, the earth, the seas, the mountains, the distant islands, we let them off with giving us only some slight indication; and since these things are unknown to us, we are content with any sort of shadowy, imagined rendering. But when they draw us from life, or some other subject that is familiar and known to us, we demand of them a perfect and exact representation of the lines and colors, and we despise them if they fail.

I am grateful to the Milesian girl who, seeing the philosopher Thales constantly absorbed in contemplating the vault of heaven, his eyes always raised upward, put something in his path to make him stumble, to warn him that it would be time to occupy his thoughts with things in the clouds once he had seen to those at his feet. She certainly gave him good advice: to look at himself rather than at the sky.

For, as Democritus says through the mouth of Cicero, *No one looks at what lies before his feet; they scan the regions of the sky.* But our condition is such that the knowledge of what we have in our hands is as far from us, and as high above the clouds, as that of the stars. As Socrates says in Plato, anyone who meddles with philosophy may be reproached as that woman reproached Thales: he sees nothing of what is in front of him. For every philosopher is ignorant of what his neighbor is doing—yes, and of what he himself is doing—and is ignorant of what they both are, beasts or men.

These people who find Sebond's arguments too weak, who are ignorant of nothing, who govern the world, who know everything—*What causes restrain the sea, what governs the year,*

FRENCH

Stellæ sponte sua, iussæue vagentur et errent:
Quid premat obscurum Lunæ, quid proferat orbem,
Quid velit et possit rerum concordia discors: n'ont ils pas quelquesfois sondé parmy leurs liures, les difficultez qui se presentent, à cognoistre leur estre propre?

Nous voyons bien que le doigt se meut, et que le pied se meut, qu'aucunes parties se branslent d'elles mesmes sans nostre congé, et que d'autres nous les agitons par nostre ordonnance, que certaine apprehension engendre la rougeur, certaine autre la palleur, telle imagination agit en la rate seulement, telle autre au cerueau, l'vne nous cause le rire, l'autre le pleurer, telle autre transit et estonne tous noz sens, et arreste le mouuement de noz membres, à tel object l'estomach se sousleue, à tel autre quelque partie plus basse.

Mais comme vne impression spirituelle, face vne telle faucée dans vn subject massif, et solide, et la nature de la liaison et cousture de ces admirables ressorts, iamais homme ne l'a sçeu: *Omnia incerta ratione, et in naturæ maiestate abdita*, dit Pline; et S. Augustin, *Modus, quo corporibus adhærent spiritus, omnino mirus est, nec comprehendi ab homine potest: et hoc ipse homo est*. Et si ne le met on pas pourtant en doubte: car les opinions des hommes, sont receuës à la suitte des creances anciennes, par authorité et à credit, comme si c'estoit religion et loy.

On reçoit comme vn iargon ce qui en est communement tenu: on reçoit cette verité, auec tout son bastiment et attelage d'argumens et de preuues, comme vn corps ferme et solide, qu'on n'esbranle plus, qu'on ne iuge plus. Au contraire, chacun à qui mieux mieux, va plastrant et confortant cette creance receue, de tout ce que peut sa raison, qui est vn vtil soupple contournable, et accommodable à toute figure. Ainsi se remplit le monde et se confit en fadeze et en mensonge.

2.12.166 Ce qui fait qu'on ne doubte de guere de choses, c'est que les communes impressions on ne les essaye iamais; on n'en sonde point le pied, où git la faute et la foiblesse: on ne debat que sur les branches: on ne demande pas si cela est vray, mais s'il a esté ainsin ou ainsin entendu. On ne demande pas si Galen a rien dict qui vaille: mais s'il a dict ainsin, ou autrement. Vrayement c'estoit bien raison que cette bride et contrainte de la liberté de noz iugements, et cette tyrannie de noz creances, s'estendist iusques aux

ENGLISH

whether the stars wander and stray of their own will or by command,
what darkens the moon's orb, what brings it forth, what the discordant concord of things intends and can do—have they never, among their books, sounded the difficulties that arise in knowing their own being?

We see well enough that the finger moves and the foot moves; that some parts stir by themselves without our leave, while others we move at our command; that a certain apprehension makes us blush, another turn pale; one notion acts only on the spleen, another on the brain; one makes us laugh, another weep; another chills and stuns all our senses and stops the movement of our limbs; at one sight the stomach heaves, at another some lower part.

But how a spiritual impression can make such a breach in a massive and solid substance, and what is the nature of the linkage and stitching of these wonderful springs, no man has ever known. *All things uncertain to reason and hidden in the majesty of nature*, says Pliny; and Saint Augustine: *The manner in which spirits cling to bodies is altogether marvelous and cannot be comprehended by man; and this is man himself.* And yet no one calls it into question; for men's opinions are accepted in the wake of ancient beliefs, on authority and on credit, as if they were religion and law.

What is commonly held about it is taken in like a jargon; this truth is accepted, with its whole structure and apparatus of arguments and proofs, as a firm and solid body that is no longer shaken, no longer judged. On the contrary, everyone vies with everyone else in plastering and propping up this accepted belief with all that his reason can do—and reason is a pliant tool, bendable and adaptable to any shape. Thus the world is filled with, and steeped in, nonsense and lies.

What makes us doubt so few things is that we never test common impressions; we do not probe their footing, where the fault and weakness lie; we argue only about the branches. We do not ask whether a thing is true, but whether it was understood this way or that. We do not ask whether Galen said anything worthwhile, but whether he said it this way or otherwise. Truly it was very reasonable that this curb and constraint on the freedom

FRENCH

escholes et aux arts. Le Dieu de la science scholastique, c'est Aristote: c'est religion de debattre de ses ordonnances, comme de celles de Lycurgus à Sparte.

Sa doctrine nous sert de loy magistrale: qui est à l'aduanture autant faulce que vne autre. Ie ne sçay pas pourquoy ie n'acceptasse autant volontiers ou les idées de Platon, ou les atomes d'Epicurus, ou le plein et le vuide de Leucippus et Democritus, ou l'eau de Thales, ou l'infinité de Nature d'Anaximander, ou l'air de Diogenes, ou les nombres et symmetrie de Pythagoras, ou l'infiny de Parmenides, ou l'vn de Musæus, ou l'eau et le feu d'Apollodorus, ou les parties similaires d'Anaxagoras, ou la discorde et amitié d'Empedocles, ou le feu de Heraclitus, ou toute autre opinion, (de cette confusion infinie d'aduis et de sentences, que produit cette belle raison humaine par sa certitude et clair-voyance, en tout ce dequoy elle se mesle) que ie feroy l'opinion d'Aristote, sur ce subject des principes des choses naturelles: lesquels principes il bastit de trois pieces, matiere, forme, et priuation.

Et qu'est-il plus vain que de faire l'inanité mesme, cause de la production des choses? La priuation c'est vne negatiue: de quelle humeur en a-il peu faire la cause et origine des choses qui sont? Cela toutesfois ne s'oseroit esbranler que pour l'exercice de la logique. On n'y debat rien pour le mettre en doute, mais pour deffendre l'autheur de l'escole des obiections estrangeres: son authorité c'est le but, au delà duquel il n'est pas permis de s'enquerir.

2.12.167 Il est bien aisé sur des fondemens auouez, de bastir ce qu'on veut; car selon la loy et ordonnance de ce commencement, le reste des pieces du bastiment se conduit aisément, sans se dementir. Par cette voye nous trouuons nostre raison bien fondée, et discourons à boule-veuë. Car nos maistres præoccupent et gaignent auant main, autant de lieu en nostre creance, qu'il leur en faut pour conclurre apres ce qu'ils veulent; à la mode des geometriens par leurs demandes auouées: le consentement et approbation que nous leurs prestons, leur donnant dequoy nous trainer à gauche et à dextre, et nous pyrouetter à leur volonté.

ENGLISH

of our judgments, and this tyranny over our beliefs, should extend even to the schools and the arts. The god of scholastic learning is Aristotle; it is a religious offense to debate his decrees, as it was those of Lycurgus at Sparta.

His doctrine serves us as magisterial law, though it may well be as false as any other. I do not see why I should not accept just as readily the Ideas of Plato, or the atoms of Epicurus, or the plenum and void of Leucippus and Democritus, or the water of Thales, or Anaximander's infinity of Nature, or the air of Diogenes, or the numbers and proportion of Pythagoras, or the infinite of Parmenides, or the One of Musaeus, or the water and fire of Apollodorus, or the like parts of Anaxagoras, or the discord and friendship of Empedocles, or the fire of Heraclitus, or any other opinion (out of that infinite confusion of views and pronouncements that this fine human reason produces, through its certainty and clear-sightedness, in everything it meddles with)—as readily as I would the opinion of Aristotle on this subject of the principles of natural things. These principles he builds out of three pieces: matter, form and privation.

And what is more vain than to make emptiness itself the cause of the production of things? Privation is a negative: what notion could have led him to make it the cause and origin of things that exist? Yet no one would dare to shake that, except as an exercise in logic. Nothing is debated there in order to cast doubt on it, but to defend the founder of the school against outside objections; his authority is the goal, beyond which no inquiry is permitted.

It is very easy to build whatever you like on agreed foundations; for in keeping with the law and ordering of this beginning, the remaining parts of the building go up easily without contradicting one another. By this route we find our reason well founded, and we reason away blindly. For our masters occupy and win in advance as much ground in our belief as they need in order to conclude afterward whatever they like, in the manner of geometers with their granted postulates: the consent and approval we lend them gives them the means to drag us left and right and spin us around at their will.

FRENCH

Quiconque est creu de ses presuppositions, il est nostre maistre et nostre Dieu: il prendra le plant de ses fondemens si ample et si aisé, que par iceux il nous pourra monter, s'il veut, iusques aux nuës. En cette pratique et negotiation de science, nous auons pris pour argent content le mot de Pythagoras, que chaque expert doit estre creu en son art. Le dialecticien se rapporte au grammairien de la signification des mots: le rhetoricien emprunte du dialecticien les lieux des argumens: le poëte, du musicien les mesures: le geometrien, de l'arithmeticien les proportions: les metaphysiciens prennent pour fondement les coniectures de la physique. Car chasque science a ses principes presupposez, par où le iugement humain est bridé de toutes parts.

Si vous venez à chocquer cette barriere, en laquelle gist la principale erreur, ils ont incontinent cette sentence en la bouche; qu'il ne faut pas debattre contre ceux qui nient les principes. Or n'y peut-il auoir des principes aux hommes, si la diuinité ne les leur a reuelez: de tout le demeurant, et le commencement, et le milieu et la fin, ce n'est que songe et fumée. A ceux qui combattent par presupposition, il leur faut presupposer au contraire, le mesme axiome, dequoy on debat. Car toute presupposition humaine, et toute enunciation, a autant d'authorité que l'autre, si la raison n'en faict la difference. Ainsin il les faut toutes mettre à la balance: et premierement les generalles, et celles qui nous tyrannisent.

La persuasion de la certitude, est vn certain tesmoignage de folie, et d'incertitude extreme. Et n'est point de plus folles gents, ny moins philosophes, que les Philodoxes de Platon. Il faut sçauoir si le feu est chault, si la neige est blanche, s'il y a rien de dur ou de mol en nostre cognoissance.

2.12.168 Et quant à ces responses, dequoy il se fait des comtes anciens: comme à celuy qui mettoit en doubte la chaleur, à qui on dit qu'il se iettast dans le feu: à celuy qui nioit la froideur de la glace, qu'il s'en mist dans le sein: elles sont tres-indignes de la profession philosophique. S'ils nous eussent laissé en nostre estat naturel, receuans les apparences estrangeres selon qu'elles se presentent à nous par nos sens; et nous eussent laissé aller apres nos appetits simples, et reglez par la condition de nostre naissance, ils auroient raison de parler ainsi.

ENGLISH

Whoever is believed in his presuppositions is our master and our God: he will lay out the ground plan of his foundations so broad and easy that by them he can lift us, if he wishes, up to the clouds. In this practice and business of knowledge we have taken at face value Pythagoras' saying that every expert should be believed in his own field. The logician refers to the grammarian for the meaning of words; the rhetorician borrows the topics of argument from the logician; the poet borrows his meters from the musician; the geometer his proportions from the arithmetician; the metaphysicians take the conjectures of physics as their foundation. For each science has its presupposed principles, by which human judgment is reined in on every side.

If you happen to run into this barrier, where the principal error lies, they immediately have this maxim on their lips: that one must not argue with those who deny first principles. Now there can be no principles for men unless the divinity has revealed them; all the rest—beginning, middle and end—is nothing but dream and smoke. Against those who fight by presupposition, we must presuppose the contrary of the very axiom under dispute. For every human presupposition, and every proposition, has as much authority as any other, unless reason makes the difference. So they must all be put on the scales—and first the general ones, and those that tyrannize over us.

The conviction of certainty is a certain sign of folly and of extreme uncertainty. And there are no people more foolish, or less philosophical, than Plato's philodoxes. We need to know whether fire is hot, whether snow is white, whether there is anything hard or soft within our knowledge.[132]

As for those retorts told in old stories—as to the man who doubted heat, who was told to throw himself into the fire, or to the man who denied that ice was cold, who was told to put some in his bosom—they are thoroughly unworthy of the philosophical profession. If they had left us in our natural state, receiving outward appearances as they present themselves to us through our senses, and had let us follow our simple appetites, regu-

132 Philodoxes: Plato's term (Republic V) for "lovers of opinion," as opposed to philosophers, lovers of wisdom.

FRENCH

ENGLISH

lated by the condition of our birth, they would be right to talk like that.

Mais c'est d'eux que nous auons appris de nous rendre iuges du monde: c'est d'eux que nous tenons cette fantasie, que la raison humaine est contrerolleuse generalle de tout ce qui est au dehors et au dedans de la voute celeste, qui embrasse tout, qui peut tout: par le moyen de laquelle tout se sçait, et cognoist. Cette response seroit bonne parmy les Canibales, qui iouyssent l'heur d'vne longue vie, tranquille, et paisible, sans les preceptes d'Aristote, et sans la cognoissance du nom de la physique. Cette response vaudroit mieux à l'aduenture, et auroit plus de fermeté, que toutes celles qu'ils emprunteront de leur raison et de leur inuention.

But it is from them that we have learned to set ourselves up as judges of the world; it is from them that we get this notion that human reason is controller-general of all that is outside and inside the vault of heaven, that it embraces everything, can do everything, and that through it everything is known and understood. That retort would do well among the Cannibals, who enjoy the happiness of a long, tranquil and peaceful life without the precepts of Aristotle and without even knowing the name of physics. That retort would perhaps be worth more, and have more firmness, than all those they will borrow from their reason and their invention.[133]

De cette-cy seroient capables auec nous, tous les animaux, et tout ce, où le commandement est encor pur et simple de la loy naturelle: mais eux ils y ont renoncé. Il ne faut pas qu'ils me dient, il est vray, car vous le voyez et sentez ainsin: il faut qu'ils me dient, si ce que ie pense sentir, ie le sens pourtant en effect: et si ie le sens, qu'ils me dient apres pourquoy ie le sens, et comment, et quoy: qu'ils me dient le nom, l'origine, les tenans et aboutissans de la chaleur, du froid; les qualitez de celuy qui agit, et de celuy qui souffre: ou qu'ils me quittent leur profession, qui est de ne receuoir ny approuuer rien, que par la voye de la raison: c'est leur touche à toutes sortes d'essais.

All animals would be capable of this retort along with us, and everything in which the command of natural law is still pure and simple; but these men have renounced it. They must not tell me, "It is true, for you see it and feel it so"; they must tell me whether what I think I feel I actually do feel; and if I feel it, let them then tell me why I feel it, and how, and what; let them tell me the name, the origin, the bounds and boundaries of heat and cold, the qualities of what acts and of what is acted upon; or else let them give up their profession, which is to accept or approve nothing except by way of reason. That is their touchstone for every kind of trial.

Mais certes c'est vne touche pleine de fauceté, d'erreur, de foiblesse, et defaillance.

But truly it is a touchstone full of falsity, error, weakness and failure.

2.12.169 Par où la voulons nous mieux esprouuer, que par elle mesme? S'il ne la faut croire parlant de soy, à peine sera elle propre à iuger des choses estrangeres: si elle cognoist quelque chose, aumoins sera-ce son estre et son domicile. Elle est en l'ame, et partie, ou effect d'icelle: car la vraye raison et essentielle, de qui nous desrobons le nom à fauces enseignes, elle loge dans le sein de Dieu, c'est là son giste et sa retraite, c'est de là où elle part, quand il plaist à Dieu nous en faire voir quelque rayon: comme Pallas saillit de la teste de son pere, pour se communiquer au monde.

How better can we test it than by itself? If it is not to be believed when speaking of itself, it will hardly be fit to judge of things outside it; if it knows anything, it must at least be its own being and dwelling. It is in the soul, and is a part or an effect of it; for true and essential reason, whose name we steal under false colors, lodges in the bosom of God. That is its home and its retreat; it is from there that it sets out when God is pleased to show us some ray of it, as Pallas sprang from her father's head to communicate herself to the world.

133 The Cannibals: the Brazilian peoples described in "Of Cannibals" (I.31).

WHAT IS THE SOUL?

The philosophers disagree about the soul's nature, seat, origin and survival.

FRENCH

2.12.170 Or voyons ce que l'humaine raison nous a appris de soy et de l'ame: non de l'ame en general, de laquelle quasi toute la philosophie rend les corps celestes et les premiers corps participants: ny de celle que Thales attribuoit aux choses mesmes, qu'on tient inanimées, conuié par la consideration de l'aimant: mais de celle qui nous appartient, que nous deuons mieux cognoistre. *Ignoratur enim quæ sit natura animaï:*
Nata sit, an contrà nascentibus insinuetur,
Et simul intereat nobiscum morte dirempta;
An tenebras Orci visat, vastásque lacunas,
An pecudes alias diuinitus insinuet se.

2.12.171 A Crates et Dicæarchus, qu'il n'y en auoit du tout point, mais que le corps s'esbranloit ainsi d'vn mouuement naturel: à Platon, que c'estoit vne substance se mouuant de soy-mesme: à Thales, vne nature sans repos: à Asclepiades, vne exercitation des sens: à Hesiodus et Anaximander, chose composée de terre et d'eau: à Parmenides, de terre et de feu: à Empedocles, de sang: *Sanguineam vomit ille animam:* à Possidonius, Cleanthes et Galen, vne chaleur ou complexion chaleureuse, *Igneus est ollis vigor, et cœlestis origo:* à Hippocrates, vn esprit espandu par le corps: à Varro, vn air receu par la bouche, eschauffé au poulmon, attrempé au cœur, et espandu par tout le corps: à Zeno, la quint'-essence des quatre elemens: à Heraclides Ponticus, la lumiere: à Xenocrates, et aux Ægyptiens, vn nombre mobile: aux Chaldées, vne vertu sans forme determinée.

Habitum quemdam vitalem corporis esse, / Harmoniam Græci quam dicunt. N'oublions pas Aristote, ce qui naturellement fait mouuoir le corps, qu'il nomme entelechie: d'vne autant froide inuention que nulle autre: car il ne parle ny de l'essence, ny de l'origine, ny de la nature de l'ame, mais en remerque seulement l'effect. Lactance, Seneque, et la meilleure part entre les dogmatistes, ont confessé que c'estoit chose qu'ils n'entendoient pas. Et apres tout ce denombrement d'opinions: *Harum sententiarum quæ vera sit, Deus aliquis viderit*, dit Cicero. Ie connoy par moy, dit S. Bernard,

ENGLISH

Now let us see what human reason has taught us about itself and about the soul: not the soul in general, in which nearly all philosophy makes the heavenly bodies and the primary bodies share; nor the soul that Thales attributed even to things considered inanimate, prompted by thinking about the magnet; but the soul that belongs to us, which we ought to know better. *For no one knows what the nature of the soul is:*
whether it is born, or on the contrary slips into us at birth,
and whether it perishes together with us, torn apart by death,
or visits the darkness of Orcus and its vast pools,
or by divine will slips into other creatures.

According to Crates and Dicaearchus, there was no soul at all, but the body moved thus by a natural motion; to Plato, it was a substance moving of itself; to Thales, a nature without rest; to Asclepiades, an exercise of the senses; to Hesiod and Anaximander, a thing composed of earth and water; to Parmenides, of earth and fire; to Empedocles, of blood: *He vomits forth his blood-red soul*; to Posidonius, Cleanthes and Galen, a heat or a hot constitution: *Fiery is their vigor, and heavenly their origin*; to Hippocrates, a spirit spread through the body; to Varro, an air taken in through the mouth, warmed in the lungs, tempered in the heart and spread throughout the body; to Zeno, the quintessence of the four elements; to Heraclides Ponticus, light; to Xenocrates and the Egyptians, a moving number; to the Chaldeans, a power without determinate form.

That it is a certain vital disposition of the body, / which the Greeks call harmony. Let us not forget Aristotle: the soul is what naturally makes the body move, which he calls entelechy—an invention as frigid as any other; for he speaks neither of the essence, nor of the origin, nor of the nature of the soul, but merely notes its effect. Lactantius, Seneca and most of the dogmatists have confessed that it was something they did not understand. And after this whole roll call of opinions: *Which of these opinions is true, some god must see*, says Cicero.

FRENCH

combien Dieu est incomprehensible, puis que les pieces de mon estre propre, ie ne les puis comprendre.

Heraclitus, qui tenoit, tout estre plein d'ames et de daimons, maintenoit pourtant, qu'on ne pouuoit aller tant auant vers la cognoissance de l'ame, qu'on y peust arriuer, si profonde estre son essence.

2.12.172 Il n'y a pas moins de dissension, ny de debat à la loger. Hippocrates et Hierophilus la mettent au ventricule du cerueau: Democritus et Aristote, par tout le corps: *Vt bona sæpe valet udo cùm dicitur esse*
Corporis, et non est tamen hæc pars vlla valentis. Epicurus, en l'estomach: *Hîc exultat enim pauor ac metus, hæc loca circúm Lætitiæ mulcent.* Les Stoïciens, autour et dedans le cœur: Erasistratus, ioignant la membrane de l'epicrane: Empedocles, au sang: comme aussi Moyse, qui fut la cause pourquoy il defendit de manger le sang des bestes, auquel leur ame est iointe: Galen a pensé que chaque partie du corps ait son ame: Strato l'a logée entre les deux sourcils: *Qua facie quidem sit animus, aut vbi habitet, ne quærendum quidem est*: dit Cicero.

Ie laisse volontiers à cet homme ses mots propres. Iroy-ie à l'éloquence alterer son parler? Ioint qu'il y a peu d'acquest à desrober la matiere de ses inuentions. Elles sont et peu frequentes, et peu roides, et peu ignorées. Mais la raison pourquoy Chrysippus l'argumente autour du cœur, comme les autres de sa secte, n'est pas pour estre oubliée: C'est par ce, dit-il, que quand nous voulons asseurer quelque chose, nous mettons la main sur l'estomach: et quand nous voulons prononcer, εγω, qui signifie moy, nous baissons vers l'estomach la machouër d'embas.

Ce lieu ne se doit passer, sans remerquer la vanité d'vn si grand personnage: car outre ce que ces considerations sont d'elles mesmes infiniment legeres, la derniere ne preuue qu'aux Grecs, qu'ils ayent l'ame en cet endroit là. Il n'est iugement humain, si tendu, qui ne sommeille par fois. Que craignons nous à dire? Voyla les Stoiciens peres de l'humaine prudence, qui trouuent, que l'ame d'vn homme accablé sous vne ruine, traine et ahanne long temps à sortir, ne se pouuant desmesler de la charge, comme vne sourix prinse à la trapelle.

ENGLISH

"I know from myself," says Saint Bernard, "how incomprehensible God is, since I cannot comprehend the parts of my own being."[134]

Heraclitus, who held that everything was full of souls and daimons, nevertheless maintained that one could not go far enough toward knowledge of the soul to reach it, so deep was its essence.

There is no less dissension and debate about where to lodge it. Hippocrates and Herophilus put it in the ventricle of the brain; Democritus and Aristotle throughout the body: *As health is often said to belong*
to the body, and yet it is no part of the healthy man. Epicurus in the stomach: *For here dread and fear leap up; around these parts*
joys soothe us. The Stoics around and within the heart; Erasistratus next to the membrane of the epicranium; Empedocles in the blood, as did Moses too, which was why he forbade eating the blood of beasts, to which their soul is joined. Galen thought that each part of the body has its own soul. Strato lodged it between the two eyebrows. *What form the mind may have, or where it dwells, should not even be asked*, says Cicero.

I gladly leave this man his own words. Should I go altering the speech of eloquence itself? Besides, there is little to gain by stealing the substance of his ideas: they are neither frequent, nor forceful, nor unknown. But the reason why Chrysippus argues that the soul is around the heart, like the others of his sect, deserves not to be forgotten. It is because, he says, when we want to affirm something we put our hand on our chest; and when we want to pronounce εγω, which means "I," we drop our lower jaw toward the chest.

This passage must not be passed over without remarking the vanity of so great a man: for besides the fact that these considerations are in themselves infinitely trivial, the last one proves only for the Greeks that they have their soul in that spot. There is no human judgment so taut that it does not doze at times. Why are we afraid to say it? There are the Stoics, fathers of human wisdom, who find that the soul of a man crushed under a collapsed building drags and labors a long time to

134 Entelechy: Aristotle's term for the realized form of a thing; he defined the soul as the first entelechy of a natural body.

FRENCH

ENGLISH

get out, unable to free itself from the weight, like a mouse caught in a trap.

Aucuns tiennent, que le monde fut faict pour donner corps par punition, aux esprits decheus par leur faute, de la pureté en quoy ils auoyent esté creés: la premiere creation n'ayant esté qu'incorporelle: et que selon qu'ils se sont plus ou moins esloignez de leur spiritualité, on les incorpore plus et moins alaigrement ou lourdement. De là vient la varieté de tant de matiere creée. Mais l'esprit, qui fut pour sa peine inuesti du corps du soleil, deuoit auoir vne mesure d'alteration bien rare et particuliere.

Some hold that the world was made to give bodies, as punishment, to spirits that had fallen by their own fault from the purity in which they had been created—the first creation having been only incorporeal—and that according as they have strayed more or less from their spirituality, they are embodied more or less lightly or heavily. Hence the variety of so much created matter. But the spirit that was clothed, as its penalty, with the body of the sun must have undergone a very rare and peculiar degree of alteration.[135]

2.12.173 Les extremitez de nostre perquisition tombent toutes en esblouyssement. Comme dit Plutarque de la teste des histoires, qu'à la mode des chartes, l'orée des terres cognuës est saisie de marests, forests profondes, deserts et lieux inhabitables. Voyla pourquoy les plus grossieres et pueriles rauasseries, se trouuent plus en ceux qui traittent les choses plus hautes, et plus auant: s'abysmants en leur curiosité et presomption. La fin et le commencement de science, se tiennent en pareille bestise. Voyez prendre à mont l'essor à Platon en ses nuages poëtiques. Voyez chez luy le iargon des Dieux. Mais à quoy songeoit-il, quand il definit l'homme, vn animal à deux pieds, sans plume: fournissant à ceux qui auoyent enuie de se moquer de luy, vne plaisante occasion?

The outer limits of our inquiry all end in dazzlement. As Plutarch says of the earliest parts of histories, it is as on maps, where the edges of the known lands are taken up by marshes, deep forests, deserts and uninhabitable places. That is why the crudest and most childish ravings are found most in those who treat the highest matters and go furthest, sinking into the abyss of their curiosity and presumption. The end and the beginning of knowledge are equally stupid. Watch Plato take flight upward into his poetic clouds; see in his works the jargon of the gods. But what was he dreaming of when he defined man as a two-footed animal without feathers, giving those who wanted to make fun of him an amusing opportunity?[136]

car ayans plumé vn chapon vif, ils alloyent le nommant, l'homme de Platon.

for, having plucked a live capon, they went about calling it "Plato's man."

2.12.174 Et quoy les Epicuriens, de quelle simplicité estoyent ils allez premierement imaginer, que leurs atomes, qu'ils disoyent estre des corps ayants quelque pesanteur, et vn mouuement naturel contre bas, eussent basti le monde: iusques à ce qu'ils fussent auisez par leurs aduersaires, que par cette description, il n'estoit pas possible qu'ils se ioignissent et se prinsent l'vn à l'autre, leur cheute estant ainsi droite et perpendiculaire, et engendrant par tout des lignes paralleles? Parquoy il fut force, qu'ils y adioustassent depuis vn mouuement de costé, fortuite: et qu'ils fournissent encore à leurs atomes, des queuës courbes et crochuës, pour les rendre aptes à s'attacher et se coudre. Et lors mesme, ceux qui les poursuyuent de cette autre consideration, les mettent ils pas en peine?

And what of the Epicureans? How simple-minded they were, first to imagine that their atoms, which they said were bodies having some weight and a natural downward motion, had built the world—until their opponents pointed out to them that by this description the atoms could not possibly join and cling to one another, since their fall was straight and perpendicular and produced parallel lines everywhere. So they were forced to add afterward a chance sideways motion, and to furnish their atoms besides with curved and hooked tails, to make them fit to attach and stitch themselves together. And even then, do not those who press

135 This is the view of Origen (3rd century AD), as reported by Augustine, City of God XI.23.
136 Plutarch makes this comparison at the opening of his Life of Theseus.

FRENCH

ENGLISH

them with this other consideration put them in difficulty?

Si les atomes ont par sort formé tant de sortes de figures, pourquoy ne se sont ils iamais rencontrez à faire vne maison et vn soulier? Pourquoy de mesme ne croid on, qu'vn nombre infini de lettres Grecques versées emmy la place, seroyent pour arriuer à la contexture de l'Iliade?

If the atoms have by chance formed so many kinds of shapes, why have they never happened to come together to make a house or a shoe? Why, by the same token, do we not believe that an infinite number of Greek letters poured out in the middle of the marketplace might arrive at the text of the Iliad?

2.12.175 Ce qui est capable de raison, dit Zenon, est meilleur, que ce qui n'en est point capable: il n'est rien meilleur que le monde: il est donc capable de raison. Cotta par cette mesme argumentation fait le monde mathematicien: et le fait musicien et organiste, par cette autre argumentation aussi de Zenon: Le tout est plus que la partie: nous sommes capables de sagesse, et sommes parties du monde: il est donc sage. Il se void infinis pareils exemples, non d'argumens faux seulement, mais ineptes, ne se tenans point, et accusans leurs autheurs non tant d'ignorance que d'imprudence, és reproches que les philosophes se font les vns aux autres sur les dissentions de leurs opinions, et de leurs sectes.

"That which is capable of reason," says Zeno, "is better than that which is not capable of it; there is nothing better than the world; therefore it is capable of reason." Cotta, by this same argument, makes the world a mathematician; and he makes it a musician and organ player by this other argument, also Zeno's: "The whole is more than the part; we are capable of wisdom, and we are parts of the world; therefore it is wise." There are countless similar examples—of arguments not just false but inept, that do not hold together and accuse their authors not so much of ignorance as of imprudence—in the reproaches philosophers throw at one another over the disagreements between their opinions and their sects.

2.12.176 Qui fagoteroit suffisamment vn amas des asneries de l'humaine sapience, il diroit merueilles. I'en assemble volontiers, comme vne montre, par quelque biais non moins vtile que les instructions plus moderees. Iugeons par là ce que nous auons à estimer de l'homme, de son sens et de sa raison, puis qu'en ces grands personnages, et qui ont porté si haut l'humaine suffisance, il s'y trouue des deffauts si apparens et si grossiers. Moy i'aime mieux croire qu'ils ont traitté la science casuelement ainsi, qu'vn iouët à toutes mains, et se sont esbatus de la raison, comme d'vn instrument vain et friuole, mettans en auant toutes sortes d'inuentions et de fantasies tantost plus tenduës, tantost plus lasches.

Anyone who bundled together a good heap of the follies of human wisdom would have wonders to tell. I gladly collect some of them, as a sample, from an angle that is no less useful than more measured teachings. Let us judge from this what we are to think of man, of his sense and his reason, since these great figures, who carried human ability so high, show such obvious and gross defects. For my part, I would rather believe that they treated knowledge casually, as a toy for any hand to play with. They amused themselves with reason as with an idle and frivolous instrument, putting forward all sorts of inventions and notions, some more taut, some more slack.

Ce mesme Platon, qui definit l'homme comme vne poulle, dit ailleurs apres Socrates, qu'il ne sçait à la verité que c'est que l'homme, et que c'est l'vne des pieces du monde d'autant difficile cognoissance. Par cette varieté et instabilité d'opinions, ils nous menent comme par la main tacitement à cette resolution de leur irresolution. Ils font profession de ne presenter pas tousiours leur auis à visage descouuert et apparent: ils l'ont caché tantost soubs des vmbrages fabuleux de la poësie, tantost soubs quelque autre masque: car nostre imperfection porte

This same Plato, who defines man as if he were a hen, says elsewhere, following Socrates, that he truly does not know what man is, and that man is one of the parts of the world hardest to know. By this variety and instability of opinions they lead us silently, as if by the hand, to this resolution of their irresolution. They make a point of not always presenting their views openly, with their faces uncovered. They have hidden them sometimes under the fabulous shadows of poetry, sometimes

FRENCH

encores cela, que la viande crue n'est pas tousiours propre à nostre estomach: il la faut assecher, alterer et corrompre.

Ils font de mesmes: ils obscurcissent par fois leurs naïfues opinions et iugemens, et les falsifient pour s'accommoder à l'vsage publique. Ils ne veulent pas faire profession expresse d'ignorance, et de l'imbecillité de la raison humaine, pour ne faire peur aux enfans: mais ils nous la descouurent assez soubs l'apparence d'vne science trouble et inconstante.

2.12.177 Ie conseillois en Italie à quelqu'vn qui estoit en peine de parler Italien, que pourueu qu'il ne cherchast qu'à se faire entendre, sans y vouloir autrement exceller, qu'il employast seulement les premiers mots qui luy viendroyent à la bouche, Latins, François, Espagnols, ou Gascons, et qu'en y adioustant la terminaison Italienne, il ne faudroit iamais à rencontrer quelque idiome du pays, ou Thoscan, ou Romain, ou Venetien, ou Piemontois, ou Napolitain, et de se ioindre à quelqu'vne de tant de formes. Ie dis de mesme de la philosophie: elle a tant de visages et de varieté, et a tant dict, que tous nos songes et resueries s'y trouuent.

L'humaine phantasie ne peut rien conceuoir en bien et en mal qui n'y soit: *Nihil tam absurdè dici potest, quod non dicatur ab aliquo philosophorum*. Et i'en laisse plus librement aller mes caprices en public: d'autant que bien qu'ils soyent nez chez moy, et sans patron, ie sçay qu'ils trouueront leur relation à quelque humeur ancienne, et ne faudra quelqu'vn de dire: Voyla d'où il le print. Mes mœurs sont naturelles: ie n'ay point appellé à les bastir, le secours d'aucune discipline.

Mais toutes imbecilles qu'elles sont, quand l'enuie m'a prins de les reciter, et que pour les faire sortir en publiq, vn peu plus decemment, ie me suis mis en deuoir de les assister, et de discours, et d'exemples: ç'a esté merueille à moy mesme, de les rencontrer par cas d'aduenture, conformes à tant d'exemples et discours philosophiques. De quel regiment estoit ma vie, ie ne l'ay appris qu'apres qu'elle est exploittée et employée. Nouuelle figure: Vn philosophe impremedité et fortuit.

2.12.178 Pour reuenir à nostre ame, ce que Platon a mis la raison au cerueau, l'ire au cœur, et la cupidité au foye, il est

ENGLISH

under some other mask. For our imperfection also means that raw food does not always suit our stomach: it has to be dried, altered and corrupted.

They do the same: they sometimes obscure their natural opinions and judgments, and falsify them to suit public usage. They do not want to make an express profession of ignorance and of the feebleness of human reason, so as not to frighten the children; but they reveal it to us clearly enough under the appearance of a muddled and inconstant knowledge.

When I was in Italy, I advised someone who was struggling to speak Italian that, provided he sought only to make himself understood and had no wish to excel at it, he should simply use the first words that came to his mouth, Latin, French, Spanish or Gascon. By adding the Italian ending he would never fail to hit upon some dialect of the country, Tuscan, Roman, Venetian, Piedmontese or Neapolitan, and to fall in with one of its many forms. I say the same of philosophy: it has so many faces and so much variety, and has said so much, that all our dreams and ravings are to be found in it.

Human fancy can conceive nothing, good or bad, that is not in it: *Nothing can be said so absurd that it has not been said by some philosopher.* And so I let my whims go out in public all the more freely. Although they were born at home and without a model, I know they will find some link with an ancient temperament, and someone will not fail to say: "That is where he took it from." My ways are natural: I have not called on the help of any discipline to build them.[137]

But feeble as they are, when the desire took me to set them down, and when, to send them out in public a little more decently, I undertook to support them with both reasonings and examples, it was a marvel even to me to find them, quite by chance, in conformity with so many philosophical examples and reasonings. Which rule my life was governed by I learned only after it had been lived and spent. A new figure: an unpremeditated and accidental philosopher.

To return to our soul: when Plato placed reason in the brain, anger in the heart and appetite in the

137 Cicero, On Divination.

FRENCH

vray-semblable que ç'a esté plustost vne interpretation des mouuemens de l'ame, qu'vne diuision, et separation qu'il en ayt voulu faire, comme d'vn corps en plusieurs membres.

Et la plus vray-semblable de leurs opinions est, que c'est tousiours vne ame, qui par sa faculté ratiocine, se souuient, comprend, iuge, desire et exerce toutes ses autres operations par diuers instrumens du corps, comme le nocher gouuerne son nauire selon l'experience qu'il en a, ores tendant ou laschant vne corde, ores haussant l'antenne, ou remuant l'auiron, par vne seule puissance conduisant diuers effets: et qu'elle loge au cerueau: ce qui appert de ce que les blessures et accidens qui touchent cette partie, offensent incontinent les facultez de l'ame: de là il n'est pas inconuenient qu'elle s'escoule par le reste du corps: *Medium non deserit vnquam / Cœli Phœbus iter: radiis tamen omnia lustrat.* comme le soleil espand du ciel en hors sa lumiere et ses puissances, et en remplit le monde.

Cætera pars animæ, per totum dissita corpus / Paret, et ad numen mentis moménque mouetur.

2.12.179 Aucuns ont dict, qu'il y auoit vne ame generale, comme vn grand corps, duquel toutes les ames particulieres estoyent extraictes, et s'y en retournoyent, se remeslant tousiours à cette matiere vniuerselle: *Deum namque ire per omnes*
Terrásque, tractúsque maris, cœlúmque profundum:
Hinc pecudes, armenta, viros, genus omne ferarum,
Quemque sibi tenues nascentem arcessere vitas:
Scilicet huc reddi deinde, ac resoluta referri
Omnia: nec morti esse locum: d'autres, qu'elles ne faisoyent que s'y resioindre et r'attacher: d'autres, qu'elle estoyent produites de la substance diuine: d'autres, par les anges, de feu et d'air. Aucuns, de toute ancienneté: aucuns, sur l'heure mesme du besoin. Aucuns les font descendre du rond de la lune, et y retourner.

Le commun des anciens, qu'elles sont engendrées de pere en fils, d'vne pareille maniere et production que toutes autres choses naturelles: argumentants cela par la ressemblance des enfans aux peres, *Instillata patris virtus tibi:*

ENGLISH

liver, it is likely that this was an interpretation of the movements of the soul rather than a division and separation he meant to make of it, as of a body into several limbs.

And the most likely of their opinions is that it is always one soul which, by its faculty, reasons, remembers, understands, judges, desires and performs all its other operations through various instruments of the body. So a helmsman steers his ship according to his experience of it, now tightening or slackening a rope, now raising the yard, now plying the oar, bringing about different effects by a single power. And it lodges in the brain: this is evident from the fact that wounds and injuries affecting that part immediately impair the faculties of the soul. From there it is not inconsistent that it should flow through the rest of the body: *Phoebus never leaves the middle / course of the sky, yet with his rays he lights up all things*, as the sun spreads its light and its powers outward from the sky and fills the world with them.[138]

The rest of the soul, spread throughout the body, / obeys, and moves at the will and impulse of the mind.

Some have said that there was a universal soul, like a great body, from which all individual souls were drawn and to which they returned, always mingling again with that universal matter: *For God, they say, pervades all*
lands, the stretches of the sea and the depths of the sky;
from him flocks, herds, men, every kind of wild beast,
each at its birth, draws its slender life;
to him, surely, all things are afterwards returned and, dissolved, carried
back; and there is no room for death. Others, that they merely rejoined and reattached themselves to it; others, that they were produced from the divine substance; others, that they were made by the angels, out of fire and air. Some say they have existed from all antiquity; some, that they are made at the very hour of need. Some make them come down from the circle of the moon and return there.[139]

The common view of the ancients was that they are begotten from father to son, in the same way and by the same process as all other natural things. They argued this from the likeness of chil-

138 Claudian, On the Sixth Consulship of Honorius.
139 Virgil, Georgics.

FRENCH

Fortes creantur fortibus et bonis: et qu'on void escouler des peres aux enfans, non seulement les marques du corps, mais encores vne ressemblance d'humeurs, de complexions, et inclinations de l'ame: Denique cur acris violentia triste leonum
Seminium sequitur? dolus vulpibus, et fuga ceruis
A patribus datur, et patrius pauor incitat artus?

/ Si non certa suo quia semine seminióque, / Vis animi pariter crescit cum corpore toto? que là dessus se fonde la iustice diuine, punissant aux enfans la faute des peres: d'autant que la contagion des vices paternels est aucunement empreinte en l'ame des enfans, et que le desreglement de leur volonté les touche.

2.12.180 Dauantage, que si les ames venoyent d'ailleurs, que d'vne suitte naturelle, et qu'elles eussent esté quelque autre chose hors du corps, elles auroyent recordation de leur estre premier; attendu les naturelles facultez, qui luy sont propres, de discourir, raisonner et se souuenir. *Si in corpus nascentibus insinuatur,*
Cur super anteactam ætatem meminesse nequimus,
Nec vestigia gestarum rerum vlla tenemus? Car pour faire valoir la condition de nos ames, comme nous voulons, il les faut presupposer toutes sçauantes, lors qu'elles sont en leur simplicité et pureté naturelle. Par ainsin elles eussent esté telles, estans exemptes de la prison corporelle, aussi bien auant que d'y entrer, comme nous esperons qu'elles seront apres qu'elles en seront sorties.

Et de ce sçauoir, il faudroit qu'elles se ressouuinssent encore estans au corps, comme disoit Platon, que ce que nous apprenions, n'estoit qu'vn ressouuenir de ce que nous auions sçeu: chose que chacun par experience peut maintenir estre fauce. En premier lieu d'autant qu'il ne nous ressouuient iustement que de ce qu'on nous apprend: et que si la memoire faisoit purement son office, aumoins nous suggereroit elle quelque traict outre l'apprentissage.

Secondement ce qu'elle sçauoit estant en sa pureté, c'estoit vne vraye science, cognoissant les choses comme elles sont, par sa diuine intelligence: là où icy on luy fait

ENGLISH

dren to their fathers: *Your father's virtue was instilled in you;*
the brave are born of the brave and good. They argued it also from the fact that we see passing from fathers to children not only bodily marks but also a resemblance of temperaments, constitutions and inclinations of the soul: Why, then, does fierce violence go with the grim
breed of lions? Why are cunning to foxes and flight to deer
handed down by their fathers, and why does inherited fear quicken their limbs?[140]

/ Is it not because a fixed power of mind, from its own seed and breed, / grows along with the whole body? They held that divine justice is founded on this, punishing in the children the fault of the fathers, inasmuch as the contagion of the fathers' vices is in some measure imprinted on the children's souls, and the disorder of their fathers' will affects them.

Moreover, they held that if souls came from anywhere other than natural succession, and had been something else outside the body, they would remember their first existence, given the natural faculties proper to it of reasoning, arguing and remembering: *If the soul is slipped into us at birth,*
why can we not remember the time gone by,
nor keep any traces of things done? For to give our souls the standing we want them to have, we must suppose them all-knowing when they are in their natural simplicity and purity. So they would have been such, being free of the bodily prison, before entering it, just as we hope they will be after they have left it.

And they would have to remember this knowledge while still in the body, as Plato said, claiming that what we learned was only a remembering of what we had known—a thing that anyone can maintain from experience to be false. In the first place, because we remember precisely only what we are taught; and if memory performed its office purely, it would at least prompt us with some item beyond what we had learned.

Secondly, what the soul knew when it was in its purity was true knowledge, knowing things as they are by its divine intelligence; whereas here it

140 The second line is from Horace, Odes; the poems that follow are Lucretius, On the Nature of Things.

FRENCH

receuoir la mensonge et le vice, si on l'en instruit; en quoy elle ne peut employer sa reminiscence, cette image et conception n'ayant iamais logé en elle.

2.12.181 De dire que la prison corporelle estouffe de maniere ses facultez naifues, qu'elles y sont toutes esteintes: cela est premierement contraire à cette autre creance, de recognoistre ses forces si grandes, et les operations que les hommes en sentent en cette vie, si admirables, que d'en auoir conclu cette diuinité et eternité passée, et l'immortalité à venir; *Nam si tantopere est animi mutata potestas,*
Omnis vt actarum exciderit retinentia rerum,
Non, vt opinor, ea ab letho iam longior errat.

2.12.182 En outre, c'est icy chez nous, et non ailleurs, que doiuent estre considerées les forces et les effects de l'ame: tout le reste de ses perfections, luy est vain et inutile: c'est de l'estat present, que doit estre payée et recognue toute son immortalité, et de la vie de l'homme, qu'elle est comtable seulement.

Ce seroit iniustice de luy auoir retranché ses moyens et ses puissances, de l'auoir desarmée, pour du temps de sa captiuité et de sa prison, de sa foiblesse et maladie, du temps où elle auroit esté forcée et contrainte, tirer le iugement et vne condemnation de durée infinie et perpetuelle: et de s'arrester à la consideration d'vn temps si court, qui est à l'aduenture d'vne ou de deux heures, ou au pis aller, d'vn siecle (qui n'ont non plus de proportion à l'infinité qu'vn instant) pour de ce moment d'interualle, ordonner et establir definitiuement de tout son estre. Ce seroit vne disproportion inique, de tirer vne recompense eternelle en consequence d'vne si courte vie.

Platon, pour se sauuer de cet inconuenient, veut que les payements futurs se limitent à la durée de cent ans, relatiuement à l'humaine durée: et des nostres assez leur ont donné bornes temporelles.

2.12.183 Par ainsin ils iugeoyent, que sa generation suyuoit la commune condition des choses humaines: comme aussi sa vie, par l'opinion d'Epicurus et de Democritus, qui a esté la plus receuë, suyuant ces belles apparences: Qu'on la voyoit naistre; à mesme que le corps en estoit capable; on voyoit esleuer ses forces comme les corporelles; on y recognoissoit la foiblesse de son enfance, et auec le temps

ENGLISH

is made to receive falsehood and vice, if it is taught them. In this it cannot use its reminiscence, since that image and conception never lodged in it.

To say that the bodily prison so stifles its natural faculties that they are all extinguished there: this is, first, contrary to that other belief, which recognizes its powers as so great, and the operations men feel of them in this life as so admirable, that it has concluded from them that the soul possesses that past divinity and eternity, and the immortality to come. *For if the power of the mind has been so changed*
that all memory of things done has slipped away,
that, I think, is not far from death.

Besides, it is here, at home with us, and nowhere else, that the powers and effects of the soul must be considered; all the rest of its perfections are vain and useless to it. It is from its present state that its whole immortality must be paid for and acknowledged, and it is to the life of man alone that it is accountable.

It would be unjust to have cut off its means and powers, to have disarmed it, and then, from the time of its captivity and imprisonment, of its weakness and sickness, the time when it had been forced and constrained, to draw a judgment and a condemnation of infinite and perpetual duration. It would be unjust to dwell on so short a time—perhaps an hour or two, or at worst a century, which bear no more proportion to infinity than an instant—in order to ordain and settle definitively its whole being on the strength of that moment's interval. It would be an unfair disproportion to draw an eternal reward as the consequence of so short a life.

Plato, to escape this difficulty, would have future payments limited to a hundred years, in proportion to the human span; and many of our own writers have given them limits in time.

Thus they judged that its generation followed the common condition of human things; and so did its life, according to the opinion of Epicurus and Democritus, which has been the most widely received, following these fine appearances: that it was seen to be born as soon as the body was capable of it; its powers were seen to grow like the

FRENCH

sa vigueur et sa maturité: et puis sa declination et sa vieillesse, et en fin sa decrepitude:

Gigni pariter cum corpore, et vnà
Crescere sentimus, paritérque senescere mentem. Ils l'apperceuoient capable de diuerses passions et agitée de plusieurs mouuemens penibles, d'où elle tomboit en lassitude et en douleur, capable d'alteration et de changement, d'allegresse, d'assopissement, et de langueur, subjecte à ses maladies et aux offences, comme l'estomach ou le pied: *Mentem sanari, corpus vt ægrum*
Cernimus, et flecti medicina posse videmus: esblouye et troublée par la force du vin: desmue de son assiette, par les vapeurs d'vne fieure chaude: endormie par l'application d'aucuns medicamens, et reueillée par d'autres.

Corpoream naturam animi esse necesse est,
Corporeis quoniam telis ictúque laborat. On luy voyoit estonner et renuerser toutes ses facultez par la seule morsure d'vn chien malade, et n'y auoir nulle si grande fermeté de discours, nulle suffisance, nulle vertu, nulle resolution philosophique, nulle contention de ses forces, qui la peust exempter de la subjection de ces accidens: la saliue d'vn chetif mastin versée sur la main de Socrates, secouër toute sa sagesse et toutes ses grandes et si reglées imaginations, les aneantir de maniere qu'il ne restast aucune trace de sa cognoissance premiere:
Vis. . . . . animaï
Conturbatur, et . . . . .

diuisa seorsum
Disiectatur, eodem illo distracta veneno: *et ce venin ne trouuer non plus de resistance en cette ame, qu'en celle d'vn enfant de quatre ans: venin capable de faire deuenir toute la philosophie, si elle estoit incarnée, furieuse et insensée: si que Caton, qui tordoit le col à la mort mesme et à la fortune, ne peust souffrir la veuë d'vn miroir, ou de l'eau, accablé d'espouuantement et d'effroy, quand il seroit tombé par la contagion d'vn chien enragé, en la maladie que les medecins nomment Hydroforbie.* Vis morbi distracta per artus
Turbat agens animam, spumantes æquore salso
Ventorum vt validis feruescunt viribus vndæ.

ENGLISH

bodily ones; one recognized in it the weakness of its childhood, and in time its vigor and maturity; and then its decline and old age, and at last its decrepitude:

We feel that the mind is born together with the body, grows along with it, and with it grows old. They perceived it to be capable of various passions and stirred by many painful movements, from which it fell into weariness and pain; capable of alteration and change, of cheerfulness, torpor and languor; subject to its own diseases and injuries, like the stomach or the foot: *We see that the mind is healed, just like a sick body,*
and see that it can be swayed by medicine. They saw it dazzled and disturbed by the strength of wine; dislodged from its seat by the vapors of a burning fever; put to sleep by the application of certain drugs, and woken by others.

The nature of the mind must be bodily,
since it suffers from bodily weapons and blows. It was seen to have all its faculties stunned and overthrown by the mere bite of a sick dog. No firmness of reasoning was so great, no ability, no virtue, no philosophical resolution, no straining of its powers, that could exempt it from subjection to these accidents. The saliva of a wretched cur dropped on Socrates' hand could shake all his wisdom and all his great and well-ordered thoughts, and annihilate them so that no trace of his former knowledge remained: The power . . . . . of the soul
is thrown into confusion and . . . . .

split apart,
is scattered, torn asunder by that same poison. *And this venom would meet no more resistance in that soul than in the soul of a child of four: a venom capable of making all philosophy, if it were made flesh, raving and mad. So Cato, who wrung the neck of death itself and of Fortune, could not have borne the sight of a mirror or of water, overwhelmed with terror and dread, had he fallen, through the contagion of a mad dog, into the disease that physicians call hydrophobia.* The force of the disease, spread through the limbs, drives the soul and throws it into turmoil, as on the salt sea
the waves foam and seethe under the mighty force of the winds.

2.12.184

FRENCH

Or quant à ce poinct, la philosophie a bien armé l'homme pour la souffrance de tous autres accidens, ou de patience, ou si elle couste trop à trouuer, d'vne deffaitte inffallible, en se desrobant tout à faict du sentiment: mais ce sont moyens, qui seruent à vne ame estant à soy, et en ses forces, capable de discours et de deliberation: non pas à cet inconuenient, où chez vn philosophe, vne ame deuient l'ame d'vn fol, troublée, renuersée, et perdue.

Ce que plusieurs occasions produisent, comme vne agitation trop vehemente, que, par quelque forte passion, l'ame peut engendrer en soy-mesme: ou vne blessure en certain endroit de la personne: ou vne exhalation de l'estomach, nous iectant à vn esblouyssement et tournoyement de teste: *Morbis in corporis auius errat*
Sæpe animus; dementit enim, deliráque fatur,
Interdúmque graui lethargo fertur in altum
Æternúmqùe soporem, oculis nutúque cadenti.

2.12.185 Les philosophes n'ont, ce me semble, guere touché cette corde, non plus qu'vne autre de pareille importance. Ils ont ce dilemme tousiours en la bouche, pour consoler nostre mortelle condition: Ou l'ame est mortelle, ou immortelle: Si mortelle, elle sera sans peine: Si immortelle, elle ira en amendant. Ils ne touchent iamais l'autre branche: Quoy, si elle va en empirant? Et laissent aux poëtes les menaces des peines futures. Mais par là ils se donnent vn beau ieu. Ce sont deux omissions qui s'offrent à moy souvent en leurs discours. Ie reuiens à la premiere.

2.12.186 Cette ame pert l'vsage du souuerain bien Stoïque, si constant et si ferme. Il faut que nostre belle sagesse se rende en cet endroit, et quitte les armes. Au demeurant, ils consideroient aussi par la vanité de l'humaine raison, que le meslange et société de deux pieces si diuerses, comme est le mortel et l'immortel, est inimaginable: *Quippe etenim mortale æterno iungere, et vnà*
Consentire putare, et fungi mutua posse,
Desipere est. Quid enim diuersius esse putandum est,
Aut magis inter se disiunctum discrepitánsque,
Quàm, mortale quod est, immortali atque perenni
Iunctum in concilio sœuas tolerare procellas?

ENGLISH

Now on this point, philosophy has indeed armed man to endure all other accidents, either with patience or, if that costs too much to find, with an infallible way out, by escaping feeling altogether. But these are means that serve a soul that is its own master and in full possession of its powers, capable of reasoning and deliberation. They do not serve in this misfortune, where in a philosopher a soul becomes the soul of a fool, disturbed, overturned and lost.

This can be produced by many causes: by too violent an agitation, which the soul can generate within itself through some strong passion; or by a wound in a certain part of the person; or by an exhalation from the stomach, throwing us into dizziness and a spinning of the head: *In diseases of the body the mind often wanders astray;*
for it loses its reason and speaks wild words,
and sometimes, under a heavy lethargy, is carried off into a deep
and endless sleep, with drooping eyes and nodding head.

Philosophers have hardly touched this string, it seems to me, any more than another of equal importance. They always have this dilemma in their mouths to console our mortal condition: either the soul is mortal or immortal; if mortal, it will be free of suffering; if immortal, it will go on improving. They never touch the other branch: what if it goes on getting worse? And they leave the threats of future punishment to the poets. But in this way they give themselves an easy game. These are two omissions that often strike me in their discourses. I return to the first.

This soul loses the use of the Stoic sovereign good, so constant and so firm. Our fine wisdom must surrender at this point and lay down its arms. For the rest, they also considered, through the vanity of human reason, that the mixture and partnership of two pieces as different as the mortal and the immortal is unimaginable: *For to join the mortal to the eternal, and to think*
that they can agree together and serve each other in turn,
is madness. For what can be thought more unlike,
or more disjoined and at odds with itself,
than that a mortal thing, joined to the immortal and

FRENCH

ENGLISH

everlasting,
should endure fierce storms in union?

2.12.187 Dauantage ils sentoyent l'ame s'engager en la mort, comme le corps. *Simul æuo fessa fatiscit.* Ce que, selon Zeno, l'image du sommeil nous montre assez. Car il estime que c'est vne defaillance et cheute de l'ame aussi bien que du corps.

Contrahi animum, et quasi labi putat atque decidere. Et ce qu'on aperceuoit en aucuns, sa force, et sa vigueur se maintenir en la fin de la vie, ils le rapportoyent à la diuersité des maladies, comme on void les hommes en cette extremité, maintenir, qui vn sens, qui vn autre, qui l'ouïr, qui le fleurer, sans alteration: et ne se voit point d'affoiblissement si vniuersel, qu'il n'y reste quelques parties entieres et vigoureuses: *Non alio pacto, quàm si pes cùm dolet ægri, / In nullo caput interea sit fortè dolore.*

Moreover, they felt that the soul was drawn into death, like the body: *Worn out by age, it gives way along with it.* This, according to Zeno, the image of sleep shows us clearly enough; for he holds that sleep is a fainting and falling of the soul as well as of the body.

He thinks the mind contracts, and as it were slips and falls. And when the soul's strength and vigor were seen in some people to hold up at the end of life, they attributed this to the diversity of diseases. So we see men in that extremity keep one sense or another unimpaired, one hearing, another smell; and no weakening is so universal that some parts do not remain whole and vigorous: *Just as when a sick man's foot hurts, / his head meanwhile may happen to feel no pain.*

2.12.188 La veuë de nostre iugement se rapporte à la verité, comme fait l'œil du chat-huant, à la splendeur du soleil, ainsi que dit Aristote. Par où le sçaurions nous mieux conuaincre que par si grossiers aueuglemens en vne si apparente lumiere? Car l'opinion contraire, de l'immortalité de l'ame, laquelle Cicero dit auoir esté premierement introduitte, au moins du tesmoignage des liures, par Pherecydes Syrius du temps du Roy Tullus (d'autres en attribuent l'inuention à Thales: et autres à d'autres) c'est la partie de l'humaine science traictée auec plus de reseruation et de doute. Les dogmatistes les plus fermes, sont contraints en cet endroit principalement, de se reietter à l'abry des ombrages de l'Academie.

Nul ne sçait ce qu'Aristote a estably de ce subiect, non plus que touts les anciens en general, qui le manient d'vne vacillante creance: *rem gratissimam promittentium magis quàm probantium*. Il s'est caché soubs le nuage des paroles et sens difficiles, et non intelligibles, et a laissé à ses sectateurs, autant à debattre sur son iugement que sur la matiere.

The sight of our judgment relates to truth as the owl's eye does to the brightness of the sun, as Aristotle says. How could we better convict it than by such gross blindness in so evident a light? For the contrary opinion, the immortality of the soul, is the part of human knowledge treated with the most reserve and doubt. Cicero says it was first introduced, at least on the testimony of books, by Pherecydes of Syros in the time of King Tullus (others attribute its invention to Thales, and others to others). The firmest dogmatists are forced, at this point above all, to fall back on the shelter of the shades of the Academy.[141]

No one knows what Aristotle laid down on this subject, any more than the ancients in general, who handle it with wavering belief: *promising a most welcome thing rather than proving it.* He hid behind a cloud of difficult and unintelligible words and meanings, and left his followers as much to debate about his judgment as about the matter itself.[142]

2.12.189 Deux choses leur rendoient cette opinion plausible: l'vne, que sans l'immortalité des ames, il n'y auroit plus dequoy asseoir les vaines esperances de la gloire, qui est vne consideration de merueilleux credit au monde: l'autre, que c'est vne tres-vtile impression, comme dit Platon,

Two things made this opinion plausible to them. One was that without the immortality of souls there would no longer be anything on which to rest the vain hopes of glory, a consideration that carries wonderful weight in the world. The other

141 Tullus Hostilius, legendary third king of Rome.
142 Seneca, Letters.

FRENCH

que les vices, quand ils se desroberont de la veuë et cognoissance de l'humaine iustice, demeurent tousiours en butte à la diuine, qui les poursuyura, voire apres la mort des coulpables. Vn soing extreme tient l'homme d'alonger son estre; il y a pourueu par toutes ses pieces. Et pour la conseruation du corps, sont les sepultures: pour la conseruation du nom, la gloire. Il a employé toute son opinion à se rebastir, impatient de sa fortune, et à s'estançonner par ses inuentions.

L'ame par son trouble et sa foiblesse, ne pouuant tenir sur son pied, va questant de toutes parts des consolations, esperances et fondements, et des circonstances estrangeres, où elle s'attache et se plante. Et pour legers et fantastiques que son inuention les luy forge, s'y repose plus seurement qu'en soy, et plus volontiers. Mais les plus aheurtez à cette si iuste et claire persuasion de l'immortalité de nos esprits; c'est merueille comme ils se sont trouuez courts et impuissans à l'establir par leurs humaines forces. *Somnia sunt non docentis, sed optantis*: disoit vn ancien.

L'homme peut recognoistre par ce tesmoignage, qu'il doit à la fortune et au rencontre, la verité qu'il descouure luy seul; puis que lors mesme, qu'elle luy est tombée en main, il n'a pas dequoy la saisir et la maintenir, et que sa raison n'a pas la force de s'en preualoir. Toutes choses produites par nostre propre discours et suffisance, autant vrayes que fauces, sont subiectes à incertitude et debat. C'est pour le chastiment de nostre fierté, et instruction de nostre misere et incapacité, que Dieu produisit le trouble, et la confusion de l'ancienne tour de Babel. Tout ce que nous entreprenons sans son assistance, tout ce que nous voyons sans la lampe de sa grace, ce n'est que vanité et folie.

L'essence mesme de la verité, qui est vniforme et constante, quand la fortune nous en donne la possession, nous la corrompons et abastardissons par nostre foiblesse. Quelque train que l'homme prenne de soy, Dieu permet qu'il arriue tousiours à cette mesme confusion, de laquelle il nous represente si viuement l'image par le iuste chastiement, dequoy il batit l'outrecuidance de Nemroth, et aneantit les vaines entreprinses du

ENGLISH

was that it is a very useful impression, as Plato says, that vices, when they slip out of the sight and knowledge of human justice, always remain a target for divine justice, which will pursue them even after the death of the guilty. Man is gripped by an extreme concern to prolong his being; he has provided for it with every means he has. For the preservation of the body there are tombs; for the preservation of the name, glory. Impatient of his lot, he has spent all his imagination on rebuilding himself and propping himself up with his inventions.

The soul, unable to stand on its own feet because of its turmoil and weakness, goes searching on every side for consolations, hopes and foundations, and for outside circumstances to which it can cling and in which it can take root. And however flimsy and fantastic the things its invention forges for it, it rests on them more securely than on itself, and more willingly. But as for those most obstinately attached to this just and clear persuasion of the immortality of our spirits, it is a wonder how short and powerless they have found themselves when trying to establish it by their human powers. *These are the dreams not of one who teaches, but of one who wishes*, said an ancient.[143]

Man can recognize from this testimony that he owes to fortune and chance any truth he discovers on his own, since even when it has fallen into his hands he lacks the means to grasp it and hold on to it, and his reason lacks the strength to make use of it. All things produced by our own reasoning and ability, the true as well as the false, are subject to uncertainty and debate. It was to punish our pride and to teach us our misery and incapacity that God produced the turmoil and confusion of the ancient tower of Babel. All that we undertake without his help, all that we see without the lamp of his grace, is nothing but vanity and folly.

The very essence of truth, which is uniform and constant, we corrupt and debase by our weakness when fortune grants us possession of it. Whatever course man takes on his own, God allows him always to arrive at that same confusion. He shows us its image so vividly in the just punishment with which he struck down the presumption of Nimrod and brought to nothing the vain enterprise of

143 Cicero, Academica.

FRENCH

bastiment de sa pyramide. *Perdam sapientiam sapientium, et prudentiam prudentium reprobabo.* La diuersité d'idiomes et de langues, dequoy il troubla cet ouurage, qu'est-ce autre chose, que cette infinie et perpetuelle altercation et discordance d'opinions et de raisons, qui accompaigne et embrouille le vain bastiment de l'humaine science? Et l'embrouille vtilement.

Qui nous tiendroit, si nous auions un grain de connoissance? Ce sainct m'a faict grand plaisir: *Ipsa vtilitatis occultatio, aut humilitatis exercitatio est, aut elationis attritio.* Iusques à quel poinct de presomption et d'insolence, ne portons nous nostre aueuglement et nostre bestise?

2.12.190 Mais pour reprendre mon propos: c'estoit vrayement bien raison, que nous fussions tenus à Dieu seul, et au benefice de sa grace, de la verité d'vne si noble creance, puis que de sa seule liberalité, nous receuons le fruict de l'immortalité, lequel consiste en la iouyssance de la beatitude eternelle. Confessons ingenuement, que Dieu seul nous l'a dict, et la foy: car leçon n'est-ce pas de Nature et de nostre raison. Et qui retentera son estre et ses forces, et dedans et dehors, sans ce priuilege diuin: qui verra l'homme, sans le flatter, il n'y verra ny efficace, ny faculté, qui sente autre chose que la mort et la terre. Plus nous donnons, et deuons, et rendons à Dieu, nous en faisons d'autant plus chrestiennement.

Ce que ce philosophe Stoïcien dit tenir du fortuit consentement de la voix populaire, valoit-il pas mieux qu'il le tinst de Dieu? *Cùm de animorum æternitate disserimus, non leue momentum apud nos habet consensus hominum, aut timentium inferos, aut colentium. Vtor hac publica persuasione.*

2.12.191 Or la foiblesse des argumens humains sur ce subiect, se connoist singulierement par les fabuleuses circonstances, qu'ils ont adioustees à la suite de cette opinion, pour trouuer de quelle condition estoit cette nostre immortalité. Laissons les Stoïciens, *Vsuram nobis largiuntur tanquam cornicibus; diu mansuros aiunt animos, semper negant*: qui donnent aux ames vne vie au delà de ceste cy, mais finie.

ENGLISH

building his pyramid. *I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and reject the understanding of the prudent.* The diversity of idioms and tongues with which he confounded that work—what else is it but this infinite and perpetual wrangling and discord of opinions and reasons that accompanies and entangles the vain edifice of human knowledge? And entangles it usefully.[144]

Who could hold us back if we had a grain of knowledge? This saint has given me great pleasure: *The very concealment of what is useful serves either to exercise humility or to wear down pride.* To what pitch of presumption and insolence do we not carry our blindness and our stupidity?[145]

But to take up my subject again: it was truly most reasonable that we should be beholden to God alone, and to the gift of his grace, for the truth of so noble a belief, since it is from his liberality alone that we receive the fruit of immortality, which consists in the enjoyment of eternal bliss. Let us frankly confess that God alone has told us so, and faith; for this is no lesson of Nature or of our reason. Whoever re-examines man's being and powers, within and without, apart from this divine privilege, whoever looks at man without flattering him, will see in him no efficacy or faculty that smells of anything but death and earth. The more we give, and owe, and render to God, the more Christianly we act.

What that Stoic philosopher says he takes from the chance agreement of popular opinion—would it not have been better for him to take it from God? *When we discuss the eternity of souls, the consensus of men who either fear or worship the powers of the underworld carries no slight weight with us. I make use of this general persuasion.*[146]

Now the weakness of human arguments on this subject shows most clearly in the fabulous details they have added in the wake of this opinion, in trying to find out what kind of condition this immortality of ours was. Let us leave aside the Stoics —*They grant us a long lease of life, like crows: they say our souls will last a long time, but deny that they will*

144 The quotation is from Saint Paul, 1 Corinthians 1:19; tradition made Nimrod the builder of the tower of Babel.
145 Saint Augustine, The City of God.
146 Seneca, Letters.

FRENCH

ENGLISH

last forever—who give souls a life beyond this one, but a finite one.[147]

La plus vniuerselle et plus receuë fantaisie, et qui dure iusques à nous, ç'a esté celle, de laquelle on fait autheur Pythagoras; non qu'il en fust le premier inuenteur, mais d'autant qu'elle receut beaucoup de poix, et de credit, par l'authorité de son approbation: C'est que les ames au partir de nous, ne faisoient que rouler de l'vn corps à vn autre, d'vn lyon à un cheual, d'vn cheual à vn Roy, se promenants ainsi sans cesse, de maison en maison. Et luy, disoit se souuenir auoir esté Æthalides, depuis Euphorbus, en apres Hermotimus, en fin de Pyrrhus estre passé en Pythagoras: ayant memoire de soy de deux cents six ans.

The most universal and most widely received fancy, which has lasted down to our time, was the one attributed to Pythagoras—not that he invented it, but because it gained much weight and credit from the authority of his approval. It is that souls, on leaving us, merely rolled from one body to another, from a lion to a horse, from a horse to a king, wandering thus endlessly from house to house. And he himself said that he remembered having been Aethalides, then Euphorbus, after that Hermotimus, and finally that he had passed from Pyrrhus into Pythagoras, so that his memory of himself went back two hundred and six years.

Adioustoyent aucuns, que ces mesmes ames remontent au ciel par fois, et en deuallent encores: *O pater, ànne aliquas ad cœlum hinc ire putandum est*
Sublimes animas, iterúmque ad tarda reuerti
Corpora? quæ lucis miseris tam dira cupido?

Some added that these same souls sometimes go back up to heaven and come down again: *O father, must we think that some souls go up from here to the sky,*
on high, and come back again to sluggish
bodies? What dreadful longing for the light do these wretches have?[148]

2.12.192 Origene les fait aller et venir eternellement du bon au mauuais estat. L'opinion que Varro recite, est, qu'en quatre cens quarante ans de reuolution elles se reioignent à leur premier corps. Chrysippus, que cela doibt aduenir apres certain espace de temps incognu et non limité. Platon (qui dit tenir de Pindare et de l'ancienne poësie cette croyance) des infinies vicissitudes de mutation, ausquelles l'ame est preparée, n'ayant ny les peines, ny les recompenses en l'autre monde, que temporelles, comme sa vie en cestuy-cy n'est que temporelle, conclud en elle vne singuliere sçience des affaires du ciel, de l'enfer, et d'icy, où elle a passé, repassé, et seiourné à plusieurs voyages: matiere à sa reminiscence.

Origen makes them come and go eternally between a good and a bad state. The opinion Varro reports is that after a cycle of four hundred and forty years they rejoin their first body; Chrysippus, that this must happen after a certain space of time, unknown and unlimited. Plato says he takes this belief from Pindar and the ancient poets. From the infinite vicissitudes of change to which the soul is destined—since in the other world its punishments and rewards are only temporary, as its life in this one is only temporary—he concludes that it has a singular knowledge of the affairs of heaven, of hell and of this world, through which it has passed, passed again, and sojourned on many journeys: matter for its reminiscence.

2.12.193 Voicy son progrés ailleurs: Qui a bien vescu, il se reioint à l'astre, auquel il est assigné: qui mal, il passe en femme: et si lors mesme il ne se corrige point, il se rechange en beste de condition conuenable à ses mœurs vicieuses: et ne verra fin à ses punitions, qu'il ne soit reuenu à sa naïue constitution, s'estant par la force de la raison défaict des qualitez grossieres, stupides, et elementaires, qui estoyent en luy. Mais ie ne veux oublier l'obiection

Here is its progress as he describes it elsewhere: whoever has lived well rejoins the star to which he is assigned; whoever has lived badly passes into a woman. And if even then he does not mend his ways, he changes again into a beast whose nature suits his vicious habits, and he will see no end to his punishments until he has returned to his natural constitution, having rid himself by the force

147 Cicero, Tusculan Disputations; crows were proverbially long-lived.
148 Virgil, Aeneid.

FRENCH

que font les Epicuriens à cette transmigration de corps en autre. Elle est plaisante. Ils demandent quel ordre il y auroit, si la presse des mourans venoit à estre plus grande que des naissans.

Car les ames deslogées de leur giste seroyent à se fouler à qui prendroit place la premiere dans ce nouuel estuy. Et demandent aussi, à quoy elles passeroient leur temps, ce pendant qu'elles attendroient qu'vn logis leur fust appresté: ou au rebours s'il naissoit plus d'animaux, qu'il n'en mourroit, ils disent que les corps seroient en mauuais party, attendant l'infusion de leur ame, et en aduiendroit qu'aucuns d'iceux se mourroient auant que d'auoir esté viuans.

Denique connubia ad veneris, partúsque ferarum,
Esse animas præsto deridiculum esse videtur,
Et spectare immortales mortalia membra
Innumero numero, certaréque præproperanter
Inter se, quæ prima potissimáque insinuetur. D'autres ont arresté l'ame au corps des trespassez, pour en animer les serpents, les vers, et autres bestes, qu'on dit s'engendrer de la corruption de nos membres, voire et de nos cendres. D'autres la diuisent en vne partie mortelle, et l'autre immortelle. Autres la font corporelle, et ce neantmoins immortelle. Aucuns la font immortelle, sans science et sans cognoissance. Il y en a aussi des nostres mesmes qui ont estimé, que des ames des condamnez, il s'en faisoit des diables: comme Plutarque pense, qu'il se face des dieux de celles qui sont sauuées.

Car il est peu de choses que cet autheur là establisse d'vne façon de parler si resolue, qu'il fait ceste-cy: maintenant par tout ailleurs vne maniere dubitatrice et ambigue. Il faut estimer, dit-il, et croire fermement, que les ames des hommes vertueux selon nature et selon iustice diuine, deuiennent d'hommes saincts, et de saincts demy-dieux, et de demy-dieux, apres qu'ils sont parfaictement, comme és sacrifices de purgation, nettoyez et purifiez, estans deliurez de toute passibilité et de toute mortalité, ils deuiennent, non par aucune ordonnance ciuile, mais à la verité, et selon raison vraysemblable, dieux entiers et parfaicts, en receuant vne fin tres heureuse et tres-glorieuse.

ENGLISH

of reason of the gross, stupid and elemental qualities that were in him. But I do not want to forget the objection the Epicureans raise to this transmigration from one body to another. It is amusing. They ask what order there would be if the crowd of the dying happened to be greater than that of the newborn.[149]

For the souls turned out of their lodging would be jostling one another over who should take the first place in this new case. They also ask how the souls would pass their time while waiting for a lodging to be got ready for them. Or, conversely, if more animals were born than died, they say the bodies would be in a bad way waiting for their soul to be poured in, and it would happen that some of them would die before they had ever been alive.

Lastly, it seems ridiculous that souls should stand ready
at the matings of Venus and the births of beasts,
and that immortal souls should wait for mortal limbs
in numberless numbers, and compete in headlong haste
among themselves as to which shall be the first and chief to slip in. Others have kept the soul in the bodies of the dead, to animate the snakes, worms and other creatures said to be generated from the decay of our limbs, and even from our ashes. Others divide it into a mortal part and an immortal part. Others make it bodily and yet immortal. Some make it immortal but without knowledge or understanding. There are even some of our own who have thought that devils were made from the souls of the damned, just as Plutarch thinks that gods are made from the souls of the saved.

For there are few things that this author asserts in as decided a manner as he does this one; everywhere else he keeps to a doubtful and ambiguous manner. We must judge, he says, and firmly believe, that the souls of virtuous men, according to nature and divine justice, become saints after being men, and demigods after being saints. And from demigods, once they have been perfectly cleansed and purified, as in sacrifices of purification, and delivered from all liability to suffering and all mortality, they become, not by any civil decree but in truth and according to probable

149 Plato, Timaeus.

FRENCH

Mais qui le voudra voir, luy, qui est des plus retenus pourtant et moderez de la bande, s'escarmoucher auec plus de hardiesse, et nous conter ses miracles sur ce propos, ie le renuoye à son discours de la lune, et du Dæmon de Socrates, là où aussi euidemment qu'en nul autre lieu, il se peut aduerer, les mysteres de la philosophie auoir beaucoup d'estrangetez communes auec celles de la poësie: l'entendement humain se perdant à vouloir sonder et contreroller toutes choses iusques au bout: tout ainsi comme, lassez et trauaillez de la longue course de nostre vie, nous retombons en enfantillage. Voyla les belles et certaines instructions, que nous tirons de la science humaine, sur le subiect de nostre ame.

ENGLISH

reason, whole and perfect gods, receiving a most happy and most glorious end.[150]

But whoever wants to see him—though he is one of the most restrained and moderate of the band—skirmishing more boldly and telling us his marvels on this subject, I refer to his discourse on the moon and on the daemon of Socrates. There, as evidently as anywhere, it can be verified that the mysteries of philosophy have many oddities in common with those of poetry: the human understanding loses itself in trying to sound and scrutinize all things to the very end. Just so, weary and worn out by the long course of our life, we fall back into childishness. Those are the fine and certain teachings we draw from human knowledge on the subject of our soul.[151]

DOCTORS AND GENERATION

Even about our own bodies, physicians and philosophers contradict one another.

FRENCH

2.12.194 Il n'y a point moins de temerité en ce qu'elle nous apprend des parties corporelles. Choisissons en vn, ou deux exemples: car autrement nous nous perdrions dans cette mer trouble et vaste des erreurs medecinales. Sçachons, si on s'accorde au moins en cecy, de quelle matiere les hommes se produisent les vns des autres. Car quant à leur premiere production, ce n'est pas merueille, si en chose si haute et ancienne, l'entendement humain se trouble et dissipe. Archelaüs le physicien, duquel Socrates fut le disciple et le mignon, selon Aristoxenus, disoit, et les hommes et les animaux auoir esté faicts d'vn limon laicteux, exprimé par la chaleur de la terre.

Pythagoras dit nostre semence estre l'escume de nostre meilleur sang: Platon, l'escoulement de la moëlle de l'espine du dos: ce qu'il argumente de ce, que cet endroit se sent le premier, de la lasseté de la besongne: Alcmeon, partie de la substance du cerueau: et qu'il soit ainsi, dit-il, les yeux troublent à ceux qui se trauaillent outre mesure à cet exercice: Democritus, vne substance extraite de toute la masse corporelle: Epicurus, extraicte de l'ame et du corps: Aristote, vn excrement tiré de l'aliment du sang le dernier qui s'espand en nos membres: autres, du sang, cuit et digeré par la chaleur des genitoires: ce qu'ils iugent de ce qu'aux extremes efforts, on rend des gouttes

ENGLISH

There is no less rashness in what it teaches us about the parts of the body. Let us pick one or two examples, for otherwise we would lose ourselves in this vast and murky sea of medical errors. Let us find out whether there is agreement at least on this: from what matter men produce one another. For as to their first production, it is no wonder if, in a matter so lofty and so ancient, the human understanding is confused and scattered. Archelaus the natural philosopher, whose disciple and favorite Socrates was, according to Aristoxenus, said that both men and animals had been made from a milky slime squeezed out by the heat of the earth.

Pythagoras says our seed is the foam of our best blood; Plato, that it is the outflow of the marrow of the spine, which he argues from the fact that this place is the first to feel the fatigue of the work; Alcmaeon, that it is part of the substance of the brain—and to show that this is so, he says, the eyes of those who exert themselves beyond measure at this exercise grow dim. Democritus says it is a substance extracted from the whole mass of the body; Epicurus, extracted from the soul and the body; Aristotle, a residue drawn from the final nourishment of the blood, the last to spread

150 Plutarch, Life of Romulus.
151 Plutarch's dialogues On the Face in the Moon and On the Sign of Socrates.

FRENCH

de pur sang: enquoy il semble qu'il y ayt plus d'apparence, si on peut tirer quelque apparence d'vne confusion si infinie.

Or pour mener à effect cette semence, combien en font-ils d'opinions contraires? Aristote et Democritus tiennent que les femmes n'ont point de sperme: et que ce n'est qu'vne sueur qu'elles eslancent par la chaleur du plaisir et du mouuement, qui ne sert de rien à la generation. Galen au contraire, et ses suyuans, que sans la rencontre des semences, la generation ne se peut faire. Voyla les medecins, les philosophes, les iurisconsultes, et les theologiens, aux prises pesle mesle auec nos femmes, sur la dispute, à quels termes les femmes portent leur fruict. Et moy ie secours par l'exemple de moy-mesme, ceux d'entre eux, qui maintiennent la grossesse d'onze moys.

Le monde est basty de cette experience, il n'est si simple femmelette qui ne puisse dire son aduis sur toutes ces contestations, et si nous n'en sçaurions estre d'accord.

2.12.195 En voyla assez pour verifier que l'homme n'est non plus instruit de la cognoissance de soy, en la partie corporelle, qu'en la spirituelle. Nous l'auons proposé luy mesmes à soy, et sa raison, à sa raison, pour voir ce qu'elle nous en diroit. Il me semble assez auoir montré combien peu elle s'entend en elle mesme. Et, qui ne s'entend en soy, en quoy se peut il entendre? *Quasi veró mensuram vllius rei possit agere, qui sui nesciat.* Vrayement Protagoras nous en comtoit de belles, faisant l'homme la mesure de toutes choses, qui ne sçeut iamais seulement la sienne. Si ce n'est luy, sa dignité ne permettra pas qu'autre creature ayt cet aduantage.

Or luy estant en soy si contraire, et l'vn iugement subuertissant l'autre sans cesse, cette fauorable proposition n'estoit qu'vne risée, qui nous menoit à conclurre par necessité la neantise du compas et du compasseur. Quand Thales estime la cognoissance de l'homme tres-difficile à l'homme, il luy apprend, la cognoissance de toute autre chose luy estre impossible.

ENGLISH

through our limbs. Others say it comes from the blood, cooked and digested by the heat of the genitals, which they judge from the fact that in extreme efforts drops of pure blood are emitted. This seems the most likely, if any likelihood can be drawn from so infinite a confusion.

Now as for bringing this seed to fruition, how many contrary opinions do they hold! Aristotle and Democritus hold that women have no sperm, and that it is only a sweat they emit through the heat of pleasure and movement, which plays no part in generation. Galen, on the contrary, and his followers hold that generation cannot take place without the meeting of the two seeds. There you have the physicians, the philosophers, the jurists and the theologians grappling pell-mell with our women over the question of the term for which women carry their fruit. And I, for my part, come to the aid, with my own example, of those among them who uphold the eleven-month pregnancy.

The world is built on this experience; there is no woman so simple that she cannot give her opinion on all these disputes; and yet we cannot agree about them.

That is enough to show that man is no better instructed in knowledge of himself in his bodily part than in his spiritual part. We have set him before himself, and his reason before his reason, to see what it would tell us about it. I think I have shown well enough how little it understands itself. And he who does not understand himself, what can he understand? *As if indeed one could take the measure of anything who does not know his own.* Truly, Protagoras told us fine tales when he made man, who never even knew his own measure, the measure of all things. If it is not man, his dignity will not allow any other creature to have this advantage.[152]

Now since man is so self-contradictory, one judgment ceaselessly overturning another, this flattering proposition was only a joke, which forced us to conclude the nothingness of both the measure and the measurer. When Thales holds that knowledge of man is very difficult for man, he teaches him that knowledge of everything else is impossible for him.

152 Pliny the Elder, Natural History.

A WARNING TO HIS READER

This desperate argument is for extreme need; keep to the common road and bridle the mind.

FRENCH	ENGLISH
2.12.196 Vous, pour qui i'ay pris la peine d'estendre vn si long corps, contre ma coustume, ne refuyrez point de maintenir vostre Sebonde, par la forme ordinaire d'argumenter, dequoy vous estes tous les iours instruite, et exercerez en cela vostre esprit et vostre estude: car ce dernier tour d'escrime icy, il ne le faut employer que comme vn extreme remede. C'est vn coup desesperé, auquel il faut abandonner vos armes, pour faire perdre à vostre aduersaire les siennes: et vn tour secret, duquel il se faut seruir rarement et reseruément. C'est grande temerité de vous perdre pour perdre vn autre. Il ne faut pas vouloir mourir pour se venger, comme fit Gobrias.	You, for whom I have taken the trouble to stretch out so long a body, contrary to my habit, will not shrink from defending your Sebond by the ordinary form of argument in which you are instructed every day, and you will exercise your mind and your study in that. For this last fencing trick should be used only as an extreme remedy. It is a desperate thrust, in which you must abandon your own weapons to make your adversary lose his; and a secret trick, to be used rarely and with reserve. It is great rashness to destroy yourself in order to destroy another. One must not wish to die to take revenge, as Gobryas did.[153]
Car estant aux prises bien estroictes auec vn Seigneur de Perse, Darius y suruenant l'espée au poing, qui craignoit de frapper, de peur d'assener Gobrias: il luy cria, qu'il donnast hardiment, quand il deuroit donner au trauers tous les deux. I'ay veu reprouuer pour iniustes, des armes et conditions de combat singulier desesperées, et ausquelles celuy qui les offroit, mettoit luy et son compaignon en termes d'vne fin à tous deux ineuitable.	For he was locked in a close struggle with a Persian lord when Darius came up sword in hand and was afraid to strike for fear of hitting Gobryas; and Gobryas shouted to him to strike boldly, even if he ran them both through. I have seen weapons and conditions of single combat condemned as unjust because they were desperate, and because the man who proposed them put himself and his opponent in a position where an end for both was inevitable.[154]
Les Portugais prindrent en la mer des Indes certains Turcs prisonniers: lesquels impatiens de leur captiuité, se resolurent, et leur succeda, frottant des clous de nauire l'vn à l'autre, et faisans tomber vne estincelle de feu dans les caques de poudre (qu'il y auoit en l'endroit où ils estoyent gardez) d'embraser et mettre en cendre eux, leurs maistres et le vaisseau. Nous secouons icy les limites et dernieres clostures des sciences: ausquelles l'extremité est vitieuse, comme en la vertu. Tenez vous dans la route commune, il ne fait mie bon estre si subtil et si fin.	The Portuguese captured some Turks in the Indian Ocean. These prisoners, impatient of their captivity, resolved to set fire to themselves, their masters and the ship and burn them all to ashes—and they succeeded—by rubbing ship's nails against one another and letting a spark fall into the kegs of powder in the place where they were kept. We are shaking here the limits and last enclosures of the sciences, in which extremity is a vice, as it is in virtue. Keep to the common road; it is no good at all being so subtle and so clever.
Souuienne vous de ce que dit le prouerbe Thoscan, *Chi troppo s'assottiglia, si scauezza.* Ie vous conseille en vos opinions et en vos discours, autant qu'en vos mœurs, et en toute autre chose, la moderation et l'attrempance, et la fuite de la nouuelleté et de l'estrangeté. Toutes les voyes extrauagantes me faschent. Vous qui par l'authorité que vostre grandeur vous apporte, et encores plus par les auantages que vous donnent les qualitez plus	Remember what the Tuscan proverb says: *Whoever makes himself too fine breaks.* I recommend to you, in your opinions and your reasonings as much as in your conduct and in everything else, moderation and temperance, and the avoidance of novelty and strangeness. All roads that stray off the beaten track annoy me. You who, by the authority your greatness brings you, and still more by the advant-

153 The unnamed lady addressed here is traditionally identified as Margaret of Valois, Queen of Navarre.
154 Gobryas was one of the Persian nobles who helped Darius overthrow the usurper known as the false Smerdis, in 522 BC.

FRENCH

vostres, pouuez d'vn clin d'œil commander à qui il vous plaist, deuiez donner cette charge à quelqu'un, qui fist profession des lettres, qui vous eust bien autrement appuyé et enrichy cette fantasie. Toutesfois en voicy assez, pour ce que vous en auez à faire.

2.12.197 Epicurus disoit des loix, que les pires nous estoyent si necessaires, que sans elles, les hommes s'entremangeroient les vns les autres. Et Platon verifie que sans loix, nous viurions comme bestes. Nostre esprit est vn vtil vagabond, dangereux et temeraire: il est malaisé d'y ioindre l'ordre et la mesure: de mon temps ceux qui ont quelque rare excellence au dessus des autres, et quelque viuacité extraordinaire, nous les voyons quasi tous, desbordez en licence d'opinions, et de mœurs: c'est miracle s'il s'en rencontre vn rassis et sociable. On a raison de donner à l'esprit humain les barrieres les plus contraintes qu'on peut.

En l'estude, comme au reste, il luy faut compter et regler ses marches: il luy faut tailler par art les limites de sa chasse. On le bride et garotte de religions, de loix, de coustumes, de science, de preceptes, de peines, et recompenses mortelles et immortelles: encores voit-on que par sa volubilité et dissolution, il eschappe à toutes ces liaisons. C'est vn corps vain, qui n'a par où estre saisi et assené: vn corps diuers et difforme, auquel on ne peut asseoir nœud ny prise.

Certes il est peu d'ames si reglées, si fortes et bien nées, à qui on se puisse fier de leur propre conduicte: et qui puissent auec moderation et sans temerité, voguer en la liberté de leurs iugemens, au delà des opinions communes. Il est plus expedient de les mettre en tutelle. C'est vn outrageux glaiue à son possesseur mesme, que l'esprit, à qui ne sçait s'en armer ordonnément et discrettement. Et n'y a point de beste, à qui il faille plus iustement donner des orbieres, pour tenir sa veuë subjecte, et contrainte deuant ses pas; et la garder d'extrauaguer ny çà ny là, hors les ornieres que l'vsage et les loix luy tracent.

Parquoy il vous siera mieux de vous resserrer dans le train accoustumé, quel qu'il soit, que de ietter vostre vol à cette licence effrenée. Mais si quelqu'vn de ces nouueaux docteurs, entreprend de faire l'ingenieux en

ENGLISH

ages that the qualities more truly your own give you, can command anyone you please with a wink, should have given this task to someone who made a profession of letters; he would have supported and enriched this notion for you quite differently. However, here is enough for what you need of it.

Epicurus said of laws that even the worst were so necessary to us that without them men would eat one another. And Plato confirms that without laws we would live like beasts. Our mind is a wandering, dangerous and reckless tool; it is hard to join order and measure to it. In my time, those who have some rare excellence above the rest, and some extraordinary liveliness, we see almost all of them overflowing into license of opinions and of morals. It is a miracle if one of them turns out settled and sociable. There is good reason to set the tightest barriers we can around the human mind.

In study, as in everything else, its steps must be counted and regulated for it; the limits of its hunting ground must be marked out for it by art. It is bridled and bound with religions, laws, customs, knowledge, precepts, and punishments and rewards both mortal and immortal; and still we see that by its volatility and looseness it escapes all these bonds. It is an empty body with nothing by which it can be seized or struck; a varied and shapeless body on which no knot or hold can be fastened.

Certainly there are few souls so well ordered, so strong and so well born that they can be trusted to their own guidance, and that can sail with moderation and without rashness in the freedom of their judgments beyond common opinions. It is more expedient to put them under guardianship. The mind is a dangerous sword, even to its owner, for anyone who does not know how to arm himself with it in an orderly and discreet way. And there is no beast that more rightly needs blinkers, to keep its gaze subject and confined to what is in front of its feet, and to keep it from straying here or there out of the ruts that usage and the laws trace for it.

Therefore it will suit you better to keep within the accustomed track, whatever it may be, than to launch your flight into this unbridled license. But if one of these new doctors undertakes to play the

FRENCH

vostre presence, aux despens de son salut et du vostre: pour vous deffaire de cette dangereuse peste, qui se respand tous les iours en vos cours, ce preseruatif à l'extreme necessité, empeschera que la contagion de ce venin n'offencera, ny vous, ny vostre assistance.

2.12.198 La liberté donc et gaillardise de ces esprits anciens, produisoit en la philosophie et sciences humaines, plusieurs sectes d'opinions differentes, chacun entreprenant de iuger et de choisir pour prendre party. Mais à present, que les hommes vont tous vn train: *qui certis quibusdam destinatisque sententiis addicti et consecrati sunt, vt étiam, quæ non probant, cogantur defendere*: et que nous receuons les arts par ciuile authorité et ordonnance: si que les escholes n'ont qu'vn patron et pareille institution et discipline circonscripte, on ne regarde plus ce que les monnoyes poisent et valent, mais chacun à son tour, les reçoit selon le prix, que l'approbation commune et le cours leur donne: on ne plaide pas de l'alloy, mais de l'vsage: ainsi se mettent egallement toutes choses.

On reçoit la medecine, comme la geometrie; et les battelages, les enchantemens, les liaisons, le commerce des esprits des trespassez, les prognostications, les domifications, et iusques à cette ridicule poursuitte de la pierre philosophale, tout se met sans contredict.

Il ne faut que sçauoir, que le lieu de Mars loge au milieu du triangle de la main, celuy de Venus au pouce, et de Mercure au petit doigt: et que quand la mensale couppe le tubercle de l'enseigneur, c'est signe de cruauté: quand elle faut soubs le mitoyen, et que la moyenne naturelle fait vn angle auec la vitale, soubs mesme endroit, que c'est signe d'vne mort miserable: que si à vne femme, la naturelle est ouuerte, et ne ferme point l'angle auec la vitale, cela denote qu'elle sera mal chaste. Ie vous appelle vous mesme à tesmoin, si auec cette science, vn homme ne peut passer auec reputation et faueur parmy toutes compagnies.

ENGLISH

clever man in your presence, at the expense of his salvation and of yours, then, to rid yourself of this dangerous plague that is spreading every day in your courts, this preservative, used in extreme necessity, will prevent the contagion of this venom from harming either you or your company.

So the freedom and boldness of those ancient minds produced in philosophy and the human sciences many sects of differing opinions, each man undertaking to judge and choose in order to take sides. But now men all go the same way: *they are bound and dedicated to certain fixed and settled opinions, so that they are forced to defend even what they do not approve.* We receive the arts by civil authority and decree, so that the schools have only one pattern and a like, circumscribed education and discipline. Now people no longer look at what the coins weigh and are worth; each in turn accepts them at the value that common approval and currency give them. People argue not about the alloy but about the use. And so all things pass on equal terms.[155]

Medicine is accepted like geometry; and conjuring tricks, enchantments, binding spells, dealings with the spirits of the dead, prognostications, the casting of astrological houses, and even that ridiculous quest for the philosopher's stone—everything passes without contradiction.

You need only know that the place of Mars lies in the middle of the triangle of the hand, that of Venus at the thumb, and that of Mercury at the little finger. When the table line cuts the mount of the forefinger, it is a sign of cruelty; when it stops short below the middle finger, and the natural middle line makes an angle with the life line at the same spot, it is a sign of a wretched death; if in a woman the natural line is open and does not close the angle with the life line, this shows that she will not be very chaste. I call you yourself to witness whether, with this science, a man cannot pass with reputation and favor in any company.

155 Cicero, Tusculan Disputations.

WHERE KNOWLEDGE STOPS

Neither the Academics' probability nor any rule can fix the limits of what we know.

FRENCH

2.12.199 Theophrastus disoit, que l'humaine cognoissance, acheminée par les sens, pouuoit iuger des causes des choses iusques à certaine mesure, mais qu'estant arriuée aux causes extremes et premieres, il falloit qu'elle s'arrestast, et qu'elle rebouchast: à cause ou de sa foiblesse, ou de la difficulté des choses. C'est vne opinion moyenne et douce; que nostre suffisance nous peut conduire iusques à la cognoissance d'aucunes choses, et qu'elle a certaines mesures de puissance, outre lesquelles c'est temerité de l'employer. Cette opinion est plausible, et introducte par gens de composition: mais il est malaisé de donner bornes à nostre esprit: il est curieux et auide, et n'a point occasion de s'arrester plus tost à mille pas qu'à cinquante.

Ayant essayé par experience, que ce à quoy l'vn s'estoit failly, l'autre y est arriué: et que ce qui estoit incogneu à vn siecle, le siecle suyuant l'a esclaircy: et que les sciences et les arts ne se iettent pas en moule, ains se forment et figurent peu à peu, en les maniant et pollissant à plusieurs fois, comme les ours façonnent leurs petits en les leschant à loisir: ce que ma force ne peut descouurir, ie ne laisse pas de le sonder et essayer:

et en retastant et pestrissant cette nouuelle matiere, la remuant et l'eschauffant, i'ouure à celuy qui me suit, quelque facilité pour en iouyr plus à son ayse, et la luy rends plus soupple, et plus maniable: *Vt Hymettia sole*
Cera remollescit, tractatáque pollice multas
Vertitur in facies, ipsóque fit vtilis vsu. Autant en fera le second au tiers: qui est cause que la difficulté ne me doit pas desesperer; ny aussi peu mon impuissance, car ce n'est que la mienne.

2.12.200 L'homme est capable de toutes choses, comme d'aucunes. Et s'il aduouë, comme dit Theophrastus, l'ignorance des causes premieres et des principes, qu'il me quitte hardiment tout le reste de sa science. Si le fondement luy faut, son discours est par terre. Le disputer et l'enquerir, n'a autre but et arrest que les principes: si cette fin n'arreste son cours, il se iecte à vne irresolution infinie. *Non potest aliud alio magis minùsue comprehendi, quoniam*

ENGLISH

Theophrastus said that human knowledge, guided by the senses, could judge the causes of things up to a certain point, but that on reaching the ultimate and first causes it had to stop and be blunted, either because of its weakness or because of the difficulty of things. It is a moderate and gentle opinion: that our ability can lead us to the knowledge of some things, and that its power has certain limits, beyond which it is rash to use it. This opinion is plausible and was put forward by people of a conciliatory disposition. But it is hard to set bounds to our mind: it is curious and greedy, and has no reason to stop at a thousand paces rather than at fifty.

I have found by experience that where one man failed, another has succeeded; that what was unknown to one century, the following century has made clear; and that the sciences and the arts are not cast in a mold, but are formed and shaped little by little, by being handled and polished many times over, as bears shape their cubs by licking them at leisure. So what my strength cannot discover, I still keep probing and trying out;

and by handling and kneading this new matter again, stirring and warming it, I give the one who comes after me some ease in enjoying it more comfortably, and make it more supple and more manageable for him: *As Hymettian wax softens in the sun,*
and, worked by the thumb, turns into many shapes, and is made useful by use itself. The second will do as much for the third. That is why difficulty must not make me despair, nor my powerlessness either, for it is only mine.[156]

Man is capable of all things just as much as of some. And if he admits, as Theophrastus says, that he is ignorant of first causes and principles, let him boldly hand over to me all the rest of his knowledge. If the foundation fails him, his reasoning lies flat on the ground. Disputing and inquiring have no other goal or stopping point than principles; if that end does not halt his course, he

156 Ovid, Metamorphoses.

FRENCH

omnium rerum vna est definitio comprehendendi. Or il est vray-semblable que si l'ame sçauoit quelque chose, elle se sçauroit premierement elle mesme; et si elle sçauoit quelque chose hors d'elle, ce seroit son corps et son estuy, auant toute autre chose.

Si on void iusques auiourd'huy les dieux de la medecine se debattre de nostre anatomie, *Mulciber in Troiam, pro Troia stabat Apollo:* quand attendons nous qu'ils en soyent d'accord? Nous nous sommes plus voisins, que ne nous est la blancheur de la nege, ou la pesanteur de la pierre. Si l'homme ne se cognoist, comment cognoist-il ses functions et ses forces? Il n'est pas à l'aduanture, que quelque notice veritable ne loge chez nous; mais c'est par hazard. Et d'autant que par mesme voye, mesme façon et conduitte, les erreurs se reçoiuent en nostre ame, elle n'a pas dequoy les distinguer, ny dequoy choisir la verité du mensonge.

2.12.201 Les Academiciens receuoyent quelque inclination de iugement; et trouuoyent trop crud, de dire qu'il n'estoit pas plus vray-semblable que la nege fust blanche, que noire; et que nous ne fussions non plus asseurez du mouuement d'vne pierre, qui part de nostre main, que de celuy de la huictiesme sphere. Et pour euiter cette difficulté et estrangeté, qui ne peut à la verité loger en nostre imagination, que malaisément; quoy qu'ils establissent que nous n'estions aucunement capables de sçauoir, et que la verité est engoufrée dans des profonds abysmes, où la veuë humaine ne peut penetrer: si aduouoyent ils, les vnes choses plus vray-semblables que les autres; et receuoyent en leur iugement cette faculté, de se pouuoir incliner plustost à vne apparence, qu'à vne autre.

Ils luy permettoyent cette propension, luy deffendant toute resolution. L'aduis des Pyrrhoniens est plus hardy, et quant et quant plus vray-semblable. Car cette inclination Academique, et cette propension à vne proposition plustost qu'à vne autre, qu'est-ce autre chose que la recognoissance de quelque plus apparente verité, en cette-cy qu'en celle-là? Si nostre entendement est capable de la forme, des lineamens, du port, et du visage, de la verité, il la verroit entiere, aussi bien que demie, naissante, et imperfaicte.

ENGLISH

plunges into endless irresolution. *One thing cannot be grasped more or less than another, since there is one single definition of grasping for all things.* Now it is likely that if the soul knew anything, it would first of all know itself; and if it knew anything outside itself, that would be its body and its case, before anything else.[157]

If we see the gods of medicine still quarreling to this day over our anatomy, *Mulciber was against Troy, Apollo stood for Troy*: when can we expect them to agree? We are nearer to ourselves than the whiteness of snow or the weight of stone is to us. If man does not know himself, how can he know his functions and his powers? It is not impossible, perhaps, that some true notion lodges in us; but if so, it is by chance. And since errors are received into our soul by the same road, in the same manner and by the same conduct, the soul has nothing by which to tell them apart, nor to choose truth over falsehood.[158]

The Academics allowed some inclination of judgment. They found it too crude to say that it was no more likely that snow was white than black, and that we were no more certain of the motion of a stone leaving our hand than of that of the eighth sphere. To avoid this difficulty and strangeness, which in truth can find room in our imagination only with great difficulty, they did lay it down that we were in no way capable of knowing, and that truth is swallowed up in deep abysses where human sight cannot penetrate. Yet they admitted that some things are more likely than others, and granted their judgment the faculty of inclining toward one appearance rather than another.[159]

They allowed it this leaning, while forbidding it any decision. The view of the Pyrrhonists is bolder, and at the same time more likely. For this Academic inclination, this leaning toward one proposition rather than another—what else is it but the recognition of some more apparent truth in this one than in that? If our understanding were capable of grasping the form, the features, the bearing and the face of truth, it would see it whole just as well as half, nascent and imperfect.

157 Cicero, Academica.
158 Ovid, Tristia; Mulciber is Vulcan, who sided with the Greeks against Troy.
159 In ancient astronomy the eighth sphere was the sphere of the fixed stars.

FRENCH

Cette apparence de verisimilitude, qui les fait prendre plustost à gauche qu'à droite, augmentez la; cette once de verisimilitude, qui incline la balance, multipliez la de cent, de mille onces; il en aduiendra en fin, que la balance prendra party tout à faict, et arrestera vn chois et vne verité entiere. Mais comment se laissent ils plier à la vray-semblance, s'ils ne cognoissent le vray? Comment cognoissent ils la semblance de ce, dequoy ils ne cognoissent pas l'essence? Ou nous pouuons iuger tout à faict, ou tout à faict nous ne le pouuons pas.

Si noz facultez intellectuelles et sensibles, sont sans fondement et sans pied, si elles ne font que flotter et vanter, pour neant laissons nous emporter nostre iugement à aucune partie de leur operation, quelque apparence qu'elle semble nous presenter. Et la plus seure assiette de nostre entendement, et la plus heureuse, ce seroit celle-là, où il se maintiendroit rassis, droit, inflexible, sans bransle et sans agitation. *Inter visa vera, aut falsa, ad animi assensum, nihil interest.* Que les choses ne logent pas chez nous en leur forme et en leur essence, et n'y facent leur entrée de leur force propre et authorité, nous le voyons assez.

Par ce que s'il estoit ainsi, nous les receurions de mesme façon: le vin seroit tel en la bouche du malade, qu'en la bouche du sain. Celuy qui a des creuasses aux doigts, ou qui les a gourdz, trouueroit vne pareille durté au bois ou au fer, qu'il manie, que fait vn autre. Les subjets estrangers se rendent donc à nostre mercy, ils logent chez nous, comme il nous plaist. Or si de nostre part nous receuions quelque chose sans alteration, si les prises humaines estoient assez capables et fermes, pour saisir la verité par noz propres moyens, ces moyens estans communs à tous les hommes, cette verité se reiecteroit de main en main de l'vn à l'autre.

Et au moins se trouueroit-il vne chose au monde, de tant qu'il y en a, qui se croiroit par les hommes d'vn consentement vniuersel. Mais ce, qu'il ne se void aucune proposition, qui ne soit debattue et controuersée entre nous, ou qui ne le puisse estre, montre bien que nostre iugement naturel ne saisit pas bien clairement ce qu'il saisit: car mon iugement ne le peut faire receuoir au iugement de mon compagnon: qui est signe qui ie l'ay saisi par quelque autre moyen, que par vne naturelle puissance, qui soit en moy et en tous les hommes.

ENGLISH

That appearance of likelihood which makes them turn left rather than right: increase it. That ounce of likelihood which tips the scale: multiply it by a hundred, by a thousand ounces. In the end the scale will come down wholly on one side and settle on one choice and one whole truth. But how do they let themselves be bent toward what is like the truth, if they do not know the true? How do they know the likeness of something whose essence they do not know? Either we can judge absolutely, or absolutely we cannot.

If our intellectual and sensory faculties have no foundation and no footing, if all they do is float and drift with the wind, then it is pointless to let our judgment be carried along by any part of their operation, whatever appearance it may seem to present to us. The surest and happiest position for our understanding would be one in which it kept itself settled, upright, unbending, without wavering and without agitation. *Between true and false appearances there is no difference as far as the mind's assent is concerned.* That things do not lodge in us in their own form and essence, and do not make their entry by their own force and authority, we see clearly enough.

For if that were so, we would all receive them in the same way: wine would taste the same in the mouth of a sick man as in the mouth of a healthy one. A man with chapped or numb fingers would find the wood or iron he handles just as hard as another man does. Outside objects therefore surrender to our mercy; they lodge in us as we please. Now if for our part we received anything without altering it, if the human grip were capable and firm enough to seize truth by our own means, then, since those means are common to all men, this truth would be passed from hand to hand, from one man to another.

And there would be at least one thing in the world, out of all there are, that men would believe by universal consent. But the fact that no proposition can be found that is not debated and disputed among us, or could not be, shows clearly that our natural judgment does not grasp very clearly what it grasps. For my judgment cannot make my companion's judgment accept it—which is a sign that I have grasped it by some other means than a natural power that is in me and in all men.

FRENCH

ENGLISH

2.12.202 Laissons à part cette infinie confusion d'opinions, qui se void entre les philosophes mesmes, et ce debat perpetuel et vniuersel en la cognoissance des choses. Car cela est presupposé tres-veritablement, que d'aucune chose les hommes, ie dy les sçauans, les mieux nais, les plus suffisans, ne sont d'accord: non pas que le ciel soit sur nostre teste: car ceux qui doubtent de tout, doubtent aussi de cela: et ceux qui nient que nous puissions comprendre aucune chose, disent que nous n'auons pas compris que le ciel soit sur nostre teste: et ces deux opinions sont, en nombre, sans comparaison les plus fortes.

Let us leave aside the infinite confusion of opinions that is seen even among the philosophers, and this perpetual and universal debate about the knowledge of things. For it is taken for granted, and very truly, that men—I mean the learned, the best-born, the most able—agree about nothing: not even that the sky is over our heads. For those who doubt everything doubt that too; and those who deny that we can comprehend anything say that we have not comprehended that the sky is over our heads. And these two opinions are, in numbers, incomparably the strongest.

A JUDGMENT THAT SHIFTS WITH THE BODY

Health, mood, passion and argument change what we hold true from hour to hour.

FRENCH

ENGLISH

2.12.203 Outre cette diuersité et diuision infinie, par le trouble que nostre iugement nous donne à nous mesmes, et l'incertitude que chacun sent en soy, il est aysé à voir qu'il a son assiette bien mal asseurée. Combien diuersement iugeons nous des choses? combien de fois changeons nous noz fantasies? Ce que ie tiens auiourd'huy, et ce que ie croy, ie le tiens, et le croy de toute ma croyance: tous mes vtils et tous mes ressorts empoignent cette opinion, et m'en respondent, sur tout ce qu'ils peuuent: ie ne sçaurois embrasser aucune verité ny conseruer auec plus d'asseurance, que ie fay cette-cy.

Besides this infinite diversity and division, it is easy to see, from the confusion our judgment throws us into and the uncertainty each man feels within himself, that its footing is very insecure. How variously we judge things! How often we change our notions! What I hold today and what I believe, I hold and believe with all my belief; all my tools and all my springs seize on this opinion and vouch for it as far as they can. I could not embrace any truth, or keep hold of it, with more assurance than I do this one.

I'y suis tout entier; i'y suis voyrement: mais ne m'est-il pas aduenu non vne fois, mais cent, mais mille, et tous les iours, d'auoir embrassé quelque autre chose à tout ces mesmes instrumens, en cette mesme condition, que depuis i'ay iugée fauce? Au moins faut-il deuenir sage à ses propres despens. Si ie me suis trouué souuent trahy soubs cette couleur, si ma touche se trouue ordinairement faulce, et ma balance inegale et iniuste, quelle asseurance en puis-ie prendre à cette fois, plus qu'aux autres? N'est-ce pas sottise, de me laisser tant de fois pipper à vn guide?

I am wholly in it; I am truly in it. But has it not happened to me—not once, but a hundred times, a thousand times, every day—that I embraced some other thing with these same instruments, in this same condition, which I have since judged to be false? At least one ought to grow wise at one's own expense. If I have often found myself betrayed under this guise, if my touchstone usually proves false and my scale uneven and unjust, what assurance can I take from it this time, more than the others? Isn't it foolish to let myself be cheated so many times by the same guide?

Toutesfois, que la Fortune nous remue cinq cens fois de place, qu'elle ne face que vuyder et remplir sans cesse, comme dans vn vaisseau, dans nostre croyance, autres et autres opinions, tousiours la presente et la derniere c'est la certaine, et l'infaillible. Pour cette-cy, il faut abandonner les biens, l'honneur, la vie, et le salut, et tout, *Posterior res illa reperta, / Perdit, et immutat sensus ad pristina quæque.* Quoy qu'on nous presche, quoy que nous

And yet let Fortune move us five hundred times from our place, let her do nothing but empty and refill our belief endlessly, as she might a vessel, with one opinion after another: always the present and latest one is the certain, the infallible one. For this one we must give up goods, honor, life, salvation, everything. *The thing found later spoils the old, / And turns our feelings against all that came be-*

FRENCH

apprenions, il faudroit tousiours se souuenir que c'est l'homme qui donne, et l'homme qui reçoit; c'est vne mortelle main qui nous le presente; c'est vne mortelle main qui l'accepte.

Les choses qui nous viennent du ciel, ont seules droict et authorité de persuasion, seules merque de verité: laquelle aussi ne voyons nous pas de nos yeux, ny ne la receuons par nos moyens: cette saincte et grande image ne pourroit pas en vn si chetif domicile, si Dieu pour cet vsage ne le prepare, si Dieu ne le reforme et fortifie par sa grace et faueur particuliere et supernaturelle. Aumoins deuroit nostre condition fautiue, nous faire porter plus moderément et retenuement en nos changemens. Il nous deuroit souuenir, quoy que nous receussions en l'entendement, que nous receuons souuent des choses fauces, et que c'est par ces mesmes vtils qui se dementent et qui se trompent souuent.

2.12.204 Or n'est-il pas merueille, s'ils se dementent, estans si aysez à incliner et à tordre par bien legeres occurrences. Il est certain que nostre apprehension, nostre iugement et les facultez de nostre ame en general, souffrent selon les mouuemens et alterations du corps, lesquelles alterations sont continuelles. N'auons nous pas l'esprit plus esueillé, la memoire plus prompte, le discours plus vif, en santé qu'en maladie? La ioye et la gayeté ne nous font elles pas receuoir les subjects qui se presentent à nostre ame, d'vn tout autre visage, que le chagrin et la melancholie? Pensez vous que les vers de Catulle ou de Sappho, rient à vn vieillard auaricieux et rechigné, comme à vn ieune homme vigoureux et ardent?

Cleomenes fils d'Anaxandridas estant malade, ses amis luy reprochoyent qu'il auoit des humeurs et fantasies nouuelles, et non accoustumées: le croy bien, fit-il, aussi ne suis-ie pas celuy que ie suis estant sain: estant autre, aussi sont autres mes opinions et fantasies. En la chicane de nos palais, ce mot est en vsage, qui se dit des criminels qui rencontrent les iuges en quelque bonne trampe, douce et debonnaire, *gaudeat de bona fortuna*. Car il est certain que les iugemens se rencontrent par fois plus tendus à la condemnation, plus espineux et aspres, tantost plus faciles, aysez, et enclins à l'excuse.

ENGLISH

fore. Whatever we are preached, whatever we learn, we should always remember that it is man who gives and man who receives; it is a mortal hand that offers it to us; it is a mortal hand that accepts it.[160]

Only the things that come to us from heaven have the right and authority to persuade; only they bear the mark of truth. And that truth, too, we do not see with our own eyes, nor receive by our own means: that great and holy image could not dwell in so wretched a lodging unless God prepares it for that use, unless God reforms and strengthens it by his particular and supernatural grace and favor. At the least, our faulty condition ought to make us behave with more moderation and restraint in our changes. We ought to remember, whatever we take into our understanding, that we often take in false things, and that we do so by these same tools, which often contradict themselves and are often deceived.

Now it is no wonder if they contradict themselves, since they are so easily bent and twisted by very slight occurrences. It is certain that our apprehension, our judgment and the faculties of our soul in general are affected by the movements and alterations of the body, and those alterations are continual. Is our mind not more alert, our memory quicker, our reasoning livelier, in health than in sickness? Do joy and gaiety not make us receive whatever presents itself to our soul with quite another face than gloom and melancholy do? Do you think the verses of Catullus or Sappho smile on a miserly, crabbed old man as they do on a vigorous and ardent young one?

When Cleomenes, son of Anaxandridas, was ill, his friends reproached him for having new and unaccustomed moods and fancies. "I can well believe it," he said; "I am not the same man I am when I am well. Being someone else, my opinions and fancies are something else too." In the wrangling of our law courts a phrase is in use, said of criminals who find the judges in a good temper, mild and kindly: *let him rejoice in his good fortune*. For it is certain that judgments are at times more bent on condemnation, thornier and harsher, and

160 Lucretius, On the Nature of Things.

FRENCH

Tel qui rapporte de sa maison la douleur de la goutte, la ialousie, ou le larrecin de son valet, ayant toute l'ame teinte et abbreuuée de colere, il ne faut pas doubter que son iugement ne s'en altere vers cette part là. Ce venerable Senat d'Areopage, iugeoit de nuict, de peur que la veue des poursuiuans corrompist sa iustice. L'air mesme et la serenité du ciel, nous apporte quelque mutation, comme dit ce vers Grec en Cicero, *Tales sunt hominum mentes, quali pater ipse / Iuppiter, auctifera lustrauit lampade terras.* Ce ne sont pas seulement les fieures, les breuuages, et les grands accidens, qui renuersent nostre iugement: les moindres choses du monde le tourneuirent.

Et ne faut pas doubter, encores que nous ne le sentions pas, que si la fieure continue peut atterrer nostre ame, que la tierce n'y apporte quelque alteration selon la mesure et proportion. Si l'apoplexie assoupit et esteint tout à faict la veuë de nostre intelligence, il ne faut pas doubter que le morfondement ne l'esblouisse. Et par consequent, à peine se peut-il rencontrer vne seule heure en la vie, où nostre iugement se trouue en sa deuë assiette, nostre corps estant subiect à tant de continuelles mutations, et estoffé de tant de sortes de ressorts, que i'en croy les medecins, combien il est malaisé, qu'il n'y en ayt tousiours quelq'vn qui tire de trauers.

2.12.205 Au demeurant, cette maladie ne se descouure pas si aisément, si elle n'est du tout extreme et irremediable: d'autant que la raison va tousiours torte, boiteuse, et deshanchée: et auec le mensonge comme auec la verité. Par ainsin, il est malaisé de descouurir son mescompte, et desreglement. I'appelle tousiours raison, cette apparence de discours que chacun forge en soy: cette raison, de la condition de laquelle, il y en peut avoir cent contraires autour d'vn mesme subject: c'est vn instrument de plomb, et de cire, alongeable, ployable, et accommodable à tout biais et à toutes mesures: il ne reste que la suffisance de le sçauoir contourner.

Quelque bon dessein qu'ait vn iuge, s'il ne s'escoute de pres, à quoy peu de gens s'amusent; l'inclination à l'amitié, à la parenté, à la beauté, et à la vengeance, et non pas seulement choses si poisantes, mais cet instinct

ENGLISH

at other times more lenient, easygoing and inclined to excuse.

When a man brings back from home the pain of gout, or jealousy, or a theft by his servant, and his whole soul is tinged and soaked with anger, there is no doubt that his judgment is altered in that direction. That venerable senate of the Areopagus judged by night, for fear that the sight of the petitioners might corrupt its justice. Even the air and the clearness of the sky bring about some change in us, as that Greek verse in Cicero says: *Men's minds are such as the light with which Father Jupiter himself / Has lit the lands with his fruitful torch.* It is not only fevers, drinks and great accidents that overturn our judgment: the slightest things in the world spin it around.[161]

And there is no doubt, though we do not feel it, that if a continuous fever can lay our soul low, a tertian fever brings it some alteration in due measure and proportion. If apoplexy puts the sight of our intelligence to sleep and puts it out altogether, there is no doubt that a chill dims it. And consequently there can hardly be found a single hour in life when our judgment is in its proper seat, our body being subject to so many continual changes, and furnished with so many kinds of springs, that—I take the physicians' word for it—it is hard for there not always to be one of them pulling askew.

Moreover, this sickness is not easily detected unless it is utterly extreme and past remedy, since reason always goes crooked, lame and out of joint, and with falsehood as readily as with truth. So it is hard to discover its miscalculations and disorders. I always call reason that semblance of reasoning that each man forges within himself: that reason of which, by its very nature, there can be a hundred contrary versions about one and the same subject. It is an instrument of lead and of wax, stretchable, bendable, adaptable to every bias and every measure; all that is needed is the skill to know how to shape it.

However good a judge's intentions, if he does not listen closely to himself—which few people bother to do—then the pull of friendship, of kinship, of beauty and of revenge can imperceptibly slip into

161 The Areopagus was the ancient council and court of Athens; the verse is Cicero's rendering of Homer, Odyssey XVIII.

FRENCH

fortuite, qui nous fait fauoriser vne chose plus qu'vne autre, et qui nous donne sans le congé de la raison, le choix, en deux pareils subjects, ou quelque vmbrage de pareille vanité, peuuent insinuer insensiblement en son iugement, la recommendation ou deffaueur d'vne cause, et donner pente à la balance.

2.12.206 Moy qui m'espie de plus prez, qui ay les yeux incessamment tendus sur moy, comme celuy qui n'a pas fort affaire ailleurs, *Quis sub Arcto*
Rex gelidæ metuatur oræ,
Quid Tyridatem terreat, vnicè
Securus, à peine oseroy-ie dire la vanité et la foiblesse que ie trouue chez moy. I'ay le pied si instable et si mal assis, ie le trouue si aysé à crouler, et si prest au branle, et ma veue si desreglée, qu'à iun ie me sens autre, qu'apres le repas: si ma santé me rid, et la clarté d'vn beau iour, me voyla honneste homme: si i'ay vn cor qui me presse l'orteil, me voylà renfroigné, mal plaisant et inaccessible.

Vn mesme pas de cheual me semble tantost rude, tantost aysé; et mesme chemin à cette heure plus court, vne autre fois plus long: et vne mesme forme ores plus ores moins aggreable. Maintenant ie suis à tout faire, maintenant à rien faire: ce qui m'est plaisir à cette heure, me sera quelquefois peine. Il se fait mille agitations indiscrettes et casueles chez moy. Ou l'humeur melancholique me tient, ou la cholerique; et de son authorité priuée, à cett'heure le chagrin predomine en moy, à cette heure l'allegresse.

Quand ie prens des liures, i'auray apperceu en tel passage des graces excellentes, et qui auront feru mon ame; qu'vn'autre fois i'y retombe, i'ay beau le tourner et virer, i'ay beau le plier et le manier, c'est vne masse incognue et informe pour moy. En mes escris mesmes, ie ne retrouue pas tousiours l'air de ma premiere imagination: ie ne sçay ce que i'ay voulu dire: et m'eschaude souuent à corriger, et y mettre vn nouueau sens, pour auoir perdu le premier qui valloit mieux.

Ie ne fay qu'aller et venir: mon iugement ne tire pas tousiours auant, il flotte, il vague, *Velut minuta magno / Deprensa nauis in mari, vesaniente vento.* Maintes-fois, comme il m'aduient de faire volontiers, ayant pris pour exercice et pour esbat, à maintenir vne contraire opinion

ENGLISH

his judgment a bias for or against a case, and tip the scale. And not only such weighty things: so can that random instinct which makes us favor one thing over another, and which gives us, without reason's leave, the choice between two like objects, or some shadow of a similar vanity.

I who spy on myself more closely, who keep my eyes constantly fixed on myself, like a man who has not much business elsewhere—*What king of the frozen shore*
Beneath the Bear is feared,
What alarms Tiridates—wholly
Unconcerned—I would hardly dare tell the vanity and weakness I find in myself. My footing is so unsteady and so poorly set, I find it so quick to give way and so ready to wobble, and my sight so unruly, that fasting I feel myself a different man from what I am after a meal. If my health smiles on me, and the brightness of a fine day, I am a perfectly decent fellow; if I have a corn pinching my toe, I am sullen, disagreeable and unapproachable.[162]

The same pace of my horse seems to me now rough, now easy; the same road now shorter, another time longer; the same shape now more, now less pleasing. One moment I am ready to do anything, the next to do nothing; what is a pleasure to me now will at some other time be a burden. A thousand heedless, haphazard stirrings go on inside me. Either the melancholy humor has hold of me, or the choleric; and on its own private authority, now gloom prevails in me, now cheerfulness.

When I take up books, I may have seen in some passage excellent graces that struck my soul; let me come back to it another time, and turn it and twist it as I may, bend it and handle it as I may, it is an unknown and shapeless lump to me. Even in my own writings I do not always recover the drift of my first conception: I do not know what I meant to say. And I often burn my fingers correcting it and putting in a new meaning, because I have lost the first one, which was better.

I do nothing but come and go. My judgment does not always move forward; it floats, it wanders, *Like a tiny boat caught on the great sea / In a raging wind.* Many times—as I often like to do—I have taken it up as an exercise and a pastime to defend an opin-

162 Horace, Odes I.26; Tiridates was a pretender to the Parthian throne.

FRENCH

à la mienne, mon esprit s'appliquant et tournant de ce costé-là, m'y attache si bien, que ie ne trouue plus la raison de mon premier aduis, et m'en despars. Ie m'entraine quasi où ie panche, comment que ce soit, et m'emporte de mon poix.

2.12.207 Chacun à peu pres en diroit autant de soy, s'il se regardoit comme moy. Les prescheurs sçauent, que l'emotion qui leur vient en parlant, les anime vers la creance: et qu'en cholere nous nous addonnons plus à la deffence de nostre proposition, l'imprimons en nous, et l'embrassons auec plus de vehemence et d'approbation, que nous ne faisons estans en nostre sens froid et reposé. Vous recitez simplement vne cause à l'aduocat, il vous y respond chancellant et doubteux: vous sentez qu'il luy est indifferent de prendre à soustenir l'vn ou l'autre party: l'auez vous bien payé pour y mordre, et pour s'en formaliser, commence-il d'en estre interessé, y a-il eschauffé sa volonté?

sa raison et sa science s'y eschauffent quant et quant: voylà vne apparente et indubitable verité, qui se presente à son entendement: il y descouure vne toute nouuelle lumiere, et le croit à bon escient, et se le persuade ainsi. Voire ie ne sçay si l'ardeur qui naist du despit, et de l'obstination, à l'encontre de l'impression et violence du magistrat, et du danger: ou l'interest de la reputation, n'ont enuoyé tel homme soustenir iusques au feu, l'opinion pour laquelle entre ses amys, et en liberté, il n'eust pas voulu s'eschauder le bout du doigt.

2.12.208 Les secousses et esbranlemens que nostre ame reçoit par les passions corporelles, peuuent beaucoup en elle: mais encore plus les siennes propres: ausquelles elle est si fort prinse, qu'il est à l'aduanture soustenable, qu'elle n'a aucune autre alleure et mouuement, que du souffle de ses vents, et que sans leur agitation elle resteroit sans action, comme vn nauire en pleine mer, que les vents abandonnent de leur secours. Et qui maintiendroit cela, suiuant le party des Peripateticiens, ne nous feroit pas beaucoup de tort, puis qu'il est cognu, que la pluspart des plus belles actions de l'ame, procedent et ont besoin de cette impulsion des passions. La vaillance, disent-ils, ne se peut parfaire sans l'assistance de la cholere.

Semper Aiax fortis, fortissimus tamen in furore. Ny ne court on sus aux meschants, et aux ennemis, assez

ENGLISH

ion contrary to my own, and my mind, applying itself and turning that way, ties me to it so firmly that I can no longer find the reason for my first view, and I give it up. I am carried almost wherever I lean, whatever the case, and swept away by my own weight.[163]

Almost anyone would say as much of himself if he looked at himself as I do. Preachers know that the emotion that comes over them as they speak quickens them toward belief, and that in anger we throw ourselves harder into the defense of our proposition, stamp it on ourselves and embrace it with more vehemence and approval than we do in our cool and calm senses. You lay out your case plainly to a lawyer: he answers you hesitant and doubtful; you feel that it makes no difference to him whether he takes up one side or the other. Have you paid him well to get his teeth into it and take it to heart? Does he begin to have a stake in it, has his will warmed to it?

his reason and his learning warm to it at the same time. Here is an evident and indubitable truth presenting itself to his understanding; he discovers an entirely new light in it, believes it in earnest, and so persuades himself. Indeed, I do not know whether the ardor born of spite and obstinacy against the pressure and violence of the magistrate and of danger, or concern for reputation, has not sent many a man to uphold, all the way to the stake, an opinion for which, among his friends and at liberty, he would not have been willing to burn the tip of his finger.

The jolts and shocks our soul receives from bodily passions can do much to it; but its own passions can do still more. It is so firmly in their grip that it is perhaps arguable that it has no other gait or motion than what comes from the breath of their winds, and that without their stirring it would lie inactive, like a ship on the open sea that the winds have deserted. And anyone who maintained this, following the party of the Peripatetics, would do us no great wrong, since it is known that most of the finest actions of the soul proceed from this impulse of the passions and need it. Valor, they say, cannot be perfected without the help of anger.

Ajax was always brave, but bravest in his fury. Nor do we fall upon the wicked and our enemies vigor-

FRENCH

vigoureusement, si on n'est courroucé. Et veulent que l'aduocat inspire le courroux aux iuges, pour en tirer iustice.

2.12.209 Les cupiditez emeurent Themistocles, emeurent Demosthenes: et ont poussé les philosophes aux trauaux, veillées, et peregrinations: nous meinent à l'honneur, à la doctrine, à la santé, fins vtiles. Et cette lascheté d'ame à souffrir l'ennuy et la fascherie, sert à nourrir en la conscience, la penitence et la repentance: et à sentir les fleaux de Dieu, pour nostre chastiment, et les fleaux de la correction politique. La compassion sert d'aiguillon à la clemence; et la prudence de nous conseruer et gouuerner, est esueillée par nostre crainte: et combien de belles actions par l'ambition? combien par la presomption? Aucune eminente et gaillarde vertu en fin, n'est sans quelque agitation desreglée.

Seroit-ce pas l'vne des raisons qui auroit meu les Epicuriens, à descharger Dieu de tout soin et sollicitude de nos affaires: d'autant que les effects mesmes de sa bonté ne se pouuoient exercer enuers nous, sans esbranler son repos, par le moyen des passions, qui sont comme des piqueures et sollicitations acheminans l'ame aux actions vertueuses? ou bien ont ils creu autrement, et les ont prinses, comme tempestes, qui desbauchent honteusement l'ame de sa tranquillité? *Vt maris tranquillitas intelligitur, nulla, ne minima quidem, aura fluctus commouente: sic animi quietus et placatus status cernitur, quum perturbatio nulla est, qua moueri queat.*

2.12.210 Quelles differences de sens et de raison, quelle contrarieté d'imaginations nous presente la diuersité de nos passions? Quelle asseurance pouuons nous doncq prendre de chose si instable et si mobile, subjecte par sa condition à la maistrise du trouble, n'allant iamais qu'vn pas forcé et emprunté? Si nostre iugement est en main à la maladie mesmes, et à la perturbation, si c'est de la folie et de la temerité, qu'il est tenu de receuoir l'impression des choses, quelle seurté pouuons nous attendre de luy?

2.12.211 N'y a il point de hardiesse à la philosophie, d'estimer des hommes qu'ils produisent leurs plus grands effects, et plus approchans de la diuinité, quand ils sont hors d'eux, et furieux et insensez? Nous nous amendons par la priuation de nostre raison, et son assoupissement. Les

ENGLISH

ously enough unless we are angry. And they would have the advocate stir up anger in the judges, to get justice out of them.[164]

Desires moved Themistocles, moved Demosthenes, and have driven philosophers to labors, sleepless nights and travels; they lead us to honor, to learning, to health—useful ends. And that weakness of soul in bearing grief and vexation serves to nourish penance and repentance in the conscience, and to make us feel the scourges of God for our chastisement, and the scourges of public punishment. Compassion serves as a spur to clemency; and the prudence to preserve and govern ourselves is awakened by our fear. And how many fine actions come from ambition? How many from presumption? In short, no eminent and spirited virtue is without some unruly agitation.

Might this not be one of the reasons that moved the Epicureans to relieve God of all care and concern for our affairs? For even the effects of his goodness could not be exercised toward us without disturbing his repose, by means of the passions, which are like goads and promptings that lead the soul to virtuous actions. Or did they think otherwise, and take the passions for storms that shamefully lure the soul away from its tranquillity? *As the calm of the sea is understood when not even the slightest breeze stirs the waves, so the quiet and peaceful state of the soul is discerned when there is no disturbance that can move it.*

What differences of sense and reason, what contrary imaginings the diversity of our passions presents to us! What assurance, then, can we take from a thing so unstable and so changeable, by its very condition subject to the mastery of disturbance, never moving except at a forced and borrowed pace? If our judgment is in the hands of sickness itself and of disturbance, if it is from folly and rashness that it must receive the impression of things, what security can we expect from it?

Is it not rather bold of philosophy to hold that men produce their greatest effects, those closest to divinity, when they are beside themselves, frenzied and out of their minds? We improve through the loss of our reason and its slumber. The two natural

163 Catullus.
164 Cicero, Tusculan Disputations.

FRENCH

deux voies naturelles, pour entrer au cabinet des Dieux, et y preueoir le cours des destinées, sont la fureur et le sommeil. Cecy est plaisant à considerer. Par la dislocation, que les passions apportent à nostre raison, nous deuenons vertueux: par son extirpation, que la fureur ou l'image de la mort apporte, nous deuenons prophetes et deuins. Iamais plus volontiers ie ne l'en creu.

C'est vn pur enthousiasme, que la saincte verité a inspiré en l'esprit philosophique, qui luy arrache contre sa proposition, que l'estat tranquille de nostre ame, l'estat rassis, l'estat plus sain, que la philosophie luy puisse acquerir, n'est pas son meilleur estat. Nostre veillée est plus endormie que le dormir: nostre sagesse moins sage que la folie: noz songes vallent mieux, que noz discours: la pire place, que nous puissions prendre, c'est en nous.

Mais pense elle pas, que nous ayons l'aduisement de remarquer, que la voix, qui fait l'esprit, quand il est deprins de l'homme, si clair-voyant, si grand, si parfaict, et pendant qu'il est en l'homme, si terrestre, ignorant et tenebreux, c'est vne voix partant de l'esprit qui est en l'homme terrestre, ignorant et tenebreux: et à cette cause voix infiable et incroyable?

2.12.212 Ie n'ay point grande experience de ces agitations vehementes, estant d'vne complexion molle et poisante; desquelles la pluspart surprennent subitement nostre ame, sans luy donner loisir de se recognoistre. Mais cette passion, qu'on dit estre produite par l'oisiueté, au cœur des ieunes hommes, quoy qu'elle s'achemine auec loisir et d'vn progrés mesuré, elle represente bien euidemment, à ceux qui ont essayé de s'opposer à son effort, la force de cette conuersion et alteration, que nostre iugement souffre.

I'ay autrefois entrepris de me tenir bandé pour la soutenir et rabattre: car il s'en faut tant que ie sois de ceux, qui conuient les vices, que ie ne les suis pas seulement, s'ils ne m'entrainent: ie la sentois naistre, croistre, et s'augmenter en despit de ma resistance: et en fin tout voyant et viuant, me saisir et posseder, de façon que, comme d'vne yuresse, l'image des choses me commençoit à paroistre autre que de coustume:

ie voyois euidemment grossir et croistre les aduantages du subject que i'allois desirant, et aggrandir et enfler par

ENGLISH

ways of entering the cabinet of the gods and foreseeing there the course of destiny are frenzy and sleep. This is amusing to consider. By the dislocation the passions bring to our reason, we become virtuous; by its uprooting, which frenzy or the image of death brings, we become prophets and soothsayers. Never have I been more glad to take philosophy's word for it.

It is a pure enthusiasm, breathed by holy truth into the philosophical mind, that wrings from it, against its own thesis, the admission that the tranquil state of our soul—the settled state, the healthiest state that philosophy can win for it—is not its best state. Our waking is more asleep than sleep; our wisdom less wise than folly; our dreams are worth more than our reasonings; the worst place we can take is in ourselves.[165]

But does philosophy not think we have the wit to notice that the voice which makes the spirit so clear-sighted, so great, so perfect when it is detached from man, and so earthly, ignorant and dark while it is in man, is a voice coming from the spirit that is in earthly, ignorant and dark man—and for that very reason a voice not to be trusted or believed?

I have no great experience of these violent agitations, being of a soft and sluggish constitution; most of them seize our soul suddenly, without giving it time to collect itself. But that passion which is said to be bred by idleness in the hearts of young men, although it advances at leisure and at a measured pace, shows very plainly, to those who have tried to resist its force, the power of the conversion and alteration our judgment undergoes.

I once undertook to keep myself braced to withstand it and beat it back; for I am so far from being one of those who invite vices that I do not even follow them unless they drag me along. I felt it being born, growing and increasing in spite of my resistance, and at last, fully seeing and alive as I was, seizing and possessing me, so that, as in drunkenness, the image of things began to look different to me than usual:

I clearly saw the attractions of the object I was pursuing swell and grow, enlarged and puffed up

165 "Enthusiasm" in its Greek sense: possession or inspiration by a god.

FRENCH

ENGLISH

le vent de mon imagination: les difficultez de mon entreprise, s'aiser et se planir; mon discours et ma conscience, se tirer arriere: mais ce feu estant euaporé, tout à vn instant, comme de la clarté d'un esclair, mon ame reprendre vne autre sorte de veuë, autre estat, et autre iugement: les difficultez de la retraite, me sembler grandes et inuincibles, et les mesmes choses de bien autre goust et visage, que la chaleur du desir ne me les auoit presentées.

by the wind of my imagination; the difficulties of my enterprise ease and level out; my reason and my conscience draw back. But once that fire had burned off, all in an instant, as with a flash of lightning, my soul took on another kind of sight, another state and another judgment: the difficulties of retreat seemed to me great and insurmountable, and the same things had quite another taste and face than the heat of desire had shown me.

Lequel plus veritablement, Pyrrho n'en sçait rien. Nous ne sommes iamais sans maladie. Les fieures ont leur chaud et leur froid: des effects d'une passion ardente, nous retombons aux effects d'vne passion frilleuse.

Which of the two views is the truer? Pyrrho knows nothing about it. We are never free of sickness. Fevers have their hot and their cold: from the effects of a burning passion we fall back into the effects of a shivering one.

2.12.213 Autant que ie m'estois ietté en auant, ie me relance d'autant en arriere. *Qualis vbi alterno procurrens gurgite pontus,*
Nunc ruit ad terras, scopulosque superiacit vndam,
Spumeus, extremámque sinu perfùndit arenam;
Nunc rapidus retro atque æstu reuoluta resorbens
Saxa, fugit, littúsque vado labente relinquit.

As far as I had thrown myself forward, I throw myself back just as far. *As when the sea, surging on in alternating flood,*
Now rushes upon the land and flings its foaming wave over the rocks,
And floods the farthest sand with its curve;
Now runs swiftly back, sucking in the stones rolled by the surge,
And flees, leaving the shore as the shallows slip away.[166]

HOLDING TO THE OLD BELIEFS

Knowing his own fickleness, he keeps his first opinions; Copernicus shows how doctrines rise and fall.

FRENCH

ENGLISH

2.12.214 Or de la cognoissance de cette mienne volubilité, i'ay par accident engendré en moy quelque constance d'opinions: et n'ay guere alteré les miennes premieres et naturelles. Car quelque apparence qu'il y ayt en la nouuelleté, ie ne change pas aisément, de peur que i'ay de perdre au change. Et puis que ie ne suis pas capable de choisir, ie prens le choix d'autruy, et me tiens en l'assiette où Dieu m'a mis. Autrement ie ne me sçauroy garder de rouler sans cesse. Ainsi me suis-ie, par la grace de Dieu, conserué entier, sans agitation et trouble de conscience, aux anciennes creances de nostre religion, au trauers de tant de sectes et de diuisions, que nostre siecle a produites.

Now from knowing this changeableness of mine I have, by accident, bred in myself a certain constancy of opinion, and I have scarcely altered my first and natural opinions. For however attractive novelty may look, I do not change easily, for fear of losing in the exchange. And since I am not capable of choosing, I take the choice of others, and stay in the position where God has put me. Otherwise I could not keep myself from rolling about endlessly. In this way, by the grace of God, I have kept myself whole, without agitation or trouble of conscience, in the ancient beliefs of our religion, through all the sects and divisions our age has produced.

Les escrits des anciens, ie dis les bons escrits, pleins et solides, me tentent, et remuent quasi où ils veulent: celuy

The writings of the ancients—I mean the good writings, full and solid—tempt me and move me

166 Virgil, Aeneid XI.

FRENCH

que i'oy, me semble tousiours le plus roide: ie les trouue auoir raison chacun à son tour, quoy qu'ils se contrarient. Cette aisance que les bons esprits ont, de rendre ce qu'ils veulent vray-semblable; et qu'il n'est rien si estrange, à quoy ils n'entreprennent de donner assez de couleur, pour tromper vne simplicité pareille à la mienne, cela montre euidemment la foiblesse de leur preuue.

Le ciel et les estoilles ont branslé trois mille ans, tout le monde l'auoit ainsi creu, iusques à ce que Cleanthes le Samien, ou, selon Theophraste, Nicetas Syracusien s'aduisa de maintenir que c'estoit la terre qui se mouuoit, par le cercle oblique du Zodiaque tournant à l'entour de son aixieu. Et de nostre temps Copernicus a si bien fondé cette doctrine, qu'il s'en sert tres-reglément à toutes les consequences astrologiennes. Que prendrons nous de là, sinon qu'il ne nous doit chaloir lequel ce soit des deux? Et qui sçait qu'vne tierce opinion d'icy à mille ans, ne renuerse les deux precedentes?

Sic voluenda ætas commutat tempora rerum:
Quod fuit in pretio, fit nullo denique honore;
Porro aliud succedit, et è contemptibus exit,
Inque dies magis appetitur, florétque repertum
Laudibus, et miro est mortales inter honore.

2.12.215 Ainsi quand il se presente à nous quelque doctrine nouuelle, nous auons grande occasion de nous en deffier, et de considerer qu'auant qu'elle fust produite, sa contraire estoit en vogue: et comme elle a esté renuersée par cette-cy, il pourra naistre à l'aduenir vne tierce inuention, qui choquera de mesme la seconde. Auant que les principes qu'Aristote a introduicts, fussent en credit, d'autres principes contentoient la raison humaine, comme ceux-cy nous contentent à cette heure. Quelles lettres ont ceux-cy, quel priuilege particulier, que le cours de nostre inuention s'arreste à eux, et qu'à eux appartient pour tout le temps aduenir, la possession de nostre creance? ils ne sont non plus exempts du boute-hors, qu'estoient leurs deuanciers.

Quand on me presse d'vn nouuel argument, c'est à moy à estimer que ce, à quoy ie ne puis satisfaire, vn autre y

ENGLISH

almost wherever they please. The one I am listening to always seems to me the strongest; I find each of them right in turn, though they contradict one another. This ease that good minds have in making whatever they like seem probable, and the fact that there is nothing so strange that they will not undertake to give it enough color to deceive a simplicity like mine, show plainly the weakness of their proof.

The heavens and the stars had been moving for three thousand years; everyone had believed so, until Cleanthes of Samos or, according to Theophrastus, Nicetas of Syracuse took it into his head to maintain that it was the earth that moved, turning about its axis along the oblique circle of the zodiac. And in our time Copernicus has grounded this doctrine so well that he uses it quite systematically for all astronomical deductions. What are we to conclude from this, except that we need not care which of the two it is? And who knows whether, a thousand years from now, a third opinion will not overturn the two before it?[167]

Thus rolling time changes the seasons of things:
What was prized falls at last into no esteem;
Then something else takes its place and rises out of contempt,
And is sought more every day, and once found it flourishes
With praise, and is held in wondrous honor among mortals.[168]

So when some new doctrine presents itself to us, we have good reason to distrust it, and to consider that before it was put forward its opposite was in vogue; and that, just as that one was overturned by this one, a third invention may arise in the future that will knock down the second in the same way. Before the principles Aristotle introduced were accepted, other principles satisfied human reason, as these satisfy us now. What letters patent do these hold, what special privilege, that the course of our invention should stop at them, and that possession of our belief should belong to them for all time to come? They are no more exempt from eviction than their predecessors were.

When someone presses me with a new argument, it is up to me to reckon that what I cannot answer, someone else will. For to believe every appear-

FRENCH

satisfera. Car de croire toutes les apparences, desquelles nous ne pouuons nous deffaire, c'est vne grande simplesse. Il en aduiendroit par là, que tout le vulgaire, et nous sommes tous du vulgaire, auroit sa creance contournable, comme vne girouette: car son ame estant molle et sans resistance, seroit forcée de receuoir sans cesse, autres et autres impressions, la derniere effaçant tousiours la trace de la precedente. Celuy qui se trouue foible, il doit respondre suiuant la pratique, qu'il en parlera à son conseil, ou s'en rapporter aux plus sages, desquels il a receu son apprentissage.

Combien y a-t-il que la medecine est au monde? On dit qu'vn nouueau venu, qu'on nomme Paracelse, change et renuerse tout l'ordre des regles anciennes, et maintient que iusques à cette heure, elle n'a seruy qu'à faire mourir les hommes. Ie croy qu'il verifiera aisément cela. Mais de mettre ma vie à la preuue de sa nouuelle experience, ie trouue que ce ne seroit pas grand'sagesse. Il ne faut pas croire à chacun, dit le precepte, par ce que chacun peut dire toutes choses.

Vn homme de cette profession de nouuelletez, et de reformations physiques, me disoit, il n'y a pas long temps, que tous les anciens s'estoient notoirement mescontez en la nature et mouuemens des vents, ce qu'il me feroit tres-euidemment toucher à la main, si ie voulois l'entendre. Apres que i'euz eu vn peu de patience à ouyr ses arguments, qui auoient tout plein de verisimilitude: Comment donc, luy fis-ie, ceux qui nauigeoient soubs les loix de Theophraste, alloient-ils en Occident, quand ils tiroient en Leuant? alloient-ils à costé, ou à reculons? C'est la fortune, me respondit-il: tant y a qu'ils se mescontoient. Ie luy repliquay lors, que i'aymois mieux suiure les effects, que la raison.

Or ce sont choses, qui se choquent souuent: et m'a lon dict qu'en la geometrie, qui pense auoir gaigné le hault poinct de certitude parmy les sciences, il se trouue des demonstrations ineuitables, subuertissans la verité de l'experience. Comme Iacques Peletier me disoit chez moy, qu'il auoit trouué deux lignes s'acheminans l'vne vers l'autre pour se ioindre, qu'il verifioit toutefois ne pouuoir iamais iusques à l'infinité, arriuer à se toucher. Et les Pyrrhoniens ne se seruent de leurs argumens et de leur raison, que pour ruiner l'apparence de l'experience: et

ENGLISH

ance we cannot shake off is great simple-mindedness. It would follow that all the common people—and we are all common people—would have a belief that turned like a weathervane; for their soul, being soft and without resistance, would be forced to receive impression after impression endlessly, the last always wiping out the trace of the one before. A man who finds himself weak should answer, as they do in legal practice, that he will speak to his counsel about it, or else refer the matter to the wisest, from whom he received his training.

How long has medicine been in the world? They say that a newcomer called Paracelsus is changing and overturning the whole order of the ancient rules, and maintains that until now medicine has served only to kill people. I believe he will easily prove that. But to stake my life on the test of his new experiments would not, I think, be great wisdom. We must not believe everyone, says the precept, because everyone can say anything.[169]

A man who made a profession of novelties and reforms in natural science told me not long ago that all the ancients had plainly been wrong about the nature and movements of the winds, and that he would make me touch it with my own hand, most evidently, if I would listen to him. After I had patiently heard his arguments, which were full of plausibility, I said to him: "How then did those who sailed under the laws of Theophrastus go west when they were heading east? Did they go sideways, or backward?" "It was chance," he answered; "in any case, they were mistaken." I replied then that I would rather follow the results than the reasoning.

Now these are things that often clash. I have been told that in geometry, which thinks it has reached the highest point of certainty among the sciences, there are irrefutable demonstrations that subvert the truth of experience. Jacques Peletier, for instance, told me in my own house that he had found two lines moving toward each other to meet, which he nevertheless proved could never, even to infinity, come to touch. And the Pyrrhon-

167 The Samian astronomer who moved the earth was in fact Aristarchus, whom Cleanthes attacked; Copernicus (1473–1543) published On the Revolutions in 1543.
168 Lucretius, On the Nature of Things.
169 Paracelsus (1493–1541), Swiss physician and alchemist who attacked the medicine of Galen.

FRENCH

est merueille, iusques où la soupplesse de nostre raison, les a suiuis à ce dessein de combattre l'euidence des effects.

Car ils verifient que nous ne nous mouuons pas, que nous ne parlons pas, qu'il n'y a point de poisant ou de chault, auecques vne pareille force d'argumentations, que nous verifions les choses plus vray-semblables. Ptolomeus, qui a esté vn grand personnage, auoit estably les bornes de nostre monde: tous les philosophes anciens ont pensé en tenir la mesure, sauf quelques isles escartées, qui pouuoient eschapper à leur cognoissance: c'eust esté pyrrhoniser, il y a mille ans, que de mettre en doubte la science de la cosmographie, et les opinions qui en estoient receuës d'vn chacun: c'estoit heresie d'aduouer des Antipodes: voila de nostre siecle vne grandeur infinie de terre ferme, non pas vne isle, ou vne contrée particuliere, mais vne partie esgale à peu pres en grandeur, à celle que nous cognoissions, qui vient d'estre descouuerte.

Les geographes de ce temps, ne faillent pas d'asseurer, que mes-huy tout est trouué et que tout est veu; *Nam quod adest præsto, placet, et pollere videtur.* Sçauoir mon si Ptolomée s'y est trompé autrefois, sur les fondemens de sa raison, si ce ne seroit pas sottise de me fier maintenant à ce que ceux-cy en disent: et s'il n'est pas plus vraysemblable, que ce grand corps, que nous appellons le monde, est chose bien autre que nous ne iugeons.

2.12.216 Platon dit, qu'il change de visage à tout sens: que le ciel, les estoilles et le soleil, renuersent par fois le mouuement, que nous y voyons: changeant l'Orient à l'Occident. Les prestres Ægyptiens dirent à Herodote, que depuis leur premier Roy, dequoy il y auoit onze mille tant d'ans (et de tous leurs Roys ils luy feirent veoir les effigies en statues tirées apres le vif) le soleil auoit changé quatre fois de routte: que la mer et la terre se changent alternatiuement, l'vne en l'autre: que la naissance du monde est indeterminée. Aristote, Cicero de mesmes.

Et quelqu'vn d'entre nous, qu'il est de toute eternité, mortel et renaissant, à plusieurs vicissitudes: appellant à tesmoins Salomon et Isaïe: pour euiter ces oppositions, que Dieu a esté quelque fois createur sans creature: qu'il a esté oisif: qu'il s'est desdict de son oisiueté, mettant la

ENGLISH

ists use their arguments and their reason only to ruin the evidence of experience; and it is a marvel how far the suppleness of our reason has followed them in this design of fighting against the evidence of facts.[170]

For they prove that we do not move, that we do not speak, that nothing is heavy or hot, with the same force of argument with which we prove the most probable things. Ptolemy, who was a great man, had set the bounds of our world; all the ancient philosophers thought they had its measure, except for a few remote islands that might escape their knowledge. A thousand years ago it would have been Pyrrhonizing to cast doubt on the science of cosmography and the opinions everyone had accepted from it; it was heresy to admit the Antipodes. And now, in our own century, an infinite expanse of mainland—not an island or a particular region, but a part roughly equal in size to the one we knew—has just been discovered.[171]

The geographers of our time do not fail to assure us that by now everything has been found and everything seen; *For what is at hand pleases us, and seems the best.* The question is whether, since Ptolemy was once mistaken on the foundations of his reasoning, it would not be foolish of me to trust now what these men say about it; and whether it is not more likely that this great body we call the world is something quite other than we judge.

Plato says that it changes its face in every respect; that the heavens, the stars and the sun sometimes reverse the motion we see in them, changing east into west. The Egyptian priests told Herodotus that since their first king, eleven thousand and some years earlier (and they showed him the likenesses of all their kings in statues taken from life), the sun had changed its course four times; that sea and land turn alternately into each other; that the birth of the world cannot be determined. Aristotle and Cicero say the same.

And one of our own writers says that the world has existed from all eternity, dying and being reborn through many vicissitudes, calling Solomon and Isaiah as witnesses, so as to avoid these objections: that God was once a creator without a

170 Peletier is describing an asymptote.
171 Claudius Ptolemy (2nd century AD), astronomer and geographer of Alexandria.

FRENCH

main à cet ouurage: et qu'il est par consequent subiect au changement. En la plus fameuse des Grecques escholes, le monde est tenu vn Dieu, faict par vn autre Dieu plus grand: et est composé d'vn corps et d'vne ame, qui loge en son centre, s'espandant par nombres de musique, à sa circonference: diuin, tres-heureux, tres-grand, tres-sage, eternel.

En luy sont d'autres Dieux, la mer, la terre, les astres, qui s'entretiennent d'vne harmonieuse et perpetuelle agitation et danse diuine: tantost se rencontrans, tantost s'esloignans: se cachans, montrans, changeans de rang, ores auant, et ores derriere. Heraclitus establissoit le monde estre composé par feu, et par l'ordre des destinées, se deuoir enflammer et resoudre en feu quelque iour, et quelque iour encore renaistre. Et des hommes dit Apulée: *sigillatim mortales, cunctim perpetui*. Alexandre escriuit à sa mere, la narration d'vn prestre Ægyptien, tirée de leurs monuments, tesmoignant l'ancienneté de cette nation infinie, et comprenant la naissance et progrez des autres païs au vray. Cicero et Diodorus disent de leur temps, que les Chaldeens tenoient registre de quatre cens mille tant d'ans.

Aristote, Pline, et autres, que Zoroastre viuoit six mille ans auant l'aage de Platon. Platon dit, que ceux de la ville de Saïs, ont des memoires par escrit, de huict mille ans: et que la ville d'Athenes fut bastie mille ans auant ladicte ville de Saïs. Epicurus, qu'en mesme temps que les choses sont icy comme nous les voyons, elles sont toutes pareilles, et en mesme façon, en plusieurs autres mondes. Ce qu'il eust dict plus asseurément, s'il eust veu les similitudes, et conuenances de ce nouueau monde des Indes Occidentales, auec le nostre, present et passé, en si estranges exemples.

2.12.217 En verité considerant ce qui est venu à nostre science du cours de cette police terrestre, ie me suis souuent esmerueillé de voir en vne tres-grande distance de lieux et de temps, les rencontres d'un si grand nombre d'opinions populaires, sauuages, et des mœurs et creances sauuages, et qui par aucun biais ne semblent tenir à nostre naturel discours. C'est vn grand ouurier de

ENGLISH

creature; that he was idle; that he went back on his idleness by setting his hand to this work; and that he is consequently subject to change. In the most famous of the Greek schools, the world is held to be a god, made by another, greater god. It is composed of a body and a soul, which dwells at its center and spreads out in musical numbers to its circumference: divine, most happy, most great, most wise, eternal.[172]

Within it are other gods—the sea, the earth, the stars—which keep one another company in a harmonious and perpetual motion, a divine dance: now meeting, now moving apart; hiding and showing themselves, changing rank, now in front, now behind. Heraclitus held that the world was made of fire and that, by the order of the fates, it was bound one day to burst into flame and dissolve into fire, and one day to be born again. And of men Apuleius says: *mortal one by one, everlasting all together*. Alexander wrote to his mother the account of an Egyptian priest, drawn from their records, attesting the boundless antiquity of that nation and giving the true birth and progress of other countries. Cicero and Diodorus say that in their time the Chaldeans kept records going back four hundred thousand and some years.

Aristotle, Pliny and others say that Zoroaster lived six thousand years before Plato's time. Plato says that the people of the city of Saïs have written records going back eight thousand years, and that the city of Athens was built a thousand years before the said city of Saïs. Epicurus says that at the same time as things are here as we see them, they are exactly alike, and in the same fashion, in many other worlds. He would have said so with more confidence if he had seen the similarities and correspondences between this new world of the West Indies and ours, present and past, in such strange examples.[173]

Truly, considering what has come to our knowledge of the course of human affairs on this earth, I have often marveled to see, across very great distances of place and time, the agreement of so great a number of wild popular opinions, and of wild customs and beliefs, which by no route seem to derive from our natural reasoning. The human

172 The school is Plato's Academy; the description follows Plato's Timaeus.
173 Saïs was an ancient city in the Nile delta; Plato reports this in the Timaeus.

FRENCH

miracles que l'esprit humain. Mais cette relation a ie ne sçay quoy encore de plus heteroclite: elle se trouue aussi en noms, et en mille autres choses.

Car on y trouua des nations, n'ayans, que nous sçachions, iamais ouy nouuelles de nous, où la circoncision estoit en credit: où il y auoit des estats et grandes polices maintenuës par des femmes, sans hommes: où nos ieusnes et nostre caresme estoit representé, y adioustant l'abstinence des femmes: où nos croix estoient en diuerses façons en credit, icy on en honoroit les sepultures, on les appliquoit là, et nommément celle de S.

André, à se deffendre des visions nocturnes, et à les mettre sur les couches des enfans contre les enchantements: ailleurs ils en rencontrerent vne de bois de grande hauteur, adorée pour Dieu de la pluye, et celle là bien fort auant dans la terre ferme: on y trouua vne bien expresse image de nos penitentiers: l'vsage des mitres, le cœlibat des prestres, l'art de deuiner par les entrailles des animaux sacrifiez: l'abstinence de toute sorte de chair et poisson, à leur viure, la façon aux prestres d'vser en officiant de langue particuliere, et non vulgaire: et cette fantasie, que le premier Dieu fut chassé par vn second son frere puisné; qu'ils furent creés auec toutes commoditez, lesquelles on leur a depuis retranchées pour leur peché;

changé leur territoire, et empiré leur condition naturelle: qu'autresfois ils ont esté submergez par l'inondation des eaux celestes, qu'il ne s'en sauua que peu de familles, qui se ietterent dans les haults creux des montagnes, lesquels creux ils boucherent, si que l'eau n'y entra point, ayans enfermé là dedans, plusieurs sortes d'animaux; que quand ils sentirent la pluye cesser, ils mirent hors des chiens, lesquels estans reuenus nets et mouillez, ils iugerent l'eau n'estre encore guere abaissée; depuis en ayans faict sortir d'autres, et les voyans reuenir bourbeux, ils sortirent repeupler le monde, qu'ils trouuerent plein seulement de serpens.

On rencontra en quelque endroit, la persuasion du iour du iugement, si qu'ils s'offençoient merueilleusement contre les Espagnols qui espandoient les os des trespassez, en fouillant les richesses des sepultures, disans que ces os escartez ne se pourroient facilement reioindre: la trafique par eschange, et non autre, foires et marchez pour cet effect: des nains et personnes

ENGLISH

mind is a great worker of miracles. But this correspondence has something still more extraordinary about it: it is found in names as well, and in a thousand other things.

For nations were found there that had never, as far as we know, heard any news of us, where circumcision was held in honor; where there were states and great governments maintained by women, without men; where our fasts and our Lent were reproduced, with abstinence from women added; where our crosses were held in honor in various ways: here graves were honored with them, there they were used—and in particular that of Saint Andrew—to protect people from visions in the night, and were placed on children's beds against enchantments; elsewhere they came upon a very tall wooden one, worshipped as the god of rain, and that one far inland. There they found a very clear likeness of our confessors; the use of miters, the celibacy of priests, the art of divining by the entrails of sacrificed animals; abstinence from every kind of meat and fish in their diet; the practice of priests using a special language in their services, not the common tongue; and this notion, that the first god was driven out by a second, his younger brother; that they were created with every comfort, which has since been cut off from them for their sin;

that their territory was changed and their natural condition made worse; that they were once submerged by a flood of waters from the sky, and only a few families were saved, who took refuge in the high caves of the mountains and stopped up those caves so that the water did not get in, having shut up several kinds of animals inside with them; that when they felt the rain stop, they let out some dogs, and when these came back clean and wet, they judged that the water had not yet gone down much; later, having let out others and seeing them come back muddy, they went out to repeople the world, which they found full of nothing but serpents.

In one place they came upon belief in the day of judgment, so that the people were wonderfully offended at the Spaniards who scattered the bones of the dead while rifling the riches of the graves, saying that these scattered bones could not easily be put back together; trade by barter and no other kind, with fairs and markets for the purpose;

FRENCH

difformes, pour l'ornement des tables des Princes: l'vsage de la fauconnerie selon la nature de leurs oyseaux; subsides tyranniques: delicatesses de iardinages; dances, saults bateleresques; musique d'instrumens; armoiries; ieux de paulme; ieu de dez et de sort, auquel ils s'eschauffent souuent, iusques à s'y iouer eux mesmes, et leur liberté: medecine non autre que de charmes: la forme d'escrire par figures: creance d'vn seul premier homme pere de tous les peuples;

adoration d'vn Dieu qui vesquit autrefois homme en parfaicte virginité, ieusne, et pœnitence, preschant la loy de nature, et des ceremonies de la religion, et qui disparut du monde, sans mort naturelle: l'opinion des geants: l'vsage de s'enyurer de leurs breuuages, et de boire d'autant: ornemens religieux peints d'ossemens et testes de morts, surplys, eau-beniste, aspergez; femmes et seruiteurs, qui se presentent à l'enuy à se brusler et enterrer, auec le mary ou maistre trespassé: loy que les aisnez succedent à tout le bien, et n'est reserué aucune part au puisné, que d'obeissance: coustume à la promotion de certain office de grande authorité, que celuy qui est promeu prend vn nouueau nom, et quitte le sien: de verser de la chaulx sur le genou de l'enfant freschement nay, en luy disant, Tu és venu de pouldre, et retourneras en pouldre: l'art des augures.

Ces vains ombrages de nostre religion, qui se voient en aucuns de ces exemples, en tesmoignent la dignité et la diuinité. Non seulement elle s'est aucunement insinuée en toutes les nations infideles de deça, par quelque imitation, mais à ces barbares aussi comme par vne commune et supernaturelle inspiration: car on y trouua aussi la creance du purgatoire, mais d'vne forme nouuelle; ce que nous donnons au feu, ils le donnent au froid, et imaginent les ames, et purgées, et punies, par la rigueur d'vne extreme froidure.

Et m'aduertit cet exemple, d'vne autre plaisante diuersité: car comme il s'y trouua des peuples qui aymoyent à deffubler le bout de leur membre, et en retranchoyent la peau à la Mahumetane et à la Iuifue, il s'en trouua d'autres, qui faisoient si grande conscience de le deffubler, qu'à tout des petits cordons, ils portoient leur peau bien soigneusement estiree et attachee au dessus, de peur que ce bout ne vist l'air.

Et de cette diuersité aussi, que comme nous honorons les Roys et les festes, en nous parant des plus honnestes

ENGLISH

dwarfs and deformed persons kept to adorn princes' tables; the practice of falconry suited to the nature of their birds; tyrannical taxes; refinements of gardening; dances and acrobats' leaps; instrumental music; coats of arms; ball games; games of dice and chance, in which they often get so heated that they stake themselves and their liberty; medicine consisting of nothing but charms; writing by means of pictures; belief in a single first man, father of all peoples;

the worship of a god who once lived as a man in perfect virginity, fasting and penance, preaching the law of nature and the ceremonies of religion, and who vanished from the world without a natural death; the belief in giants; the habit of getting drunk on their drinks and drinking deep; religious ornaments painted with bones and skulls, surplices, holy water, sprinklers; wives and servants vying with one another to offer themselves to be burned and buried with their dead husband or master; a law that the eldest inherits all the property, and nothing is left to the younger but obedience; a custom that on promotion to a certain office of great authority the man promoted takes a new name and gives up his own; the custom of pouring lime on the knee of a newborn child, saying to him, "You came from dust, and to dust you shall return"; the art of augury.

These empty shadows of our religion that can be seen in some of these examples bear witness to its dignity and divinity. Not only has it in some way worked its way, by a kind of imitation, into all the infidel nations on this side of the world, but into these barbarous peoples too, as if by a common and supernatural inspiration. For they also found there a belief in purgatory, but in a new form: what we assign to fire, they assign to cold, and they imagine souls both purged and punished by the rigor of extreme cold.

And this example reminds me of another amusing diversity. Just as some peoples were found there who liked to uncover the end of their member, and cut off the skin in the Muslim and Jewish fashion, others were found who had such scruples about uncovering it that they wore the skin very carefully stretched over it and tied on top with little cords, for fear that the end should see the air.

And this diversity too: just as we honor kings and festivals by dressing in the finest clothes we have,

FRENCH	ENGLISH
vestements que nous ayons: en aucunes regions, pour montrer toute disparité et submission à leur Roy, les subiects se presentoyent à luy, en leurs plus viles habillements, et entrants au palais prennent quelque vieille robe deschiree sur la leur bonne, à ce que tout le lustre, et l'ornement soit au maistre. Mais suyuons.	in some regions, to show their complete inequality and submission to their king, subjects presented themselves to him in their meanest clothes, and on entering the palace they put some old torn robe over their good one, so that all the luster and ornament should belong to the master. But let us go on.

CLIMATE, DESIRE AND THE SOVEREIGN GOOD

Our minds vary with the soil, and we cannot even agree on what to wish for.

FRENCH	ENGLISH
2.12.218 Si Nature enserre dans les termes de son progrez ordinaire, comme toutes autres choses, aussi les creances, les iugemens, et opinions des hommes: si elles ont leur reuolution, leur saison, leur naissance, leur mort, comme les choux: si le ciel les agite, et les roule à sa poste, quelle magistrale authorité et permanante, leur allons nous attribuant?	If Nature encloses men's beliefs, judgments and opinions within the bounds of her ordinary progress, as she does all other things; if they have their cycle, their season, their birth and their death, like cabbages; if the heavens stir them and roll them about as they please, what masterly and permanent authority are we going to attribute to them?
Si par experience nous touchons à la main que la forme de nostre estre despend de l'air, du climat, et du terroir où nous naissons: non seulement le tainct, la taille, la complexion et les contenances, mais encore les facultez de l'ame: *Et plaga cæli non solùm ad robur corporum, sed etiam animorum facit*, dit Vegece: et que la Deesse fundatrice de la ville d'Athenes, choisit à la situer, vne temperature de pays, qui fist les hommes prudents, comme les prestres d'Ægypte apprindrent à Solon: *Athenis tenue cælum: ex quo etiam acutiores putantur Attici: crassum Thebis: itaque pingues Thebani, et valentes*: en maniere qu'ainsi que les fruicts naissent diuers, et les animaux, les hommes naissent aussi plus et moins belliqueux, iustes, temperans et dociles:	Experience lets us touch with our own hands that the form of our being depends on the air, the climate and the soil where we are born. This holds not only for our complexion, our build, our constitution and our bearing, but also for the faculties of the soul: *And the climate contributes not only to the strength of the body but also to that of the mind*, says Vegetius. The goddess who founded the city of Athens chose for its site a climate that would make men wise, as the priests of Egypt taught Solon: *At Athens the air is thin, which is also why the Athenians are thought sharper; at Thebes it is thick, and so the Thebans are dull and sturdy*. So, just as fruits and animals are born different, men too are born more or less warlike, just, temperate and docile:[174]
icy subiects au vin, ailleurs au larecin ou à la paillardise: icy enclins à superstition, ailleurs à la mescreance: icy à la liberté, icy à la seruitude: capables d'vne science ou d'vn art: grossiers ou ingenieux: obeyssans ou rebelles: bons ou mauuais, selon que porte l'inclination du lieu où ils sont assis, et prennent nouuelle complexion, si on les change de place, comme les arbres: qui fut la raison, pour laquelle Cyrus ne voulut accorder aux Perses d'abandonner leur pays aspre et bossu, pour se transporter en vn autre doux et plain: disant que les terres grasses et molles font les hommes mols, et les fertiles les esprits infertiles.	here given to wine, elsewhere to theft or lechery; here inclined to superstition, elsewhere to unbelief; here to liberty, here to servitude; capable of one science or one art; dull or clever; obedient or rebellious; good or bad, according to the inclination of the place where they are set; and they take on a new constitution if they are moved, like trees. That was why Cyrus would not allow the Persians to leave their harsh and hilly country for another that was gentle and flat. Rich, soft lands, he said, make soft men, and fertile lands make infertile minds.

174 Vegetius was a Roman writer on military matters (late 4th century AD); the second quotation is from Cicero, On Fate.

FRENCH

Si nous voyons tantost fleurir vn art, vne creance, tantost vne autre, par quelque influance celeste: tel siecle produire telles natures, et incliner l'humain genre à tel ou tel ply: les esprits des hommes tantost gaillars, tantost maigres, comme nos champs: que deuiennent toutes ces belles prerogatiues dequoy nous allons flattants? Puis qu'vn homme sage se peut mesconter, et cent hommes, et plusieurs nations: voire et l'humaine nature selon nous, se mesconte plusieurs siecles, en cecy ou en cela: quelle seureté auons nous que par fois elle cesse de se mesconter, et qu'en ce siecle elle ne soit en mescompte?

2.12.219 Il me semble entre autres tesmoignages de nostre imbecillité, que celuy-cy ne merite pas d'estre oublié, que par desir mesme, l'homme ne sçache trouuer ce qu'il luy faut: que non par iouyssance, mais par imagination et par souhait, nous ne puissions estre d'accord de ce dequoy nous auons besoing pour nous contenter. Laissons à nostre pensée tailler et coudre à son plaisir: elle ne pourra pas seulement desirer ce qui luy est propre, et le satisfaire. *Quid enim ratione timemus*
Aut cupimus? quid tam dextro pede concipis, vt te
Conatus non pœniteat, votique peracti? C'est pourquoy Socrates ne requeroit les Dieux, sinon de luy donner ce qu'ils sçauoient luy estre salutaire.

Et la priere des Lacedemoniens publique et priuée portoit, simplement les choses bonnes et belles leur estre octroyées: remettant à la discretion de la puissance supreme le tirage et choix d'icelles. *Coniugium petimus, partúmque vxoris; at illi / Notum qui pueri, qualisque futura sit vxor.* Et le Chrestien supplie Dieu que sa volonté soit faicte: pour ne tomber en l'inconuenient que les poëtes feignent du Roy Midas.

Il requit les Dieux que tout ce qu'il toucheroit se conuertist en or: sa priere fut exaucée, son vin fut or, son pain or, et la plume de sa couche, et d'or sa chemise et son vestement: de façon qu'il se trouua accablé soubs la iouyssance de son desir, et estrené d'vne insupportable commodité: il luy falut desprier ses prieres: *Attonitus nouitate mali, diuésque misérque, / Effugere optat opes, et, quæ modò vouerat, odit.* Disons de moy-mesme. Ie demandois à la Fortune autant qu'autre chose, l'ordre Sainct Michel estant ieune: car c'estoit lors l'extreme marque d'honneur de la noblesse Françoise, et tres-rare. Elle me l'a plaisamment accordé.

ENGLISH

We see one art or one belief flourish now, another later, through some influence of the heavens. We see one age produce one kind of nature and bend the human race this way or that, and men's minds grow now lush, now lean, like our fields. If so, what becomes of all those fine prerogatives we keep flattering ourselves with? One wise man can be mistaken, and so can a hundred men and many nations. Indeed, by our own account, human nature itself has been mistaken for many centuries about this or that. So what assurance have we that at some point it stops being mistaken, and that it is not in error in this century?

Among the other proofs of our feebleness, it seems to me that this one deserves not to be forgotten: that even in desire man cannot find what he needs; that not in enjoyment, but in imagination and in wishing, we cannot agree on what we need to content us. Let our thought cut and sew as it pleases: it will not even be able to desire what is right for it, and satisfy itself. *For what do we fear*
Or desire with reason? What do you plan so auspiciously that you
Do not regret the attempt and the wish fulfilled? That is why Socrates asked the gods only to give him what they knew to be good for him.[175]

And the prayer of the Spartans, public and private, simply asked that good and beautiful things be granted them, leaving the selection and choice of them to the discretion of the supreme power. *We ask for a wife and for children by her; but he alone knows / What the children will be, and what kind of wife.* And the Christian prays God that his will be done, so as not to fall into the trouble that the poets invent about King Midas.

He asked the gods that everything he touched should turn to gold. His prayer was granted: his wine was gold, his bread gold, and the feathers of his bed, and gold his shirt and his clothes. He found himself crushed under the fulfillment of his desire, presented with an unbearable convenience, and he had to unpray his prayers: *Stunned by the strangeness of the evil, both rich and wretched, / He longs to escape his wealth, and hates what he had just prayed for.* Let me speak of myself. When I was young I asked Fortune for the Order of Saint Mi-

175 Juvenal, Satires X; the Latin quotations in the next chunks up to "Man is dearer to them" come from the same satire.

FRENCH

ENGLISH

chael as much as for anything else, for it was then the highest mark of honor of the French nobility, and very rare. She granted it to me, in an amusing way.[176]

Au lieu de me monter et hausser de ma place, pour y aueindre, elle m'a bien plus gratieusement traitté, elle l'a rauallé et rabaissé iusques à mes espaules et au dessoubs. Cleobis et Biton, Trophonius et Agamedes, ayans requis ceux là leur Deesse, ceux-cy leur Dieu, d'vne recompense digne de leur pieté, eurent la mort pour present: tant les opinions celestes sur ce qu'il nous faut, sont diuerses aux nostres.

Instead of raising me and lifting me from my place to reach it, she treated me far more graciously: she lowered it and brought it down to my shoulders, and below. Cleobis and Biton asked their goddess, and Trophonius and Agamedes their god, for a reward worthy of their piety, and they received death as their gift: so different are the opinions of heaven about what we need from our own.[177]

Dieu pourroit nous ottroyer les richesses, les honneurs, la vie et la santé mesme, quelquefois à nostre dommage: car tout ce qui nous est plaisant, ne nous est pas tousiours salutaire: si au lieu de la guerison, il nous envoye la mort, ou l'empirement de nos maux: *Virga tua et baculus tuus ipsa me consolata sunt*: il le fait par les raisons de sa providence, qui regarde bien plus certainement ce qui nous est deu, que nous ne pouuons faire: et la deuons prendre en bonne part, comme d'vne main tres-sage et tres-amie.

God could grant us riches, honors, life and even health, sometimes to our harm, for not everything that pleases us is always good for us. If instead of healing he sends us death, or a worsening of our ills—*Your rod and your staff, they have comforted me* —he does it for reasons of his providence, which sees far more surely than we can what is due to us. We must take it in good part, as coming from a most wise and most loving hand.[178]

Si consilium vis
Permittes ipsis expendere numinibus, quid
Conueniat nobis, rebúsque sit vtile nostris:
Charior est illis homo quàm sibi. Car de les requerir des honneurs, des charges, c'est les requerir, qu'ils vous iettent à vne bataille, ou au ieu des dez, ou telle autre chose, de laquelle l'issue vous est incognue, et le fruict doubteux.

If you want advice,
You will leave it to the gods themselves to weigh what
Suits us and what is useful for our affairs:
Man is dearer to them than he is to himself. For to ask them for honors and offices is to ask them to throw you into a battle, or a game of dice, or some such thing whose outcome is unknown to you and whose fruit is doubtful.

2.12.220 Il n'est point de combat si violent entre les philosophes, et si aspre, que celuy qui se dresse sur la question du souuerain bien de l'homme: duquel par le calcul de Varro, nasquirent deux cens quatre vingtz sectes. *Qui autem de summo bono dissentit, de tota philosophiæ ratione disputat.*
Tres mihi conuiuæ propè dissentire videntur,
Poscentes vario multum diuersa palato:
Quid dem? quid non dem? Renuis tu quod iubet alter;
Quod petis, id sanè est inuisum acidúmque duobus. Nature deuroit ainsi respondre à leurs contestations, et à leurs debats.

There is no combat among philosophers so violent and so bitter as the one that arises over the question of man's sovereign good, from which, by Varro's reckoning, two hundred and eighty sects were born. *But whoever disagrees about the supreme good disagrees about the whole system of philosophy.*
Three guests seem to me almost at odds,
Calling for very different things with their different palates:
What should I give? What not give? You refuse what the other orders;
What you ask for is surely odious and sour to the other two. This is how Nature ought to answer their disputes and their debates.[179]

176 Ovid, Metamorphoses XI.
177 Cleobis and Biton, sons of a priestess of Hera, and Trophonius and Agamedes, builders of Apollo's temple at Delphi, each died peacefully after asking for the best gift the gods could give.
178 Psalm 23 (22 in the Latin Bible).

FRENCH

Les uns disent nostre bien estre, loger en la vertu: d'autres, en la volupté: d'autres, au consentir à Nature: qui en la science: qui à n'auoir point de douleur: qui à ne se laisser emporter aux apparences: et à cette fantasie semble retirer cet' autre, de l'ancien Pythagoras: *Nil admirari, propè res est vna, Numaci, / Soláque, quæ possit facere et seruare beatum,* qui est la fin de la secte Pyrrhonienne. Aristote attribue à magnanimité, rien n'admirer. Et disoit Archésilas, les soustenemens et l'estat droit et inflexible du iugement, estre les biens: mais les consentemens et applications estre les vices et les maux. Il est vray qu'en ce qu'il l'establissoit par axiome certain, il se départoit du Pyrrhonisme.

Les Pyrrhoniens, quand ils disent que le souuerain bien c'est l'Ataraxie, qui est l'immobilité du iugement, ils ne l'entendent pas dire d'vne façon affirmatiue, mais le mesme bransle de leur ame, qui leur fait fuir les precipices, et se mettre à couuert du serein, celuy là mesme leur presente cette fantasie, et leur en fait refuser vne autre.

2.12.221 Combien ie desire, que pendant que ie vis, ou quelque autre, ou Iustus Lipsius, le plus sçauant homme qui nous reste, d'vn esprit tres-poly et iudicieux, vrayement germain à mon Turnebus, eust et la volonté, et la santé, et assez de repos, pour ramasser en vn registre, selon leurs diuisions et leurs classes, sincerement et curieusement, autant que nous y pouuons voir, les opinions de l'ancienne philosophie sur le subiect de nostre estre et de nos mœurs, leurs controuerses, le credit et suitte des pars, l'application de la vie des autheurs et sectateurs, à leurs preceptes, és accidens memorables et exemplaires! Le bel ouurage et vtile que ce seroit!

ENGLISH

Some say our good lies in virtue; others, in pleasure; others, in consenting to Nature; one says in knowledge, one in having no pain, one in not letting oneself be carried away by appearances. And this notion seems to resemble that other one of ancient Pythagoras: *To marvel at nothing is almost the one and only thing, Numicius, / That can make a man happy and keep him so,* which is the goal of the Pyrrhonist sect. Aristotle ascribes marveling at nothing to magnanimity. And Arcesilaus said that suspensions of judgment, and its upright and unbending state, were goods, while assents and adherences were vices and evils. True, by establishing this as a certain axiom he departed from Pyrrhonism.[180]

When the Pyrrhonists say that the sovereign good is Ataraxia, which is the immobility of judgment, they do not mean to say it in an affirmative way. The same motion of their soul that makes them flee precipices and take shelter from the evening damp presents this notion to them and makes them reject another.

How I wish that, while I am alive, someone—or Justus Lipsius, the most learned man we have left, with a most polished and judicious mind, a true brother to my Turnebus—had the will, the health and enough leisure to gather into a register, according to their divisions and classes, sincerely and carefully, as far as we can see into it, the opinions of ancient philosophy on the subject of our being and our conduct! It would set out their controversies, the standing and following of each party, and how the lives of the authors and their followers matched their precepts in memorable and exemplary circumstances. What a fine and useful work that would be![181]

LAWS AND NATURAL LAW

Laws change from country to country; no natural law is accepted everywhere.

FRENCH

2.12.222 Au demeurant, si c'est de nous que nous tirons le reglement de nos mœurs, à quelle confusion nous reiettons nous? Car ce que nostre raison nous y conseille

ENGLISH

For the rest, if it is from ourselves that we draw the rule of our conduct, into what confusion do we cast ourselves? For the most probable advice our

179 Varro (116–27 BC) was the most learned Roman scholar of his day. The quotations are from Cicero, On Ends, and Horace, Epistles II.2.
180 Horace, Epistles I.6.
181 Justus Lipsius (1547–1606), Flemish humanist who corresponded with Montaigne.

FRENCH

de plus vray-semblable, c'est generalement à chacun d'obeyr aux loix de son pays, comme est l'aduis de Socrates inspiré, dit-il, d'vn conseil diuin. Et par là que veut elle dire, sinon que nostre deuoir n'a autre regle que fortuite? La verité doit auoir vn visage pareil et vniuersel. La droiture et la iustice, si l'homme en cognoissoit, qui eust corps et veritable essence, il ne l'attacheroit pas à la condition des coustumes de cette contrée, ou de celle là: ce ne seroit pas de la fantasie des Perses ou des Indes, que la vertu prendroit sa forme.

Il n'est rien subiect à plus continuelle agitation que les loix. Depuis que ie suis nay, i'ay veu trois et quatre fois, rechanger celles des Anglois noz voisins, non seulement en subiect politique, qui est celuy qu'on veut dispenser de constance, mais au plus important subiect qui puisse estre, à sçauoir de la religion. Dequoy i'ay honte et despit, d'autant plus que c'est vne nation, à laquelle ceux de mon quartier ont eu autrefois vne si priuée accointance, qu'il reste encore en ma maison aucunes traces de nostre ancien cousinage.

Et chez nous icy, i'ay veu telle chose qui nous estoit capitale, deuenir legitime: et nous qui en tenons d'autres, sommes à mesmes, selon l'incertitude de la fortune guerriere, d'estre vn iour criminels de læse majesté humaine et diuine, nostre iustice tombant à la mercy de l'iniustice: et en l'espace de peu d'années de possession, prenant vne essence contraire. Comment pouuoit ce Dieu ancien plus clairement accuser en l'humaine cognoissance l'ignorance de l'estre diuin: et apprendre aux hommes, que leur religion n'estoit qu'vne piece de leur inuention, propre à lier leur societé, qu'en declarant, comme il fit, à ceux qui en recherchoient l'instruction de son trepied, que le vray culte à chacun, estoit celuy qu'il trouuoit obserué par l'vsage du lieu, où il estoit?

O Dieu, quelle obligation n'auons nous à la benignité de nostre souuerain createur, pour auoir desniaisé nostre creance de ces vagabondes et arbitraires deuotions, et l'auoir logée sur l'eternelle base de sa saincte parolle? Que nous dira donc en cette necessité la philosophie? que nous suyuions les loix de nostre pays? c'est à dire cette mer flottante des opinions d'vn peuple, ou d'vn Prince,

ENGLISH

reason gives us on this is, in general, that each man should obey the laws of his country, as was the opinion of Socrates, inspired, he says, by divine counsel. And what does reason mean by that, except that our duty has no rule but a fortuitous one? Truth must have a face that is the same everywhere and universal. If man knew any rectitude and justice that had body and true essence, he would not tie it to the condition of the customs of this region or that; virtue would not take its shape from the notions of the Persians or the Indians.

Nothing is subject to more continual agitation than laws. Since I was born I have seen the laws of the English, our neighbors, change three and four times. This happened not only in political matters, which is the area people like to excuse from constancy, but in the most important matter there can be, namely religion. It makes me ashamed and vexed, all the more because the people of my region once had so close an acquaintance with that nation that some traces of our old kinship still remain in my house.[182]

And here at home I have seen something that was a capital crime for us become lawful; and we who hold to other things are liable, depending on the uncertain fortunes of war, to be one day guilty of high treason against human and divine majesty, our justice falling to the mercy of injustice and, after a few years of possession, taking on a contrary essence. How could that ancient god more clearly expose human knowledge's ignorance of the divine being, and teach men that their religion was only a piece of their own invention, fit to bind their society together, than by declaring, as he did, to those who sought instruction about it from his tripod, that the true worship for each man was the one he found observed by the practice of the place where he was?[183]

O God, what an obligation we owe to the kindness of our sovereign Creator for having cured our belief of those wandering and arbitrary devotions and set it on the eternal foundation of his holy word! What then will philosophy tell us in this necessity? That we should follow the laws of our country? That is, that drifting sea of the opinions

182 Guyenne, Montaigne's region, was ruled by the English crown from 1152 until 1453.
183 Apollo, whose oracle at Delphi spoke through a priestess seated on a tripod; Xenophon reports this answer.

FRENCH

qui me peindront la iustice d'autant de couleurs, et la reformeront en autant de visages, qu'il y aura en eux de changemens de passion. Ie ne puis pas auoir le iugement si flexible. Quelle bonté est-ce, que ie voyois hyer en credit, et demain ne l'estre plus: et que le traiect d'vne riuiere fait crime?

Quelle verité est-ce que ces montaignes bornent mensonge au monde qui se tient au delà?

2.12.223 Mais ils sont plaisans, quand pour donner quelque certitude aux loix, ils disent qu'il y en a aucunes fermes, perpetuelles et immuables, qu'ils nomment naturelles, qui sont empreintes en l'humain genre par la condition de leur propre essence: et de celles là, qui en fait le nombre de trois, qui de quatre, qui plus, qui moins: signe, que c'est vne marque aussi douteuse que le reste. Or ils sont si defortunez (car comment puis-ie nommer cela, sinon defortune, que d'vn nombre de loix si infiny, il ne s'en rencontre aumoins vne que la fortune et temerité du sort ait permis estre vniuersellement receuë par le consentement de toutes les nations?)

ils sont, dis-ie, si miserables, que de ces trois ou quatre loix choisies, il n'en y a vne seule, qui ne soit contredite et desaduoüee, non par vne nation, mais par plusieurs. Or c'est la seule enseigne vray-semblable, par laquelle ils puissent argumenter aucunes loix naturelles, que l'vniuersité de l'approbation: car ce que Nature nous auroit veritablement ordonné, nous l'ensuyurions sans doubte d'vn commun consentement: et non seulement toute nation, mais tout homme particulier, ressentiroit la force et la violence, que luy feroit celuy, qui le voudroit pousser au contraire de cette loy. Qu'ils m'en montrent pour voir, vne de cette condition.

Protagoras et Ariston ne donnoyent autre essence à la iustice des loix, que l'authorité et opinion du legislateur: et que cela mis à part, le bon et l'honneste perdoyent leurs qualitez, et demeuroyent des noms vains, de choses indifferentes. Thrasymachus en Platon estime qu'il n'y a point d'autre droit que la commodité du superieur. Il n'est chose, en quoy le monde soit si diuers qu'en coustumes et loix. Telle chose est icy abominable, qui apporte recommandation ailleurs: comme en Lacedemone la subtilité de desrober.

Les mariages entre les proches sont capitalement defendus entre nous, ils sont ailleurs en honneur, *Gentes*

ENGLISH

of a people or a prince, which will paint justice for me in as many colors, and reshape it into as many faces, as there are changes of passion in them? I cannot have so flexible a judgment. What kind of goodness is it that I saw esteemed yesterday and will see discredited tomorrow, and that crossing a river turns into a crime?

What kind of truth is it that these mountains bound, and that becomes a lie in the world beyond them?

But they are amusing when, to give some certainty to the laws, they say that there are some laws that are firm, perpetual and immutable, which they call natural, imprinted on the human race by the condition of its very essence. Of these, one man makes the number three, another four, one more, one less—a sign that this mark is as doubtful as the rest. Now they are so unlucky (for what can I call it but bad luck, that out of so infinite a number of laws there should not be found even one that the fortune and rashness of chance has allowed to be universally accepted by the consent of all nations?)

they are, I say, so wretched that of these three or four chosen laws there is not a single one that is not contradicted and disavowed, not by one nation but by several. Now the only plausible sign by which they could argue for any natural laws is universal approval. For what Nature had truly ordained for us we would undoubtedly follow by common consent; and not only every nation but every individual would feel the force and violence done to him by anyone who tried to push him against that law. Let them show me one of that kind, just so I can see it.

Protagoras and Ariston gave the justice of laws no other essence than the authority and opinion of the legislator. Set that aside, they said, and the good and the honorable lost their qualities and remained empty names for indifferent things. Thrasymachus, in Plato, holds that there is no other right than the advantage of the stronger. There is nothing in which the world is so diverse as in customs and laws. A thing that is abominable here wins commendation elsewhere, as skill in stealing did in Sparta.

Marriages between close relatives are forbidden among us on pain of death; elsewhere they are

FRENCH

esse feruntur,
In quibus et nato genitrix, et nata parenti
Iungitur, et pietas geminato crescit amore. Le meurtre des enfans, meurtre des peres, communication de femmes, trafique de voleries, licence à toutes sortes de voluptez: il n'est rien en somme si extreme, qui ne se trouue receu par l'vsage de quelque nation.

2.12.224 Il est croyable qu'il y a des loix naturelles: comme il se voit és autres creatures: mais en nous elles sont perduës, cette belle raison humaine s'ingerant par tout de maistriser et commander, brouillant et confondant le visage des choses, selon sa vanité et inconstance. *Nihil itaque amplius nostrum est: quod nostrum dico, artis est.* Les subiets ont diuers lustres et diuerses considerations: c'est de là que s'engendre principalement la diversité d'opinions. Vne nation regarde vn subiect par vn visage, et s'arreste à celuy là: l'autre par vn autre.

2.12.225 Il n'est rien si horrible à imaginer, que de manger son pere. Les peuples qui auoyent anciennement cette coustume, la prenoyent toutesfois pour tesmoignage de pieté et de bonne affection, cherchant par là à donner à leurs progeniteurs la plus digne et honorable sepulture: logeants en eux mesmes et comme en leurs moelles, les corps de leurs peres et leurs reliques: les viuifiants aucunement et regenerants par la transmutation en leur chair viue, au moyen de la digestion et du nourrissement. Il est aysé à considerer quelle cruauté et abomination c'eust esté à des hommes abreuuez et imbus de cette superstition, de ietter la despouille des parens à la corruption de la terre, et nourriture des bestes et des vers.

2.12.226 Lycurgus considera au larrecin, la viuacité, diligence, hardiesse, et adresse, qu'il y a à surprendre quelque chose de son voisin, et l'vtilité qui reuient au public, que chacun en regarde plus curieusement à la conseruation de ce qui est sien: et estima que de cette double institution, à assaillir et à defendre, il s'en tiroit du fruit à la discipline militaire (qui estoit la principale science et vertu, à quoy il vouloit duire cette nation) de plus grande consideration, que n'estoit le desordre et l'iniustice de se preualoir de la chose d'autruy.

ENGLISH

held in honor. *There are said to be peoples*
Among whom mother is joined to son, and daughter to father,
And their devotion grows with doubled love. The murder of children, the murder of fathers, the sharing of wives, the trade in stolen goods, license for every kind of pleasure: in short, there is nothing so extreme that it is not found accepted by the practice of some nation.[184]

It is credible that there are natural laws, as can be seen in other creatures; but in us they are lost, because that fine human reason meddles everywhere to master and command, muddling and confusing the face of things according to its vanity and inconstancy. *So nothing is ours any longer; what I call ours is the product of art.* Subjects have different lights and different aspects, and it is chiefly from this that diversity of opinions arises. One nation looks at a subject from one side and stops there; another from another side.

There is nothing so horrible to imagine as eating one's father. Yet the peoples who had this custom in ancient times took it as a mark of piety and good affection. By it they sought to give their forebears the worthiest and most honorable burial, lodging the bodies and remains of their fathers in themselves, as if in their very marrow. In some way they brought them back to life and regenerated them by transforming them into their own living flesh through digestion and nourishment. It is easy to see what a cruelty and abomination it would have been for men steeped and imbued in this superstition to throw their parents' remains to rot in the earth and feed the beasts and the worms.

Lycurgus considered, in theft, the quickness, diligence, boldness and skill it takes to snatch something from one's neighbor. He also weighed the benefit to the public, since everyone then looks more carefully to the keeping of what is his. He judged that this double training, in attack and in defense, brought benefits to military discipline (which was the principal science and virtue in which he wanted to train that nation) of greater consequence than the disorder and injustice of seizing another's property.

184 Ovid, Metamorphoses X.

FRENCH

2.12.227 Dionysius le tyran offrit à Platon vne robbe à la mode de Perse, longue, damasquinée, et parfumée: Platon la refusa, disant, qu'estant nay homme, il ne vestiroit pas volontiers de robbe de femme: mais Aristippus l'accepta, auec cette responce, que nul accoustrement ne pouuoit corrompre vn chaste courage. Ses amis tançoient sa lascheté de prendre si peu à cœur, que Dionysius luy eust craché au visage: Les pescheurs, dit-il, souffrent bien d'estre baignés des ondes de la mer, depuis la teste iusqu'aux pieds, pour attraper vn goujon. Diogenes lauoit ses choulx, et le voyant passer, Si tu sçavois viure de choulx, tu ne ferois pas la cour à vn tyran.

A quoy Aristippus, Si tu sçauois viure entre les hommes, tu ne lauerois pas des choulx. Voylà comment la raison fournit d'apparence à diuers effects. C'est vn pot à deux ances, qu'on peut saisir à gauche et à dextre. *Bellum, ô terra hospita, portas:*
Bello armantur equi, bellum hæc armenta minantur:
Sed tamen ijdem olim curru succedere sueti
Quadrupedes, et frena iugo concordia ferre,
Spes est pacis.

2.12.228 On preschoit Solon de n'espandre pour la mort de son fils des armes impuissantes et inutiles: Et c'est pour cela, dit-il, que plus iustement ie les espans, qu'elles sont inutiles et impuissantes. La femme de Socrates rengregeoit son deuil par telle circonstance, O qu'iniustement le font mourir ces meschants iuges! Aimerois tu donc mieux que ce fust iustement? luy repliqua il. Nous portons les oreilles percées, les Grecs tenoient cela pour vne marque de seruitude. Nous nous cachons pour iouïr de nos femmes, les Indiens le font en public. Les Scythes immoloyent les estrangers en leurs temples, ailleurs les temples seruent de franchise. *Inde furor vulgi, quòd numina vicinorum*
Odit quisque locus, cùm solos credat habendos
Esse Deos quos ipse colit.

2.12.229 I'ay ouy parler d'vn iuge, lequel où il rencontroit vn aspre conflit entre Bartolus et Baldus, et quelque matiere agitée de plusieurs contrarietez, mettoit en marge de son

ENGLISH

Dionysius the tyrant offered Plato a robe in the Persian fashion, long, damasked and perfumed. Plato refused it, saying that, having been born a man, he would not willingly wear a woman's robe; but Aristippus accepted it, replying that no attire could corrupt a chaste heart. His friends reproached him for his spinelessness in taking so lightly the fact that Dionysius had spat in his face. "Fishermen," he said, "put up with being drenched by the sea waves from head to foot to catch a gudgeon." Diogenes was washing his cabbages and, seeing him pass by, said: "If you knew how to live on cabbages, you would not pay court to a tyrant."

To which Aristippus replied: "If you knew how to live among men, you would not be washing cabbages." That is how reason lends plausibility to different courses. It is a pot with two handles, which can be grabbed by the left or by the right. *It is war you bring us, O land that receives us:*
Horses are armed for war; war is what these herds threaten.
But still, these same beasts were once used to drawing the chariot,
And to bearing the bridle in harmony under the yoke:
There is hope of peace.[185]

Solon was urged not to shed powerless and useless tears for the death of his son. "That is exactly why I am right to shed them," he said, "because they are useless and powerless." Socrates' wife was aggravating her grief with this circumstance: "Oh, how unjustly these wicked judges are putting him to death!" "Would you rather it were justly, then?" he replied. We wear pierced ears; the Greeks considered that a mark of slavery. We hide to enjoy our wives; the Indians do it in public. The Scythians sacrificed foreigners in their temples; elsewhere temples serve as sanctuaries. *Hence the fury of the crowd: each place hates*
The gods of its neighbors, believing that the only gods to be held
As gods are those it worships itself.[186]

I have heard of a judge who, wherever he came across a sharp conflict between Bartolus and Baldus, or some matter tossed about by many contra-

185 Virgil, Aeneid III.
186 Juvenal, Satires XV.

FRENCH

liure. Question pour l'amy, c'est à dire que la verité estoit si embrouillée et debatue, qu'en pareille cause, il pourroit fauoriser celle des parties que bon luy sembleroit. Il ne tenoit qu'à faute d'esprit et de suffisance, qu'il ne peust mettre par tout, Question pour l'amy. Les aduocats et les iuges de nostre temps, trouuent à toutes causes, assez de biais pour les accommoder où bon leur semble. A vne science si infinie, dépendant de l'authorité de tant d'opinions, et d'vn subiect si arbitraire, il ne peut estre, qu'il n'en naisse vne confusion extreme de iugemens.

Aussi n'est-il guere si clair procés, auquel les aduis ne se trouuent diuers: ce qu'vne compaignie a iugé, l'autre le iuge au contraire, et elle mesmes au contraire vne autre fois. Dequoy nous voyons des exemples ordinaires, par cette licence, qui tache merueilleusement la cerimonieuse authorité et lustre de nostre iustice, de ne s'arrester aux arrests, et courir des vns aux autres iuges, pour decider d'vne mesme cause.

2.12.230 Quant à la liberté des opinions philosophiques, touchant le vice et la vertu, c'est chose où il n'est besoing de s'estendre: et où il se trouue plusieurs aduis, qui valent mieux teus que publiez aux foibles esprits. Arcesilaus disoit n'estre considerable en la paillardise, de quel costé et par où on le fust. *Et obscœnas voluptates, si natura requirit non genere, aut loco, aut ordine, sed forma, ætate, figura metiendas Epicurus putat. Ne amores quidem sanctos à sapiente alienos esse arbitrantur. Quæramus ad quam vsque ætatem iuuenes amandi sint.* Ces deux derniers lieux Stoïques, et sur ce propos, le reproche de Diogarchus à Platon mesme, montrent combien la plus saine philosophie souffre de licences esloignées de l'vsage commun, et excessiues.

2.12.231 Les loix prennent leur authorité de la possession et de l'vsage: il est dangereux de les ramener à leur naissance: elles grossissent et s'annoblissent en roulant, comme nos riuieres: suyuez les contremont iusques à leur source, ce n'est qu'vn petit surjon d'eau à peine recognoissable, qui s'enorgueillit ainsin, et se fortifie, en vieillissant. Voyez les anciennes considerations, qui ont donné le premier branle à ce fameux torrent, plein de dignité, d'horreur et de reuerence: vous les trouuerez si legeres et si delicates,

ENGLISH

dictions, would write in the margin of his book: "Question for a friend." That is to say, the truth was so tangled and disputed that in a similar case he could favor whichever party he pleased. It was only for lack of wit and ability that he did not write "Question for a friend" everywhere. The lawyers and judges of our time find in every case enough angles to bend it wherever they please. In a science so infinite, depending on the authority of so many opinions, and in so arbitrary a subject, an extreme confusion of judgments cannot fail to arise.[187]

So there is hardly a lawsuit so clear that opinions do not differ on it: what one court has judged, another judges the opposite way, and the same court judges the opposite way another time. We see ordinary examples of this in that license—which marvelously stains the ceremonious authority and luster of our justice—of not resting content with rulings, and of running from one set of judges to another to decide the same case.

As for the freedom of philosophical opinions on vice and virtue, I need not enlarge on it; there are many views on it that are better kept quiet than published to weak minds. Arcesilaus said that in lechery it was of no importance from which side, or by which way, one was taken. *And as for obscene pleasures, if nature requires them, Epicurus thinks they should be measured not by birth, place or rank, but by beauty, age and figure. Nor do they think holy loves are foreign to the wise man. Let us inquire up to what age young men may be loved.* These last two Stoic passages, and on this subject the reproach of Dicaearchus to Plato himself, show how much excessive license, far removed from common practice, even the soundest philosophy allows.[188]

Laws take their authority from possession and usage; it is dangerous to trace them back to their birth. They swell and grow nobler as they roll along, like our rivers: follow them upstream to their source, and it is only a little trickle of water, barely recognizable, that grows proud in this way and gathers strength as it ages. Look at the ancient considerations that gave the first push to this fam-

187 Bartolus of Sassoferrato and his pupil Baldus de Ubaldis, 14th-century Italian jurists whose commentaries on Roman law were standard authorities.

188 The Latin passages are from Cicero and Seneca. Dicaearchus was a pupil of Aristotle.

FRENCH

que ces gens icy qui poisent tout, et le ramenent à la raison, et qui ne reçoiuent rien par authorité et à credit, il n'est pas merueille s'ils ont leurs iugements souuent tres-esloignez des iugemens publiques.

Gens qui prennent pour patron l'image premiere de Nature, il n'est pas merueille, si en la pluspart de leurs opinions, ils gauchissent la voye commune. Comme pour exemple: peu d'entre eux eussent approuué les conditions contrainctes de nos mariages: et la plus part ont voulu les femmes communes, et sans obligation. Ils refusoient nos ceremonies. Chrysippus disoit, qu'vn philosophe fera vne douzaine de culebutes en public, voire sans haut de chausses, pour vne douzaine d'oliues. A peine eust il donné aduis à Clisthenes de refuser la belle Agariste sa fille, à Hippoclides, pour luy auoir veu faire l'arbre fourché sur vne table.

Metrocles lascha vn peu indiscretement vn pet en disputant, en presence de son eschole: et se tenoit en sa maison caché de honte, iusques à ce que Crates le fut visiter: et adioustant à ses consolations et raisons, l'exemple de sa liberté, se mettant à peter à l'enuy auec luy, il luy osta ce scrupule: et de plus, le retira à sa secte Stoïque, plus franche, de la secte Peripatetique plus ciuile, laquelle iusque lors il auoit suiuy. Ce que nous appellons honnesteté, de n'oser faire à descouuert, ce qui nous est honneste de faire à couuert, ils l'appelloient sottise: et de faire le fin à taire et desaduoüer ce que nature, coustume, et nostre desir publient et proclament de nos actions, ils l'estimoyent vice.

Et leur sembloit, que c'estoit affoller les mysteres de Venus, que de les oster du retiré sacraire de son temple, pour les exposer à la veuë du peuple: et que tirer ses jeux hors du rideau, c'estoit les perdre. C'est chose de poix, que la honte: la recelation, reseruation, circonscription, parties de l'estimation. Que la volupté tres ingenieusement faisoit instance, sous le masque de la vertu, de n'estre prostituée au milieu des quarrefours, foulée des pieds et des yeux de la commune, trouuant à dire la dignité et commodité de ses cabinets accoustumez.

ENGLISH

ous torrent, full of dignity, awe and reverence: you will find them so light and so flimsy that it is no wonder these people here, who weigh everything and bring it back to reason, and accept nothing on authority and on trust, often hold judgments very far from public ones.

People who take as their model the original image of Nature—it is no wonder if in most of their opinions they swerve from the common path. For example, few of them would have approved of the constrained conditions of our marriages, and most of them wanted women to be held in common and without obligation. They rejected our ceremonies. Chrysippus said that a philosopher will turn a dozen somersaults in public, even without breeches, for a dozen olives. He would hardly have advised Cleisthenes to refuse his beautiful daughter Agariste to Hippocleides for having seen him stand on his head on a table.[189]

Metrocles, while disputing in front of his school, rather indiscreetly let out a fart, and kept himself hidden at home for shame until Crates came to visit him. Crates added to his consolations and arguments the example of his own freedom, starting to fart in competition with him. In this way he rid Metrocles of his scruple, and moreover drew him over to his own Stoic sect, which was freer, from the Peripatetic sect, more polite, which he had followed until then. What we call decency—not daring to do openly what it is decent for us to do in private—they called foolishness. And to play the sly one by concealing and disowning what nature, custom and our desire publish and proclaim of our actions, they considered a vice.[190]

And it seemed to them that it was spoiling the mysteries of Venus to take them out of the secluded sanctuary of her temple and expose them to the people's view, and that to bring her games out from behind the curtain was to ruin them. Shame is a weighty thing; concealment, reserve and limits are part of what gives a thing its value. It also seemed to them that pleasure, very cleverly, under the mask of virtue, pleaded not to be prostituted in the middle of the crossroads and trampled by the feet and eyes of the common

189 Herodotus tells how Hippocleides, the favored suitor, lost Agariste by dancing on his head on a table at the wedding feast.
190 The story is told by Diogenes Laertius; Crates was in fact a Cynic.

FRENCH

ENGLISH

people, since it missed the dignity and comfort of its usual private rooms.

De là disent aucuns, que d'oster les bordels publiques, c'est non seulement espandre par tout la paillardise, qui estoit assignée à ce lieu là, mais encore esguillonner les hommes vagabonds et oisifs à ce vice, par la malaisance. *Mœchus es Aufidiæ, qui vir, Coruine, fuisti;*
Riualis fuerat qui tuus, ille vir est.
Cur aliena placet tibi, quæ tua non placet vxor?
Nunquid securus non potes arrigere? Cette experience se diuersifie en mille exemples. Nullus in vrbe fuit tota, qui tangere vellet
Vxorem gratis Cæciliane tuam,
Dum licuit: sed nunc, positis custodibus, ingens
Turba fututorum est.

Hence some say that abolishing public brothels not only spreads everywhere the lechery that was confined to those places, but also goads idle, wandering men into this vice by the very difficulty. *You are Aufidia's lover, Corvinus, you who were her husband;*
The man who was your rival is now her husband.
Why does another man's wife please you, when as your own she did not?
Is it that you cannot get an erection when you feel safe? This experience varies in a thousand examples. There was no one in the whole city willing to touch
Your wife, Caecilianus, even for free,
As long as it was allowed; but now that you have set guards, a huge
Crowd of men is eager to bed her.[191]

Ingeniosus homo es. On demanda à vn philosophe qu'on surprit à mesme, ce qu'il faisoit: il respondit tout froidement, Ie plante vn homme: ne rougissant non plus d'estre rencontré en cela, que si on l'eust trouué plantant des aulx.

You are a clever man. A philosopher who was caught in the act was asked what he was doing. He answered quite coolly, "I am planting a man," blushing no more at being found at it than if he had been caught planting garlic.

2.12.232 C'est, comme i'estime, d'vne opinion tendre, respectueuse, qu'vn grand et religieux autheur tient cette action, si necessairement obligée à l'occultation et à la vergongne, qu'en la licence des embrassements Cyniques, il ne se peut persuader, que la besoigne en vinst à sa fin: ains qu'elle s'arrestoit à representer des mouuements lascifs seulement, pour maintenir l'impudence de la profession de leur eschole: et que pour eslancer ce que la honte auoit contrainct et retiré, il leur estoit encore apres besoin de chercher l'ombre. Il n'auoit pas veu assez auant en leur desbauche. Car Diogenes exerçant en publiq sa masturbation, faisoit souhait en presence du peuple assistant, de pouuoir ainsi saouler son ventre en le frottant.

It is, I believe, out of a tender and respectful opinion that a great and religious author holds this act to be so necessarily bound to concealment and shame that he cannot persuade himself that, in the license of the Cynics' embraces, the business ever came to its end. He believes instead that it stopped at merely representing lascivious movements, to keep up the impudence their school professed, and that to release what shame had constrained and held back, they still needed afterwards to seek the shade. He had not looked far enough into their debauchery. For Diogenes, masturbating in public, expressed the wish, in front of the people standing around, that he could satisfy his belly in the same way by rubbing it.[192]

A ceux qui luy demandoyent, pourquoy il ne cherchoit lieu plus commode à manger, qu'en pleine ruë: C'est, respondoit il, que i'ay faim en pleine ruë. Les femmes philosophes, qui se mesloyent à leur secte, se mesloyent aussi à leur personne, en tout lieu, sans discretion: et Hipparchia ne fut receuë en la societé de Crates, qu'en condition de suyure en toutes choses les vz et coustumes

To those who asked him why he did not look for a more convenient place to eat than the middle of the street, he replied: "Because I am hungry in the middle of the street." The women philosophers who mingled with their sect also mingled with their persons, anywhere, without discretion; and

191 Martial, Epigrams III.70 and I.73.
192 Saint Augustine, City of God XIV.20.

FRENCH	ENGLISH
de sa regle. Ces philosophes icy donnoient extreme prix à la vertu: et refusoyent toutes autres disciplines que la morale: si est-ce qu'en toutes actions ils attribuoyent la souueraine authorité à l'election de leur sage, et au dessus des loix: et n'ordonnoyent aux voluptez autre bride, que la moderation, et la conseruation de la liberté d'autruy.	Hipparchia was admitted into Crates' company only on condition that she follow the usages and customs of his rule in all things. These philosophers set extreme value on virtue and rejected all disciplines other than ethics. Yet in all actions they gave sovereign authority to the choice of their wise man, even above the laws, and put no other bridle on pleasures than moderation and respect for the freedom of others.[193]

INTERPRETING TEXTS

Any meaning can be drawn from a text, as Homer and Plato show.

FRENCH	ENGLISH
2.12.233 Heraclitus et Protagoras, de ce que le vin semble amer au malade, et gracieux au sain: l'auiron tortu dans l'eau, et droit à ceux qui le voyent hors de là: et de pareilles apparences contraires qui se trouuent aux subiects, argumenterent que tous subiects auoyent en eux les causes de ces apparences: et qu'il y auoit au vin quelque amertume, qui se rapportoit au goust du malade; l'auiron, certaine qualité courbe, se rapportant à celuy qui le regarde dans l'eau. Et ainsi de tout le reste. Qui est dire, que tout est en toutes choses, et par consequent rien en aucune: car rien n'est, où tout est.	Heraclitus and Protagoras observed that wine seems bitter to the sick man and pleasant to the healthy one, that an oar looks bent in the water and straight to those who see it out of the water, and that similar contrary appearances are found in objects. From this they argued that all objects contained in themselves the causes of these appearances: that there was some bitterness in the wine that answered to the sick man's taste, and in the oar a certain bent quality that answered to the person looking at it in the water. And so with all the rest. Which is to say that everything is in all things, and consequently nothing is in any; for nothing is where everything is.
2.12.234 Cette opinion me ramentoit l'experience que nous auons, qu'il n'est aucun sens ny visage, ou droict, ou amer, ou doux, ou courbe, que l'esprit humain ne trouue aux escrits, qu'il entreprend de fouïller. En la parole la plus nette, pure, et parfaicte, qui puisse estre, combien de fauceté et de mensonge a lon faict naistre? quelle heresie n'y a trouué des fondements assez, et tesmoignages, pour entreprendre et pour se maintenir? C'est pour cela, que les autheurs de telles erreurs, ne se veulent iamais departir de cette preuue du tesmoignage de l'interpretation des mots.	This opinion reminds me of what experience shows us: there is no sense or aspect, straight or bitter or sweet or bent, that the human mind does not find in the writings it sets out to dig into. In the clearest, purest and most perfect word there can be, how much falsehood and lying have people made to spring up? What heresy has not found in it foundations and testimonies enough to launch itself and keep itself going? That is why the authors of such errors never want to give up this proof by the testimony of the interpretation of words.
Vn personnage de dignité, me voulant approuuer par authorité, cette queste de la pierre philosophale, où il est tout plongé: m'allegua dernierement cinq ou six passages de la Bible, sur lesquels, il disoit, s'estre premierement fondé pour la descharge de sa conscience: (car il est de profession ecclesiastique) et à la verité l'inuention n'en	A person of rank, wanting to justify to me by authority this quest for the philosopher's stone in which he is completely immersed, recently cited five or six passages of the Bible on which, he said, he had first based himself to clear his conscience (for he is a churchman by profession). And to tell

193 Hipparchia of Maroneia (4th century BC), Cynic philosopher and wife of Crates.

FRENCH

estoit pas seulement plaisante, mais encore bien proprement accommodée à la deffence de cette belle science.

2.12.235 Par cette voye, se gaigne le credit des fables diuinatrices. Il n'est prognostiqueur, s'il a cette authorité, qu'on le daigne feuilleter, et rechercher curieusement tous les plis et lustres de ses paroles, à qui on ne face dire tout ce qu'on voudra, comme aux Sybilles. Il y a tant de moyens d'interpretation, qu'il est malaisé que de biais, ou de droit fil, vn esprit ingenieux ne rencontre en tout subiect, quelque air, qui luy serue à son poinct. Pourtant se trouue vn stile nubileux et doubteux, en si frequent et ancien vsage. Que l'autheur puisse gaigner cela, d'attirer et embesoigner à soy la posterité. Ce que non seulement la suffisance, mais autant, ou plus, la faueur fortuite de la matiere peut gaigner.

Qu'au demeurant il se presente par bestise ou par finesse, vn peu obscurement et diuersement: ne luy chaille. Nombre d'esprits le belutants et secoüants, en exprimeront quantité de formes, ou selon, ou à costé, ou au contraire de la sienne, qui luy feront toutes honneur. Il se verra enrichi des moyens de ses disciples, comme les regents du Landit. C'est ce qui a faict valoir plusieurs choses de neant, qui a mis en credit plusieurs escrits, et chargé de toute sorte de matiere qu'on a voulu: vne mesme chose receuant mille et mille, et autant qu'il nous plaist d'images et considerations diuerses.

2.12.236 Est-il possible qu'Homere aye voulu dire tout ce qu'on luy fait dire: et qu'il se soit presté à tant et si diuerses figures, que les theologiens, legislateurs, capitaines, philosophes, toute sorte de gents, qui traittent sciences, pour diuersement et contrairement qu'ils les traittent, s'appuyent de luy, s'en rapportent à luy: Maistre general à touts offices, ouurages, et artisans: General Conseiller à toutes entreprises? Quiconque a eu besoing d'oracles et de predictions, en y a trouué pour son faict.

Vn personnage sçauant et de mes amis, c'est merueille quels rencontres et combien admirables il y faict naistre, en faueur de nostre religion: et ne se peut aysément departir de cette opinion, que ce ne soit le dessein d'Homere, (si luy est cet autheur aussi familier qu'à

ENGLISH

the truth, the idea was not only amusing but also very aptly suited to the defense of that fine science.

This is how prophetic fables win credit. Take any prognosticator with enough authority that people deign to leaf through him and search carefully through all the folds and glints of his words: he can be made to say anything one likes, as with the Sibyls. There are so many ways of interpreting that it is hard for an ingenious mind not to find, on any subject, obliquely or straight on, some air that serves its purpose. That is why a cloudy and ambiguous style has been in such frequent and ancient use. Let the author only manage to attract posterity and keep it busy with him—something that not only ability but as much, or more, the fortuitous favor of the subject matter can achieve.

For the rest, whether he presents himself somewhat obscurely and ambiguously out of stupidity or out of cunning, let him not care. Many minds sifting and shaking him will squeeze out a quantity of forms, in line with his own, or beside it, or contrary to it, and all of them will do him honor. He will find himself enriched by his disciples' means, like the schoolmasters at the Lendit fair. This is what has given value to many worthless things, what has brought many writings into credit and loaded them with every kind of matter one wanted: one and the same thing receiving thousands upon thousands of different images and interpretations, as many as we please.[194]

Is it possible that Homer meant to say everything he is made to say, and that he lent himself to so many and such different shapes? Theologians, legislators, captains, philosophers, every sort of people who deal with the sciences, however differently and contrarily they treat them, lean on him and appeal to him: General Master of all offices, works and craftsmen; General Counselor in all undertakings. Whoever has needed oracles and predictions has found in him what suited his case.

A learned man, a friend of mine—it is a wonder what coincidences, and how admirable, he brings out of Homer in favor of our religion. He cannot easily be shaken from the opinion that this was Homer's design (and yet he knows this author as

194 The Lendit fair at Saint-Denis, near Paris, was the occasion on which students brought their masters their yearly fees.

FRENCH

ENGLISH

homme de nostre siecle). Et ce qu'il trouue en faueur de la nostre, plusieurs anciennement l'auoient trouué en faueur des leurs.

well as any man of our century). And what he finds in favor of our religion, many in ancient times had found in favor of theirs.

2.12.237 Voyez demener et agiter Platon, chacun s'honorant de l'appliquer à soy, le couche du costé qu'il le veut. On le promeine et l'insere à toutes les nouuelles opinions, que le monde reçoit: et le differente lon à soy-mesmes selon le different cours des choses. On fait desaduoüer à son sens, les mœurs licites en son siecle, d'autant qu'elles sont illicites au nostre. Tout cela, viuement et puissamment, autant qu'est puissant et vif l'esprit de l'interprete.

See how Plato is tossed and turned about: everyone, honoring himself by applying Plato to himself, lays him on whatever side he wants. He is paraded about and inserted into all the new opinions the world takes up, and made to differ from himself according to the different course of things. His meaning is made to disavow morals that were lawful in his century, because they are unlawful in ours. All this is done vividly and powerfully, as powerfully and vividly as the interpreter's mind allows.

Sur ce mesme fondement qu'auoit Heraclitus, et cette sienne sentence, Que toutes choses auoyent en elles les visages qu'on y trouuoit, Democritus en tiroit vne toute contraire conclusion: c'est que les subiects n'auoient du tout rien de ce que nous y trouuions: et de ce que le miel estoit doux à l'vn, et amer à l'autre, il argumentoit, qu'il n'estoit ny doux, ny amer. Les Pyrrhoniens diroient qu'ils ne sçauent s'il est doux ou amer, ou ny l'vn ny l'autre, ou tous les deux: car ceux-cy gaignent tousiours le haut poinct de la dubitation.

From the same foundation as Heraclitus, and from that maxim of his that all things had in them the aspects people found in them, Democritus drew an entirely contrary conclusion: that objects had absolutely nothing of what we found in them. Because honey was sweet to one person and bitter to another, he argued that it was neither sweet nor bitter. The Pyrrhonists would say that they do not know whether it is sweet or bitter, or neither, or both; for they always reach the highest point of doubt.

Les Cyrenayens tenoyent, que rien n'estoit perceptible par le dehors, et que cela estoit seulement perceptible, qui nous touchoit par l'interne attouchement, comme la douleur et la volupté: ne recognoissants ny ton, ny couleur, mais certaines affections seulement, qui nous en venoyent: et que l'homme n'auoit autre siege de son iugement. Protagoras estimoit estre vray à chacun, ce qui semble à chacun. Les Epicuriens logent aux sens tout iugement, et en la notice des choses, et en la volupté. Platon a voulu, le iugement de la verité, et la verité mesme retirée des opinions et des sens, appartenir à l'esprit et à la cogitation.

The Cyrenaics held that nothing was perceptible from outside, and that only what touched us by internal contact was perceptible, such as pain and pleasure. They recognized neither sound nor color, but only certain affections that came to us from them, and they held that man had no other seat for his judgment. Protagoras thought that whatever seems true to each man is true for him. The Epicureans place all judgment in the senses, both in the knowledge of things and in pleasure. Plato wanted the judgment of truth, and truth itself, withdrawn from opinions and from the senses, to belong to the mind and to thought.

THE SENSES

All knowledge comes through the senses, which may be too few and are easily deceived.

FRENCH

ENGLISH

2.12.238 Ce propos m'a porté sur la consideration des sens, ausquels git le plus grand fondement et preuue de nostre ignorance. Tout ce qui se cognoist, il se cognoist sans doubte par la faculté du cognoissant: car puis que le iugement vient de l'operation de celuy qui iuge, c'est

This discussion has brought me to consider the senses, in which lies the greatest foundation and proof of our ignorance. Whatever is known is undoubtedly known through the faculty of the knower. For since judgment comes from the operation

FRENCH

raison que cette operation il la parface par ses moyens et volonté, non par la contraincte d'autruy: comme il aduiendroit, si nous cognoissions les choses par la force et selon la loy de leur essence. Or toute cognoissance s'achemine en nous par les sens, ce sont nos maistres: *Via qua munita fidei / Proxima fert humanum in pectus, templáque mentis.* La science commence par eux, et se resout en eux.

Apres tout, nous ne sçaurions non plus qu'vne pierre, si nous ne sçauions, qu'il y a son, odeur, lumiere, faueur, mesure, poix, mollesse, durté, aspreté, couleur, polisseure, largeur, profondeur. Voyla le plant et les principes de tout le bastiment de nostre science. Et selon aucuns, science n'est rien autre chose, que sentiment. Quiconque me peut pousser à contredire les sens, il me tient à la gorge, il ne me sçauroit faire reculer plus arriere. Les sens sont le commencement et la fin de l'humaine cognoissance. Inuenies primis ab sensibus esse creatam / Notitiam veri, neque sensus posse refelli.

/ Quid maiore fide porro quàm sensus haberi / Debet? Qu'on leur attribue le moins qu'on pourra, tousiours faudra il leur donner cela, que par leur voye et entremise s'achemine toute nostre instruction. Cicero dit que Chrysippus ayant essayé de rabattre de la force des sens et de leur vertu, se representa à soy-mesmes des argumens au contraire, et des oppositions si vehementes, qu'il n'y peut satisfaire. Surquoy Carneades, qui maintenoit le contraire party, se vantoit de se seruir des armes mesmes et paroles de Chrysippus, pour le combattre: et s'escrioit à cette cause contre luy: O miserable, ta force t'a perdu.

Il n'est aucun absurde, selon nous, plus extreme, que de maintenir que le feu n'eschauffe point, que la lumiere n'esclaire point, qu'il n'y a point de pesanteur au fer, ny de fermeté, qui sont notices que nous apportent les sens; ny creance, ou science en l'homme, qui se puisse comparer à celle-là en certitude.

2.12.239 La premiere consideration que i'ay sur le subiect des sens, est que ie mets en doubte que l'homme soit prouueu de tous sens naturels. Ie voy plusieurs animaux, qui viuent vne vie entiere et parfaicte, les vns sans la veuë,

ENGLISH

of the one who judges, it stands to reason that he carries out this operation by his own means and will, not under constraint from something else—as would happen if we knew things by the force and according to the law of their essence. Now all knowledge makes its way into us through the senses; they are our masters: *The paved road by which belief / Most directly enters the human heart and the temples of the mind.* Knowledge begins with them and is resolved into them.[195]

After all, we would know no more than a stone if we did not know that there are sound, smell, light, taste, measure, weight, softness, hardness, roughness, color, smoothness, breadth and depth. There you have the ground plan and the principles of the whole edifice of our knowledge. And according to some, knowledge is nothing but sensation. Whoever can push me into contradicting the senses has me by the throat; he could not drive me back any farther. The senses are the beginning and the end of human knowledge. You will find that the notion of truth was first created / By the senses, and that the senses cannot be refuted.

/ What, then, should be held more worthy of belief / Than the senses? However little we may grant them, we must always grant them this: all our learning makes its way through their channel and mediation. Cicero says that Chrysippus, having tried to reduce the force and power of the senses, put to himself arguments to the contrary and objections so vehement that he could not answer them. Whereupon Carneades, who maintained the opposite side, boasted of using Chrysippus' very weapons and words to fight him, and so cried out against him: "Wretch, your own strength has undone you."

There is no absurdity, in our view, more extreme than to maintain that fire does not heat, that light does not illuminate, that there is no weight or solidity in iron—notions the senses bring us; nor is there any belief or knowledge in man that can compare with these in certainty.

My first consideration on the subject of the senses is that I doubt whether man is provided with all the natural senses. I see many animals that live a complete and perfect life, some without sight, oth-

195 Lucretius, On the Nature of Things V.

FRENCH

autres sans l'ouye: qui sçait si à nous aussi il ne manque pas encore vn, deux, trois, et plusieurs autres sens? Car s'il en manque quelqu'vn, nostre discours n'en peut découurir le défaut. C'est le priuilege des sens, d'être l'extreme borne de nostre aperceuance. Il n'y a rien au delà d'eux, qui nous puisse seruir à les descouurir: voire ny l'vn sens n'en peut descouurir l'autre.

An poterunt oculos aures reprehendere, an aures
Tactus, an hunc porro tactum sapor arguet oris,
An confutabunt nares, oculiue reuincent? Ils font trestous, la ligne extreme de nostre faculté. *Seorsum cuique potestas*
Diuisa est, sua vis cuique est. Il est impossible de faire conceuoir à vn homme naturellement aueugle, qu'il n'y void pas, impossible de luy faire desirer la veuë et regretter son defaut. Parquoy, nous ne deuons prendre aucune asseurance de ce que nostre ame est contente et satisfaicte de ceux que nous auons: veu qu'elle n'a pas dequoy sentir en cela sa maladie et son imperfection, si elle y est.

Il est impossible de dire chose à cet aueugle, par discours, argument, ny similitude, qui loge en son imagination aucune apprehension, de lumiere, de couleur, et de veuë. Il n'y a rien plus arriere, qui puisse pousser le sens en euidence. Les aueugles nais, qu'on void desirer à voir, ce n'est pas pour entendre ce qu'ils demandent: ils ont appris de nous, qu'ils ont à dire quelque chose, qu'ils ont quelque chose à desirer, qui est en nous, laquelle ils nomment bien, et ses effects et consequences: mais ils ne sçauent pourtant pas que c'est, ny ne l'apprehendent ny pres ny loing.

2.12.240 I'ay veu vn Gentil-homme de bonne maison, aueugle nay, aumoins aueugle de tel aage, qu'il ne sçait que c'est que de veuë: il entend si peu ce qui luy manque, qu'il vse et se sert comme nous, des paroles propres au voir, et les applique d'vne mode toute sienne et particuliere. On luy presentoit vn enfant duquel il estoit parrain, l'ayant pris entre ses bras: Mon Dieu, dit-il, le bel enfant, qu'il le fait beau voir, qu'il a le visage gay. Il dira comme l'vn d'entre nous, Cette sale a vne belle veuë, il fait clair, il fait beau soleil.

ENGLISH

ers without hearing. Who knows whether we too may not still lack one, two, three or many other senses? For if we lack one, our reason cannot discover the lack. It is the privilege of the senses to be the outermost limit of our perception. There is nothing beyond them that can help us discover them; indeed, not even one sense can discover another.

Can the ears correct the eyes, or touch
Correct the ears? Or will the taste of the mouth refute this touch,
Or will the nose confute it, or the eyes overturn it?
Every one of them marks the outermost line of our faculty. *Each has its own separate power,*
Each its own force. It is impossible to make a man born blind conceive that he does not see; impossible to make him desire sight and regret its absence. Therefore we should take no assurance from the fact that our soul is content and satisfied with the senses we have, since it has no means of feeling its sickness and imperfection in this respect, if there is any.

It is impossible to tell this blind man anything, by reasoning, argument or comparison, that will lodge in his imagination any apprehension of light, color or sight. There is nothing further back that can bring the sense into evidence. As for those born blind whom we see wishing they could see, it is not because they understand what they are asking for. They have learned from us that they lack something, that there is something in us for them to desire. They name it well enough, along with its effects and consequences; but they still do not know what it is, and do not grasp it, either closely or from afar.

I have seen a gentleman of good family who was born blind, or at least blind from such an early age that he does not know what sight is. He understands so little what he lacks that he uses words that belong to seeing just as we do, and applies them in a way entirely his own. When they presented him with a child to whom he was godfather, he took it in his arms and said: "My God, what a beautiful child! How lovely it is to see! What a cheerful face he has!" He will say, like any one of us: "This room has a fine view"; "It is bright"; "The sun is shining beautifully."

FRENCH

Il y a plus: car par ce que ce sont nos exercices que la chasse, la paume, la bute, et qu'il l'a ouy dire, il s'y affectionne et s'y embesoigne: et croid y auoir la mesme part, que nous y auons: il s'y picque et s'y plaist, et ne les reçoit pourtant que par les oreilles. On luy crie, que voyla vn liéure, quand on est en quelque belle splanade, où il puisse picquer: et puis on luy dit encore, que voyla vn lieure pris: le voyla aussi fier de sa prise, comme il oit dire aux autres, qu'ils le sont.

L'esteuf, il le prend à la main gauche, et le pousse à tout sa raquette: de la harquebouse, il en tire à l'aduenture, et se paye de ce que ses gens luy disent, qu'il est ou haut, ou costier.

2.12.241 Que sçait-on si le genre humain fait vne sottise pareille, à faute de quelque sens, et que par ce defaut, la plus part du visage des choses nous soit caché? Que sçait-on, si les difficultez que nous trouuons en plusieurs ouurages de Nature, viennent de là? et si plusieurs effets des animaux qui excedent nostre capacité, sont produicts par la faculté de quelque sens, que nous ayons à dire? et si aucuns d'entre eux ont vne vie plus pleine par ce moyen, et entiere que la nostre?

Nous saisissons la pomme quasi par tous nos sens: nous y trouuons de la rougeur, de la polisseure, de l'odeur et de la douceur: outre cela, elle peut auoir d'autres vertus, comme d'asseicher ou restreindre, ausquelles nous n'auons point de sens qui se puisse rapporter. Les proprietez que nous appellons occultes en plusieurs choses, comme à l'aymant d'attirer le fer, n'est-il pas vraysemblable qu'il y a des facultez sensitiues en Nature propres à les iuger et à les apperceuoir, et que le defaut de telles facultez, nous apporte l'ignorance de la vraye essence de telles choses?

C'est à l'auanture quelque sens particulier, qui descouure aux coqs l'heure du matin et de minuict, et les esmeut à chanter: qui apprend aux poulles, avaut tout vsage et experience, de craindre vn esparuier, et non vne oye, ny vn paon, plus grandes bestes: qui aduertit les poulets de la qualité hostile, qui est au chat contr'eux, et à ne se deffier du chien: s'armer contre le miaulement, voix aucunement flatteuse, non contre l'abayer, voix aspre et quereleuse. Aux freslons, aux formis, et aux rats, de choisir tousiours le meilleur formage et la meilleure poire, auant que d'y auoir tasté, et qui achemine le cerf,

ENGLISH

There is more. Because hunting, tennis and target shooting are our pastimes, and he has heard about them, he grows fond of them and takes part in them, and believes he has the same share in them that we have. He gets keen and takes pleasure in them, and yet he receives them only through his ears. Someone shouts to him that there is a hare, when they are on some fine open ground where he can spur his horse on; and then they tell him that the hare has been caught, and there he is, as proud of his catch as he hears others say they are.

He takes the ball in his left hand and strikes it with his racket; he fires the arquebus at random, and is satisfied when his people tell him he has shot high or wide.

How do we know that the human race is not committing a similar folly for lack of some sense, and that through this defect most of the face of things is not hidden from us? How do we know whether the difficulties we find in many works of Nature come from this? Or whether many feats of animals that exceed our capacity are produced by the faculty of some sense we lack? Or whether some of them have, by this means, a fuller and more complete life than ours?

We grasp the apple with almost all our senses: we find in it redness, smoothness, smell and sweetness. Beyond that, it may have other properties, such as drying or binding, to which no sense we have can correspond. As for the properties we call occult in many things, such as the magnet's power to attract iron, is it not likely that there are sensory faculties in Nature suited to judge and perceive them, and that our lack of such faculties leaves us ignorant of the true essence of such things?

Perhaps it is some particular sense that reveals to roosters the hour of morning and of midnight and moves them to crow. Perhaps such a sense teaches hens, before any practice or experience, to fear a sparrowhawk and not a goose or a peacock, which are larger creatures. It may warn chicks of the hostility the cat bears them, and teach them not to distrust the dog—to arm themselves against the mewing, a rather flattering voice, and not against the barking, a harsh and quarrelsome one. It may teach hornets, ants and rats always to choose the best cheese and the best pear before having tasted

FRENCH

l'elephant et le serpent à la cognoissance de certaine herbe propre à leur guerison.

2.12.242 Il n'y a sens, qui n'ait vne grande domination, et qui n'apporte par son moyen vn nombre infiny de cognoissances. Si nous auions à dire l'intelligence des sons, de l'harmonie, et de la voix, cela apporteroit vne confusion inimaginable à tout le reste de nostre science. Car outre ce qui est attaché au propre effect de chaque sens, combien d'argumens, de consequences, et de conclusions tirons nous aux autres choses par la comparaison de l'vn sens à l'autre?

Qu'vn homme entendu, imagine l'humaine nature produicte originellement sans la veuë, et discoure combien d'ignorance et de trouble luy apporteroit vn tel defaut, combien de tenebres et d'aueuglement en nostre ame: on verra par là, combien nous importe, à la cognoissance de la verité, la priuation d'vn autre tel sens, ou de deux, ou de trois, si elle est en nous. Nous auons formé vne verité par la consultation et concurrence de nos cinq sens: mais à l'aduenture falloit-il l'accord de huict, ou de dix sens, et leur contribution, pour l'apperceuoir certainement et en son essence.

2.12.243 Les sectes qui combatent la science de l'homme, elles la combatent principalement par l'incertitude et foiblesse de nos sens. Car puis que toute cognoissance vient en nous par leur entremise et moyen, s'ils faillent au rapport qu'ils nous font, s'ils corrompent ou alterent ce, qu'ils nous charrient du dehors, si la lumiere qui par eux s'écoule en nostre ame est obscurcie au passage, nous n'auons plus que tenir.

De cette extreme difficulté sont nées toutes ces fantasies: que chaque subiect a en soy tout ce que nous y trouuons: qu'il n'a rien de ce que nous y pensons trouuer: et celle des Epicuriens, que le soleil n'est non plus grand que ce que nostre veuë le iuge: *Quicquid id est, nihilo fertur maiore figura,*
Quàm, nostris oculis quam cernimus, esse videtur: que les apparences, qui representent vn corps grand, à celuy qui en est voisin, et plus petit, à celuy qui en est esloigné, sont toutes deux vrayes: *Nec tamen hic oculos falli concedimus hilum;*
Proinde animi vitium hoc oculis adfingere noli: et resolument qu'il n'y a aucune tromperie aux sens: qu'il faut passer à leur mercy, et chercher ailleurs des raisons pour excuser la difference et contradiction que nous y trouuons.

ENGLISH

them, and lead the stag, the elephant and the snake to know a certain herb fit to heal them.

There is no sense that does not hold great sway, and that does not bring us, by its means, an infinite number of pieces of knowledge. If we lacked the understanding of sounds, of harmony and of the voice, it would bring unimaginable confusion into all the rest of our knowledge. For besides what is bound up with the proper effect of each sense, how many arguments, inferences and conclusions do we draw about other things by comparing one sense with another?

Let an intelligent man imagine human nature produced originally without sight. Let him work out how much ignorance and confusion such a lack would bring it, how much darkness and blindness in our soul. From that we shall see how much it matters to our knowledge of the truth to be deprived of another such sense, or of two, or of three, if we are. We have formed a truth by the consultation and concurrence of our five senses. But perhaps it would take the agreement and contribution of eight or ten senses to perceive it with certainty and in its essence.

The sects that attack human knowledge attack it chiefly through the uncertainty and weakness of our senses. For all knowledge comes into us by their agency and means. So if they fail in the report they give us, if they corrupt or alter what they carry in to us from outside, if the light that flows through them into our soul is darkened on the way, we have nothing left to hold on to.

From this extreme difficulty have arisen all these notions: that each object has in itself everything we find in it; that it has nothing of what we think we find in it; and the notion of the Epicureans, that the sun is no bigger than our sight judges it to be: *Whatever it is, it moves with no greater shape*
Than it seems to have to our eyes that see it: that the appearances that show a body as large to someone near it, and as smaller to someone far from it, are both true: *Yet we do not grant that the eyes are deceived one whit;*
So do not pin this fault of the mind on the eyes: and, resolutely, that there is no deception at all in the senses; that we must put ourselves at their mercy, and look elsewhere for reasons to excuse the difference and contradiction we find in them.

FRENCH

2.12.244 Voyre inuenter toute autre mensonge et resuerie (ils en viennent iusques là) plustost que d'accuser les sens. Timagoras iuroit, que pour presser ou biaiser son œuil, il n'auoit iamais apperceu doubler la lumiere de la chandelle: et que cette semblance venoit du vice de l'opinion, non de l'instrument. De toutes les absurditez la plus absurde aux Epicuriens, est, desauoüer la force et l'effect des sens. Proinde quod in quoque est his visum tempore, verum est.

/ Et, si non potuit ratio dissoluere causam,
Cur ea quæ fuerint iuxtim quadrata, procul sint
Visa rotunda: tamen præstat rationis egentem
Reddere mendosè causas vtriusque figuræ,
Quàm manibus manifesta suis emittere quæquam,
Et violare fidem primam, et conuellere tota
Fundamenta, quibus nixatur vita salúsque.

/ Non modò enim ratio ruat omnis, vita quoque ipsa
Concidat extemplo, nisi credere sensibus ausis,
Præcipitésque locos vitare, et cætera quæ sint
In genere hoc fugienda. Ce conseil desesperé et si peu philosophique, ne represente autre chose, sinon que l'humaine science ne se peut maintenir que par raison des-raisonnable, folle et forcenée: mais qu'encore vaut-il mieux, que l'homme, pour se faire valoir, s'en serue, et de tout autre remede, tant fantastique soit-il, que d'aduoüer sa necessaire bestise: verité si desaduantageuse. Il ne peut fuïr, que les sens ne soyent les souuerains maistres de sa cognoissance: mais ils sont incertains et falsifiables à toutes circonstances.

C'est-là, où il faut battre à outrance: et, si les forces iustes nous faillent, comme elles font, y employer l'opiniastreté, la temerité, l'impudence. Au cas, que ce que disent les Epicuriens soit vray, à sçauoir, que nous n'auons pas de science, si les apparences des sens sont fauces: et ce que disent les Stoïciens, s'il est aussi vray, que les apparences des sens sont si fauces qu'elles ne nous peuuent produire aucune science: nous concluerons aux despens de ces deux grandes sectes dogmatistes, qu'il n'y a point de science.

2.12.245 Quant à l'erreur et incertitude de l'operation des sens, chacun s'en peut fournir autant d'exemples qu'il luy

ENGLISH

Indeed, they would invent any other lie or fantasy whatever (they go that far) rather than accuse the senses. Timagoras swore that, however he pressed or twisted his eye, he had never seen the candle's light double, and that this appearance came from a fault of opinion, not of the instrument. Of all absurdities, the most absurd for the Epicureans is to deny the force and effect of the senses. Therefore whatever is seen by them at any time is true.[196]

/ And if reason cannot unravel the cause
Why things that were square close at hand
Seem round from afar, still it is better, for want of reason,
To give faulty causes for each of the two shapes
Than to let slip from our hands things plain to see,
And violate our first trust, and tear up all
The foundations on which life and safety rest.

/ For not only would all reason collapse; life itself
Would fall at once, unless you dared to trust the senses
And shun steep places and the other things
Of this kind that must be avoided. This desperate and so unphilosophical advice amounts to nothing but this: that human knowledge can only maintain itself by unreasonable, mad and frenzied reason. But even so, it is better for man, in order to make himself count for something, to use that reason, and any other remedy however fantastic, than to admit his necessary stupidity—a truth so much to his disadvantage. He cannot escape the fact that the senses are the sovereign masters of his knowledge; but they are uncertain and open to falsification in every circumstance.

That is the point where we must strike with all our might, and, if legitimate strength fails us, as it does, bring in stubbornness, rashness and impudence. Suppose what the Epicureans say is true, namely that we have no knowledge if the appearances of the senses are false; and suppose what the Stoics say is also true, that the appearances of the senses are so false that they cannot produce any knowledge for us. Then we shall conclude, at the expense of these two great dogmatist sects, that there is no knowledge.

As for the error and uncertainty in the working of the senses, anyone can furnish himself with as

196 Timagoras: an Epicurean philosopher mentioned by Cicero in the Academica.

FRENCH

plaira: tant les faultes et tromperies qu'ils nous font, sont ordinaires. Au retentir d'vn valon, le son d'vne trompette semble venir deuant nous, qui vient d'vne lieuë derriere.
Extantésque procul medio de gurgite montes,
Ïidem apparent, longè diuersi licet.
Et fugere ad puppim colles campique videntur
Quos agimus propter nauim.

/ Vbi in medio nobis equus acer obhæsit
Flumine, equi corpus transuersum ferre videtur
Vis, et in aduersum flumen contrudere raptim. A manier vne balle d'arquebuse, soubs le second doigt, celuy du milieu estant entrelassé par dessus, il faut extremement se contraindre, pour aduoüer, qu'il n'y en ait qu'vne, tant le sens nous en represente deux. Car que les sens soyent maintesfois maistres du discours, et le contraignent de receuoir des impressions qu'il sçait et iuge estre faulces, il se void à tous coups.

Ie laisse à part celuy de l'attouchement, qui a ses functions plus voisines, plus viues et substantielles, qui renuerse tant de fois par l'effect de la douleur qu'il apporte au corps, toutes ces belles resolutions Stoïques, et contraint de crier au ventre, celuy qui a estably en son ame ce dogme auec toute resolution, que la colique, comme toute autre maladie et douleur, est chose indifferente, n'ayant la force de rien rabbattre du souuerain bon-heur et felicité, en laquelle le sage est logé par sa vertu.

Il n'est cœur si mol, que le son de nos tabourins et de nos trompettes n'eschauffe, ny si dur que la douceur de la musique n'esueille et ne chatouille: ny ame si reuesche, qui ne se sente touchée de quelque reuerence, à considerer cette vastité sombre de noz eglises, la diuersité d'ornemens, et ordre de noz ceremonies, et ouyr le son deuotieux de noz orgues, et l'harmonie si posée, et religieuse de noz voix. Ceux mesme qui y entrent auec mespris, sentent quelque frisson dans le cœur, et quelque horreur, qui les met en deffiance de leur opinion.

Quant à moy, ie ne m'estime point assez fort, pour ouyr en sens rassis, des vers d'Horace, et de Catulle, chantez d'vne voix suffisante, par vne belle et ieune bouche. Et Zenon auoit raison de dire, que la voix estoit la fleur de la beauté. On m'a voulu faire accroire, qu'vn homme que

ENGLISH

many examples as he likes, so common are the faults and deceptions they practice on us. When a valley echoes, the sound of a trumpet seems to come from in front of us when it comes from a league behind. And mountains rising far off from the middle of the sea
Appear as one, though they are far apart.
And the hills and plains seem to flee toward the stern
As we drive our ship past them.

/ When our spirited horse has stuck fast in mid-stream,
A force seems to carry the horse's body sideways
And to thrust it swiftly upstream. If you handle an arquebus ball under your forefinger, with the middle finger crossed over it, you have to strain yourself extremely to admit that there is only one, so strongly does the sense show us two. For that the senses are often masters of our reasoning, and force it to receive impressions it knows and judges to be false, is seen at every turn.

I leave aside the sense of touch, whose functions are closer, more lively and substantial. By the effect of the pain it brings the body it so often overturns all those fine Stoic resolutions. It forces a man to cry out over his belly—a man who has established in his soul, with all resolution, the dogma that colic, like every other illness and pain, is a matter of indifference, having no power to diminish in any way the sovereign happiness and felicity in which the wise man is lodged by his virtue.

There is no heart so soft that the sound of our drums and trumpets does not fire it, nor so hard that the sweetness of music does not rouse and tickle it. There is no soul so crabbed that it does not feel touched by some reverence as it considers the dark vastness of our churches, the variety of ornaments and the order of our ceremonies, and hears the devout sound of our organs and the so composed and religious harmony of our voices. Even those who enter with contempt feel a certain shiver in the heart, and a certain awe, which makes them distrust their own opinion.

As for me, I do not reckon myself strong enough to hear verses of Horace and Catullus sung in an accomplished voice by a lovely young mouth and keep a level head. And Zeno was right to say that the voice was the flower of beauty. Someone once

FRENCH

tous nous autres François cognoissons, m'auoit imposé, en me recitant des vers, qu'il auoit faicts: qu'ils n'estoyent pas tels sur le papier, qu'en l'air: et que mes yeux en feroyent contraire iugement à mes oreilles: tant la prononciation a de credit à donner prix et façon aux ouurages, qui passent à sa mercy.

Surquoy Philoxenus ne fut pas fascheux, en ce, qu'oyant vn, donner mauuais ton à quelque sienne composition, il se print à fouler aux pieds, et casser de la brique, qui estoit à luy: disant, Ie romps ce qui est à toy, comme tu corromps ce qui est à moy. A quoy faire, ceux mesmes qui se sont donnez la mort d'vne certaine resolution, destournoyent-ils la face, pour ne voir le coup qu'ils se faisoyent donner? et ceux qui pour leur santé desirent et commandent qu'on les incise et cauterise, ne peuuent soustenir la veuë des apprests, vtils et operation du chirurgien, attendu que la veuë ne doit auoir aucune participation à cette douleur?

Cela ne sont ce pas propres exemples à verifier l'authorité que les sens ont sur le discours? Nous auons beau sçauoir que ces tresses sont empruntées d'vn page ou d'vn lacquais: que cette rougeur est venue d'Espaigne, et cette blancheur et polisseure, de la mer Oceane: encore faut-il que la veuë nous force d'en trouuer le subject plus aimable et plus agreable, contre toute raison. Car en cela il n'y a rien du sien. Auferimur cultu, gemmis: auróque teguntur / Crimina, pars minima est ipsa puella sui.

/ Sæpe vbi sit quod ames inter tam multa requiras:
Decipit hac oculos ægide, diues amor. *Combien donnent à la force des sens les poëtes, qui font Narcisse esperdu de l'amour de son ombre:* Cunctáque miratur, quibus est mirabilis ipse;
Se cupit imprudens; et qui probat, ipse probatur;
Dûmque petit, petitur: paritérque accendit et ardent: *et l'entendement de Pygmalion si troublé par l'impression de la veuë de sa statue d'iuoire, qu'il l'aime et la serue pour viue:*
Oscula dat reddique putat, sequitúrque tenétque,
Et credit tactis digitos infidere membris,
Et metuit pressos veniat ne liuor in artus.

ENGLISH

tried to make me believe that a man whom all of us French know had taken me in by reciting to me verses he had written; that they were not the same on paper as in the air; and that my eyes would judge them otherwise than my ears had. So much credit has delivery in giving value and shape to the works that pass into its hands.

On which point Philoxenus was not being unreasonable when, hearing someone give a bad tone to one of his compositions, he began trampling and breaking some bricks that belonged to the man, saying: "I am breaking what is yours, as you are spoiling what is mine." Why did even those who put themselves to death with firm resolution turn their faces away so as not to see the blow they were having dealt them? And why can those who for their health desire and order that they be cut and cauterized not bear the sight of the surgeon's preparations, instruments and operation, given that sight is to have no share in that pain?[197]

Are these not apt examples to prove the authority the senses have over reasoning? It is no use our knowing that these tresses were borrowed from a page or a lackey, that this rosiness came from Spain, and this whiteness and smoothness from the Ocean sea: our sight still forces us to find their owner more lovable and more pleasing, against all reason. For in all this there is nothing of her own. We are carried away by finery; gems and gold cover / Faults; the girl herself is the smallest part of herself.

/ Often you must search, amid so much, for where the thing you love is:
With this aegis rich Love deceives the eyes. *How much the poets grant to the power of the senses when they make Narcissus distraught with love for his reflection:* He admires everything for which he himself is admired;
Unwittingly he desires himself; he who approves is himself approved;
While he seeks, he is sought; he kindles and burns at once: *and Pygmalion's understanding so disturbed by the impression the sight of his ivory statue makes on him that he loves it and serves it as if it were alive:* He gives it kisses and thinks they are returned; he pursues it and holds it,
And believes his fingers sink into the limbs he

197 Philoxenus: Greek dithyrambic poet (c. 435–380 BC).

FRENCH

ENGLISH

touches,
And fears a bruise may appear on the limbs he presses.

2.12.246 Qu'on loge vn philosophe dans vne cage de menus filets de fer clair-semez, qui soit suspendue au hault des tours nostre Dame de Paris; il verra par raison euidente, qu'il est impossible qu'il en tombe; et si ne se sçauroit garder, s'il n'a accoustumé le mestier des couureurs, que la veuë de cette haulteur extreme, ne l'espouuante et ne le transisse. Car nous auons assez affaire de nous asseurer aux galeries, qui sont en nos clochers, si elles sont façonnées à iour, encores qu'elles soyent de pierre. Il y en a qui n'en peuuent pas seulement porter la pensée.

Put a philosopher in a cage made of thin, widely spaced iron bars, and hang it from the top of the towers of Notre-Dame in Paris. He will see by evident reason that it is impossible for him to fall out of it; and yet, unless he is used to the roofer's trade, he could not keep the sight of that extreme height from terrifying and paralyzing him. For we have quite enough trouble feeling safe in the galleries of our bell towers if they are of openwork, even though they are made of stone. There are some who cannot even bear the thought of it.

Qu'on iette vne poultre entre ces deux tours d'vne grosseur telle qu'il nous la faut à nous promener dessus, il n'y a sagesse philosophique de si grande fermeté, qui puisse nous donner courage d'y marcher, comme nous ferions si elle estoit à terre. I'ay souuent essayé cela, en noz montaignes de deça, et si suis de ceux qui ne s'effrayent que mediocrement de telles choses, que ie ne pouuoy souffrir la veuë de cette profondeur infinie, sans horreur et tremblement de iarrets et de cuisses, encores qu'il s'en fallust bien ma longueur, que ie ne fusse du tout au bord, et n'eusse sçeu choir, si ie ne me fusse porté à escient au danger.

Lay a beam between those two towers, as wide as we need to walk on it: there is no philosophical wisdom so firm that it could give us the courage to walk along it as we would if it were on the ground. I have often tried this in our mountains hereabouts. And yet, though I am one of those who are only moderately frightened by such things, I could not bear the sight of that infinite depth without horror and trembling in my hams and thighs—even though I was a good full body's length from the very edge, and could not have fallen unless I had deliberately put myself in danger.

I'y remarquay aussi, quelque haulteur qu'il y eust, pourueu qu'en cette pente il s'y presentast vn arbre, ou bosse de rocher, pour soustenir vn peu la veuë, et la diuiser, que cela nous allege et donne asseurance; comme si c'estoit chose dequoy à la cheute nous peussions receuoir secours: mais que les precipices coupez et vniz, nous ne les pouuons pas seulement regarder sans tournoyement de teste: *vt despici sine vertigine simul oculornm animique non possit*: qui est vne euidente imposture de la veuë. Ce fut pourquoy ce beau philosophe se creua les yeux, pour descharger l'ame de la desbauche qu'elle en receuoit, et pouuoir philosopher plus en liberté.

I also noticed there that, however great the height, provided some tree or jutting rock appeared on the slope to support the eye a little and break up the view, this relieves us and gives us confidence, as if it were something that could help us when we fell. But sheer, smooth precipices we cannot even look at without our heads spinning: *so that one cannot look down without dizziness of eyes and mind alike*: which is an evident imposture of sight. That was why that fine philosopher put out his eyes: to free his soul of the debauchery it received from them, and to be able to philosophize more freely.[198]

Mais à ce comte, il se deuoit aussi faire estoupper les oreilles, que Theophrastus dit estre le plus dangereux instrument que nous ayons pour receuoir des impressions violentes à nous troubler et changer; et se deuoit priuer en fin de tous les autres sens; c'est à dire de son estre et de sa vie. Car ils ont tous cette puissance, de commander nostre discours et nostre ame. *Fit etiam sæpe*

But by that reckoning he should also have had his ears stopped, which Theophrastus says are the most dangerous instrument we have for receiving violent impressions that disturb and change us; and in the end he should have deprived himself of all the other senses too—that is to say, of his being and his life. For they all have this power of com-

198 The Latin is from Livy. The philosopher is Democritus, who according to legend blinded himself to think more freely.

FRENCH

specie quadam, sæpe vocum grauitate et cantibus, vt pellantur animi vehementius: sæpe etiam cura et timore. Les medecins tiennent, qu'il y a certaines complexions, qui s'agitent par aucuns sons et instrumens iusques à la fureur.

I'en ay veu, qui ne pouuoient ouyr ronger vn os soubs leur table sans perdre patience: et n'est guere homme, qui ne se trouble à ce bruit aigre et poignant, que font les limes en raclant le fer: comme à ouyr mascher pres de nous, ou ouyr parler quelqu'vn, qui ayt le passage du gosier ou du nez empesché, plusieurs s'en esmeuuent, iusques à la colere et la haine. Ce flusteur protocole de Gracchus, qui amollissoit, roidissoit, et contournoit la voix de son maistre, lors qu'il haranguoit à Rome, à quoy seruoit il, si le mouuement et qualité du son, n'auoit force à esmouuoir et alterer le iugement des auditeurs?

Vrayement il y a bien dequoy faire si grande feste de la fermeté de cette belle piece, qui se laisse manier et changer au bransle et accidens d'vn si leger vent.

ENGLISH

manding our reasoning and our soul. *It also often happens that minds are stirred more powerfully by some sight, often by the gravity of voices and by songs; often too by care and fear.* Physicians hold that there are certain constitutions which are agitated to the point of frenzy by certain sounds and instruments.[199]

I have seen people who could not hear a bone being gnawed under their table without losing patience. And there is hardly a man who is not upset by that sharp, piercing noise files make when they scrape iron; just as, on hearing someone chew near us, or hearing someone talk whose throat or nose is blocked, many people are moved to anger and hatred. That flute-player who prompted Gracchus, who softened, stiffened and modulated his master's voice when he was haranguing in Rome—what was he for, if the movement and quality of sound had no power to move and alter the judgment of the listeners?[200]

Truly, there is good reason to make such a fuss about the firmness of this fine piece of work, which lets itself be handled and changed by the motion and chance gusts of so light a wind.

WAKING AND DREAMING

Passions alter what we perceive, and our waking may be another kind of sleep.

FRENCH

2.12.247 Cette mesme pipperie, que les sens apportent à nostre entendement, ils la reçoiuent à leur tour. Nostre ame par fois s'en reuenche de mesme, ils mentent, et se trompent à l'enuy. Ce que nous voyons et oyons agitez de colere, nous ne l'oyons pas tel qu'il est. *Et solem geminum, et duplices se ostendere Thebas.* L'obiect que nous aymons, nous semble plus beau qu'il n'est: *Multimodis igitur prauas turpésque videmus / Esse in deliciis, summóque in honore vigere:* et plus laid celuy que nous auons à contre-cœur. A vn homme ennuyé et affligé, la clarté du iour semble obscurcie et tenebreuse. Noz sens sont non seulement alterez, mais souuent hebetez du tout, par les passions de l'ame.

Combien de choses voyons nous, que nous n'apperceuons pas, si nous auons nostre esprit empesché ailleurs? *In*

ENGLISH

This same cheating that the senses bring to our understanding, they receive in their turn. Our soul sometimes takes its revenge in the same way: they vie with each other in lying and deceiving. What we see and hear when stirred by anger, we do not hear as it is. *And the sun appears double, and Thebes twofold.* The object we love seems to us more beautiful than it is: *So we see women misshapen and ugly in many ways / Being adored and flourishing in the highest honor:* and the one we dislike seems uglier. To a man in grief and affliction, the light of day seems dimmed and dark. Our senses are not only altered but often utterly dulled by the passions of the soul.[201]

How many things do we see that we do not notice, if our mind is busy elsewhere? *Even in things*

199 Theophrastus (c. 371–287 BC), Aristotle's successor as head of his school. The Latin is from Cicero, On Divination.
200 Gaius Gracchus, Roman tribune (2nd century BC), kept a flute-player behind him to give him the pitch while he spoke, as Plutarch reports.

FRENCH

rebus quoque apertis noscere possis,
Si non aduertas animum, proinde esse, quasi omni
Tempore semotæ fuerint, longéque remotæ. Il semble que l'ame retire au dedans, et amuse les puissances des sens. Par ainsin et le dedans et le dehors de l'homme est plein de foiblesse et de mensonge.

2.12.248 Ceux qui ont apparié nostre vie à vn songe, ont eu de la raison, à l'aduanture plus qu'ils ne pensoyent. Quand nous songeons, nostre ame vit, agit, exerce toutes ses facultez, ne plus ne moins que quand elle veille; mais si plus mollement et obscurement; non de tant certes, que la difference y soit, comme de la nuict à vne clarté vifue: ouy, comme de la nuict à l'ombre: là elle dort, icy elle sommeille: plus et moins; ce sont tousiours tenebres, et tenebres Cymmeriennes. Nous veillons dormants, et veillants dormons. Ie ne voy pas si clair dans le sommeil: mais quant au veiller, ie ne le trouue iamais assez pur et sans nuage.

Encore le sommeil en sa profondeur, endort par fois les songes: mais nostre veiller n'est iamais si esueillé, qu'il purge et dissipe bien à poinct les resueries, qui sont les songes des veillants, et pires que songes. Nostre raison et nostre ame receuant les fantasies et opinions, qui luy nayssent en dormant, et authorizant les actions de noz songes de pareille approbation, qu'elle fait celles du iour: pourquoy ne mettons nous en doubte, si nostre penser, nostre agir, est pas vn autre songer, et nostre veiller, quelque espece de dormir?

ENGLISH

plainly in view you can perceive
That, if you do not turn your mind to them, it is as if
They had been all the time apart and far removed. It seems that the soul draws the powers of the senses inward and keeps them occupied. Thus both the inside and the outside of man are full of weakness and falsehood.

Those who have likened our life to a dream were right—perhaps more than they thought. When we dream, our soul lives, acts and exercises all its faculties neither more nor less than when it is awake. If it does so more softly and dimly, it is certainly not by so much that the difference is like that between night and bright daylight—rather, like that between night and shade. There it sleeps, here it dozes: more and less; it is always darkness, and Cimmerian darkness. We wake sleeping, and waking sleep. I do not see so clearly in sleep; but as for waking, I never find it pure and cloudless enough.[202]

Sleep, in its depths, even puts dreams to sleep at times; but our waking is never so wide awake that it properly purges and dispels the reveries, which are the dreams of the waking, and worse than dreams. Our reason and our soul accept the notions and opinions that arise in them while sleeping, and authorize the actions of our dreams with the same approval they give to those of the day. Why, then, do we not call in doubt whether our thinking and our acting are not another kind of dreaming, and our waking some kind of sleep?

ANIMALS AND THE SENSES

Beasts perceive differently from us, so we cannot know which perception is true.

FRENCH

2.12.249 Si les sens sont noz premiers iuges, ce ne sont pas les nostres qu'il faut seuls appeller au conseil: car en cette faculté, les animaux ont autant ou plus de droit que nous. Il est certain qu'aucuns ont l'ouye plus aigue que l'homme, d'autres la veue, d'autres le sentiment, d'autres l'attouchement ou le goust. Democritus disoit que les Dieux et les bestes auoyent les facultez sensitiues beaucoup plus parfaictes que l'homme. Or entre les effects de leurs sens, et les nostres, la difference est extreme. Nostre saliue nettoye et asseche noz playes, elle

ENGLISH

If the senses are our first judges, it is not ours alone that we must call into council; for in this faculty animals have as much right as we have, or more. It is certain that some have keener hearing than man, others keener sight, others keener smell, others keener touch or taste. Democritus said that the gods and the beasts had far more perfect sensory faculties than man. Now between the effects of their senses and ours the difference is

201 The first Latin line is from Virgil, Aeneid, describing the madness of Pentheus.
202 In Homer's Odyssey the Cimmerians live in perpetual mist and darkness at the edge of the world.

FRENCH

tue le serpent. Tantáque in his rebus distantia differitásque est, / Vt quod aliis cibus est, aliis fuat acre venenum.

/ Sæpe etenim serpens, hominis contacta saliua, / Disperit, ac sese mandendo conficit ipsa. Quelle qualité donnerons nous à la saliue, ou selon nous, ou selon le serpent? Par quel des deux sens verifierons nous sa veritable essence que nous cherchons? Pline dit qu'il y a aux Indes certains lieures marins, qui nous sont poison, et nous à eux: de maniere que du seul attouchement nous les tuons. Qui sera veritablement poison, ou l'homme, ou le poisson? à qui en croirons nous, ou au poisson de l'homme, ou à l'homme du poisson? Quelque qualité d'air infecte l'homme qui ne nuit point au bœuf; quelque autre le bœuf, qui ne nuit point à l'homme; laquelle des deux sera en verité et en nature pestilente qualité?

Ceux qui ont la iaunisse, ils voyent toutes choses iaunastres et plus pasles que nous: *Lurida præterea fiunt quæcunque tuentur / Arquati.* Ceux qui ont cette maladie que les medecins nomment Hyposphragma, qui est vne suffusion de sang soubs la peau, voient toutes choses rouges et sanglantes. Ces humeurs, qui changent ainsi les operations de nostre veuë, que sçauons nous si elles predominent aux bestes, et leur sont ordinaires? Car nous en voyons les vnes, qui ont les yeux iaunes, comme noz malades de iaunisse, d'autres qui les ont sanglans de rougeur: à celles là, il est vray-semblable, que la couleur des obiects paroist autre qu'à nous: quel iugement des deux sera le vray?

Car il n'est pas dict, que l'essence des choses, se rapporte à l'homme seul. La dureté, la blancheur, la profondeur, et l'aigreur, touchent le seruice et science des animaux, comme la nostre: Nature leur en a donné l'vsage comme à nous. Quand nous pressons l'œil, les corps que nous regardons, nous les apperceuons plus longs et estendus: plusieurs bestes ont l'œil ainsi pressé: cette longueur est donc à l'aduanture la veritable forme de ce corps, non pas celle que noz yeux luy donnent en leur assiette ordinaire.

Si nous serrons l'œil par dessoubs, les choses nous semblent doubles: *Bina lucernarum florentia lumina flammis, / Et duplices hominum facies, et corpora bina.* Si nous auons les oreilles empeschées de quelque chose, ou le passage de l'ouye resserré, nous receuons le son autre, que nous ne faisons ordinairement: les animaux qui ont

ENGLISH

extreme. Our saliva cleans and dries our wounds; it kills the snake. And so great is the distance and difference in these things / That what is food for some is bitter poison for others.

/ For often a snake, touched by human saliva, / Perishes and destroys itself by biting itself. What quality shall we assign to saliva—the one it has for us, or the one it has for the snake? By which of the two senses shall we verify the true essence we are looking for? Pliny says that in the Indies there are certain sea hares that are poison to us, and we to them, so that we kill them by a mere touch. Which will truly be poison, the man or the fish? Whom shall we believe, the fish about the man, or the man about the fish? Some quality of the air infects man that does no harm to the ox; some other infects the ox that does no harm to man. Which of the two will be, in truth and in nature, a pestilent quality?

Those who have jaundice see everything as yellowish and paler than we do: *Besides, whatever the jaundiced look at / Turns sallow.* Those who have the illness physicians call hyposphragma, which is an effusion of blood under the skin, see everything as red and bloody. These humors that thus change the workings of our sight—how do we know whether they predominate in animals and are normal for them? For we see some that have yellow eyes, like our jaundice patients, and others that have them bloodshot with redness. To these it is likely that the color of objects appears different from what it is to us. Which of the two judgments will be the true one?

For it is nowhere laid down that the essence of things relates to man alone. Hardness, whiteness, depth and sourness concern the use and knowledge of animals as they do ours: Nature has given them the use of these as she has given it to us. When we press on the eye, we perceive the bodies we look at as longer and stretched out. Many beasts have their eyes pressed like that; so this length is perhaps the true form of that body, not the one our eyes give it in their ordinary position.

If we squeeze the eye from below, things seem double to us: *The lamps' flowering lights with twin flames, / And men's faces double, and bodies twofold.* If our ears are blocked by something, or the passage of hearing is narrowed, we receive sound differently from usual. Animals that have hairy ears, or

FRENCH

les oreilles velues, ou qui n'ont qu'vn bien petit trou au lieu de l'oreille, ils n'oyent par consequent pas ce que nous oyons, et reçoiuent le son autre.

Nous voyons aux festes et aux theatres, qu'opposant à la lumiere des flambeaux, vne vitre teinte de quelque couleur, tout ce qui est en ce lieu, nous appert ou vert, ou iaune, ou violet: *Et vulgò faciunt id lutea russáque vela,*
Et ferrugina, cùm, magnis intenta theatris,
Per malos volgata trabésque trementia pendent:
Namque ibi consessum caueai subter, et omnem
Scenai speciem, patrum, matrúmque, deroúmque
Inficiunt, cogùntque suo volitare colore. Il est vray-semblable que les yeux des animaux, que nous voyons estre de diuerse couleur, leur produisent les apparences des corps de mesmes leurs yeux.

2.12.250 Pour le iugement de l'operation des sens, il faudroit donc que nous en fussions premierement d'accord auec les bestes, secondement entre nous mesmes. Ce que nous ne sommes aucunement: et entrons en debat tous les coups de ce que l'vn oyt, void, ou gouste, quelque chose autrement qu'vn autre: et debattons autant que d'autre chose, de la diuersité des images que les sens nous rapportent. Autrement oit, et voit par la regle ordinaire de nature, et autrement gouste, vn enfant qu'vn homme de trente ans: et cettuy-cy autrement qu'vn sexagenaire. Les sens sont aux vns plus obscurs et plus sombres, aux autres plus ouuerts et plus aigus. Nous receuons les choses autres et autres selon que nous sommes, et qu'il nous semble.

Or nostre sembler estant si incertain et controuersé, ce n'est plus miracle, si on nous dit, que nous pouuons auouër que la neige nous apparoist blanche, mais que d'establir si de son essence elle est telle, et à la verité, nous ne nous en sçaurions respondre: et ce commencement esbranlé, toute la science du monde s'en va necessairement à vau-l'eau. Quoy, que noz sens mesmes s'entr'empeschent l'vn l'autre? vne peinture semble esleuée à la veue, au maniement elle semble plate: dirons nous que le musque soit aggreable ou non, qui resiouit nostre sentiment, et offence nostre goust?

Il y a des herbes et des vnguens propres à vne partie du corps, qui en blessent vne autre: le miel est plaisant au goust, mal plaisant à la veue. Ces bagues qui sont entaillées en forme de plumes, qu'on appelle en deuise, pennes sans fin, il n'y a œil qui en puisse discerner la

ENGLISH

have only a tiny hole instead of an ear, consequently do not hear what we hear, and receive sound differently.

We see at festivals and in theaters that when a pane of glass tinted some color is placed before the light of the torches, everything in the place appears to us green, or yellow, or violet: *And yellow, red and dark purple awnings commonly do this,*
When, stretched over great theaters,
Spread across masts and beams, they hang quivering:
For there they stain the seated crowd below in the tiers,
And the whole show of the stage, the senators, the matrons, the gods,
And make them flutter in their own color. It is likely that the eyes of animals, which we see to be of various colors, produce for them appearances of bodies in the same color as their eyes.

To judge the working of the senses, then, we would first have to agree about it with the beasts, and second among ourselves. This we do not do at all. We fall into dispute every time one person hears, sees or tastes something differently from another, and we argue about the diversity of the images the senses bring us as much as about anything else. By the ordinary rule of nature a child hears, sees and tastes otherwise than a man of thirty, and he otherwise than a man of sixty. In some people the senses are duller and darker, in others more open and keener. We receive things differently, and differently again, according to what we are and how they seem to us.

Now since our seeming is so uncertain and disputed, it is no longer a wonder if we are told that we may admit that snow appears white to us, but that as to establishing whether it is so in its essence and in truth, we could not vouch for it. And with this starting point shaken, all the knowledge in the world is necessarily swept away downstream. What of the fact that our senses themselves get in each other's way? A painting seems raised to the eye; to the touch it seems flat. Shall we say that musk is pleasant or not, when it delights our smell and offends our taste?

There are herbs and ointments good for one part of the body that injure another. Honey is pleasant to the taste, unpleasant to the sight. Those rings carved in the form of feathers, which in the language of devices are called "endless feathers":

FRENCH

largeur, et qui se sçeust deffendre de cette pipperie, que d'vn costé elle n'aille en eslargissant, et s'appointant et estressissant par l'autre, mesmes quand on la roulle autour du doigt: toutesfois au maniement elle vous semble equable en largeur et par tout pareille.

Ces personnes qui pour aider leur volupté, se seruoyent anciennement de miroirs, propres à grossir et aggrandir l'obiect qu'ils representent, affin que les membres qu'ils auoient à embesongner, leur pleussent d'auantage par cette accroissance oculaire: auquel des deux sens donnoient-ils gaigné, ou à la veue qui leur representoit ces membres gros et grands à souhait, ou à l'attouchement qui les leur presentoit petits et desdaignables? Sont-ce nos sens qui prestent au subject ces diuerses conditions, et que les subjects n'en ayent pourtant qu'vne?

Comme nous voyons du pain que nous mangeons; ce n'est que pain, mais nostre vsage en fait des os, du sang, de la chair, des poils, et des ongles: *Vt cibus, in membra atque artus cùm diditur omnes, / Disperit, atque aliam naturam sufficit ex se.* L'humeur que succe la racine d'vn arbre, elle se fait tronc, feuille et fruict: l'air n'estant qu'vn, il se fait par l'application à vne trompette, diuers en mille sortes de sons. Sont-ce, dis-ie, noz sens qui façonnent de mesme, de diuerses qualitez ces subjects; ou s'ils les ont telles? Et sur ce doubte, que pouuons nous resoudre de leur veritable essence?

D'auantage puis que les accidens des maladies, de la resuerie, ou du sommeil, nous font paroistre les choses autres, qu'elles ne paroissent aux sains, aux sages, et à ceux qui veillent: n'est-il pas vray-semblable que nostre assiette droicte, et noz humeurs naturelles, ont aussi dequoy donner vn estre aux choses, se rapportant à leur condition, et les accommoder à soy, comme font les humeurs desreglées: et nostre santé aussi capable de leur fournir son visage, comme la maladie? Pourquoy n'a le temperé quelque forme des obiects relatiue à soy, comme l'intemperé: et ne leur imprimera-il pareillement son charactere? Le desgousté charge la fadeur au vin; le sain la saueur; l'alteré la friandise.

ENGLISH

there is no eye that can make out their width, and that could defend itself against the illusion that the ring widens on one side and narrows to a point on the other, even when you turn it around your finger. Yet to the touch it seems to you of even width and the same all around.[203]

Those people who in ancient times, to aid their pleasure, used mirrors designed to swell and enlarge the object they reflected, so that the members they had to put to work might please them more through this increase to the eye: to which of the two senses did they award the victory? To sight, which showed them those members as big and large as they could wish, or to touch, which presented them as small and contemptible? Is it our senses that lend the object these various conditions, while the objects nevertheless have only one?[204]

It is as we see with the bread we eat: it is only bread, but our use of it makes it into bones, blood, flesh, hair and nails: *As food, when distributed into all the limbs and members, / Perishes and supplies from itself another nature.* The sap that the root of a tree sucks up becomes trunk, leaf and fruit; and air, though it is one, becomes, when applied to a trumpet, varied into a thousand kinds of sounds. Is it, I say, our senses that likewise fashion these objects with various qualities, or do the objects really have them? And in this doubt, what can we decide about their true essence?

Moreover, the accidents of illness, of delirium or of sleep make things appear to us otherwise than they appear to the healthy, the wise and the waking. Is it not likely, then, that our upright condition and our natural humors also have the means to give things a being that corresponds to their own condition, and to adapt them to themselves, as disordered humors do; and that our health is as capable of lending them its own face as illness is? Why should the temperate man not have some form of objects relative to himself, as the intemperate man has, and why should he not likewise stamp them with his own character? The man with no appetite blames the wine for being flat; the healthy man credits it with flavor; the thirsty man with deliciousness.

203 A lover's emblem punning on pennes (feathers) and peines (pains): "endless pains."
204 Montaigne has in mind Hostius Quadra, whose mirrors Seneca describes in his Natural Questions.

FRENCH

Or nostre estat accommodant les choses à soy, et les transformant selon soy, nous ne sçauons plus quelles sont les choses en verité, car rien ne vient à nous que falsifié et alteré par noz sens. Où le compas, l'esquarre, et la regle sont gauches, toutes les proportions qui s'en tirent, tous les bastimens qui se dressent à leur mesure, sont aussi necessairement manques et deffaillans. L'incertitude de noz sens rend incertain tout ce qu'ils produisent.

Denique vt in fabrica, si praua est regula prima,
Normáque si fallax rectis regionibus exit,
Et libella aliqua si ex parte claudicat hilum,
Omnia mendosè fieri, atque obstipa necessum est,
Praua, cubantia, prona, supina, atque absona tecta,
Iam ruere vt quædam videantur velle, ruántque
Prodita iudiciis fallacibus omnia primis.
Hic igitur ratio tibi rerum praua necesse est,
Falsáque sit falsis quæcumque à sensibus orta est. Au demeurant, qui sera propre à iuger de ces differences?

Comme nous disons aux debats de la religion, qu'il nous faut vn iuge non attaché à l'vn ny à l'autre party, exempt de choix et d'affection, ce qui ne se peut parmy les Chrestiens: il aduient de mesme en cecy: car s'il est vieil, il ne peut iuger du sentiment de la vieillesse, estant luy mesme partie en ce debat: s'il est ieune, de mesme: sain, de mesme, de mesme malade, dormant, et veillant: il nous faudroit quelqu'vn exempt de toutes ces qualitez, afin que sans præoccupation de iugement, il iugeast de ces propositions, comme à luy indifferentes: et à ce compte il nous faudroit vn iuge qui ne fust pas.

ENGLISH

Now since our condition adapts things to itself and transforms them according to itself, we no longer know what things are in truth; for nothing comes to us except falsified and altered by our senses. Where the compass, the square and the rule are crooked, all the proportions drawn from them, all the buildings put up to their measure, are also necessarily faulty and defective. The uncertainty of our senses makes uncertain everything they produce.

Finally, as in a building, if the first rule is warped,
And if the square is false and departs from straight lines,
And if the level is off in any part the least bit,
Everything must be made faulty and askew,
The roofs warped, leaning, tilting forward and back, out of all proportion,
So that some parts seem about to fall, and do fall,
All betrayed by those first false judgments:
So too your reasoning about things must be warped
And false, whatever springs from false senses. For the rest, who will be fit to judge these differences?

We say in religious disputes that we need a judge attached to neither party, free of preference and affection—which is not possible among Christians. It is the same in this matter. For if he is old, he cannot judge of the perception of old age, being himself a party to the dispute; if he is young, the same; healthy, the same; and the same if he is sick, sleeping or waking. We would need someone free of all these qualities, so that, without prejudgment, he might judge these propositions as matters indifferent to him. And by that reckoning we would need a judge who did not exist.

NO FIRM GROUND

Neither senses nor reason can settle the dispute; everything flows and changes.

FRENCH

2.12.251 Pour iuger des apparences que nous receuons des subjects, il nous faudroit vn instrument iudicatoire: pour verifier cet instrument, il nous y faut de la demonstration: pour verifier la demonstration, vn instrument, nous voila au rouet. Puis que les sens ne peuuent arrester nostre dispute, estans pleins eux-mesmes d'incertitude, il faut que ce soit la raison: aucune raison ne s'establira sans vne autre raison, nous voyla à reculons iusques à l'infiny.

ENGLISH

To judge the appearances we receive from objects, we would need a judging instrument; to verify that instrument, we need demonstration; to verify the demonstration, an instrument: there we are, going around in a circle. Since the senses cannot settle our dispute, being full of uncertainty themselves, it must be reason. But no reason can be established without another reason: there we are, going backward to infinity.

FRENCH

Nostre fantasie ne s'applique pas aux choses estrangeres, ains elle est conceue par l'entremise des sens, et les sens ne comprennent pas le subject estranger, ains seulement leurs propres passions: et par ainsi la fantasie et apparence n'est pas du subject, ains seulement de la passion et souffrance du sens; laquelle passion, et subject, sont choses diuerses: parquoy qui iuge par les apparences, iuge par chose autre que le subject. Et de dire que les passions des sens, rapportent à l'ame, la qualité des subjects estrangers par ressemblance; comment se peut l'ame et l'entendement asseurer de cette ressemblance, n'ayant de soy nul commerce, auec les subjects estrangers? Tout ainsi comme, qui ne cognoist pas Socrates, voyant son pourtraict, ne peut dire qu'il luy ressemble.

Or qui voudroit toutesfois iuger par les apparences: si c'est par toutes, il est impossible, car elles s'entr'empeschent par leurs contrarietez et discrepances, comme nous voyons par experience. Sera ce qu'aucunes apparences choisies reglent les autres? Il faudra verifier cette choisie par vne autre choisie, la seconde par la tierce: et par ainsi ce ne sera iamais faict. Finalement, il n'y a aucune constante existence, ny de nostre estre, ny de celuy des obiects. Et nous, et nostre iugement, et toutes choses mortelles, vont coulant et roulant sans cesse. Ainsin il ne se peut establir rien de certain de l'vn à l'autre, et le iugeant, et le iugé, estans en continuelle mutation et branle.

ENGLISH

Our notion is not applied to external things; rather, it is conceived through the medium of the senses. And the senses do not grasp the external object, but only their own affections. So the notion and appearance is not of the object, but only of the affection and impression received by the sense; and that affection and the object are different things. Therefore whoever judges by appearances judges by something other than the object. And as for saying that the affections of the senses convey to the soul the quality of external objects by resemblance: how can the soul and the understanding be sure of that resemblance, having of themselves no dealings with external objects? Just so, someone who does not know Socrates cannot, on seeing his portrait, say that it resembles him.

Now suppose someone wanted to judge by appearances nevertheless. If by all of them, it is impossible, for they get in each other's way by their contradictions and discrepancies, as we see by experience. Shall it be that some selected appearances govern the others? This selected one will have to be verified by another selected one, the second by a third, and so it will never be done. Finally, there is no constant existence, either of our being or of that of objects. And we, and our judgment, and all mortal things, go flowing and rolling ceaselessly. Thus nothing certain can be established from one to the other, both the judging and the judged being in continual change and motion.

BEING AND PASSING

Only God truly is; man can rise above himself only by God's grace.

FRENCH

2.12.252 Nous n'auons aucune communication à l'estre, par ce que toute humaine nature est tousiours au milieu, entre le naistre et le mourir, ne baillant de soy qu'vne obscure apparence et ombre, et vne incertaine et debile opinion. Et si de fortune vous fichez vostre pensée à vouloir prendre son estre, ce sera ne plus ne moins que qui voudroit empoigner l'eau: car tant plus il serrera et pressera ce qui de sa nature coule par tout, tant plus il perdra ce qu'il vouloit tenir et empoigner.

Ainsi veu que toutes choses sont subjectes à passer d'vn changement en autre, la raison qui y cherche vne reelle

ENGLISH

We have no communication with being, because all human nature is always midway between birth and death, offering of itself only a dim appearance and shadow, and an uncertain and feeble opinion. And if by chance you fix your thought on trying to grasp its being, it will be neither more nor less than if someone tried to grip water: for the more he squeezes and presses what by its nature flows everywhere, the more he will lose what he wanted to hold and grip.[205]

Thus, since all things are subject to pass from one change to another, reason, seeking a real sub-

FRENCH

subsistance, se trouue deceuë, ne pouuant rien apprehender de subsistant et permanant: par ce que tout ou vient en estre, et n'est pas encore du tout, ou commence à mourir auant qu'il soit nay. Platon disoit que les corps n'auoient iamais existence, ouy bien naissance, estimant qu'Homere eust faict l'Ocean pere des Dieux, et Thetis la mere: pour nous montrer, que toutes choses sont en fluxion, muance et variation perpetuelle. Opinion commune à tous les philosophes auant son temps, comme il dit: sauf le seul Parmenides, qui refusoit mouuement aux choses: de la force duquel il fait grand cas.

Pythagoras, que toute matiere est coulante et labile. Les Stoiciens, qu'il n'y a point de temps present, et que ce que nous appellons present, n'est que la iointure et assemblage du futur et du passé: Heraclitus, que iamais homme n'estoit deux fois entré en mesme riuiere: Epicharmus, que celuy qui a pieça emprunté de l'argent, ne le doit pas maintenant; et que celuy qui cette nuict a esté conuié à venir ce matin disner, vient auiourd'huy non conuié; attendu que ce ne sont plus eux, ils sont deuenus autres: et qu'il ne se pouuoit trouuer vne substance mortelle deux fois en mesme estat: car par soudaineté et legereté de changement, tantost elle dissipe tantost elle rassemble, elle vient, et puis s'en va, de façon, que ce qui commence à naistre, ne paruient iamais iusques à perfection d'estre.

Pourautant que ce naistre n'acheue iamais, et iamais n'arreste, comme estant à bout, ains depuis la semence, va tousiours se changeant et muant d'vn à autre. Comme de semence humaine se fait premierement dans le ventre de la mere vn fruict sans forme: puis vn enfant formé, puis estant hors du ventre, vn enfant de mammelle; apres il deuient garçon; puis consequemment vn iouuenceau; apres vn homme faict; puis vn homme d'aage; à la fin decrepite vieillard. De maniere que l'aage et generation subsequente va tousiours deffaisant et gastant la precedente.

Mutat enim mundi naturam totius ætas,
Ex alióque alius status excipere omnia debet,
Nec manet vlla sui similis res: omnia migrant,
Omnia commutat natura et vertere cogit. Et puis nous autres sottement craignons vne espece de mort, là où nous en

ENGLISH

stance in them, finds itself disappointed, being unable to apprehend anything subsistent and permanent; because everything is either coming into being and does not yet entirely exist, or is beginning to die before it is born. Plato said that bodies never had existence, but only birth, believing that Homer had made Ocean the father of the gods and Thetis the mother in order to show us that all things are in perpetual flux, change and variation. This, as he says, was an opinion common to all the philosophers before his time—except Parmenides alone, who denied motion to things, and whose force he makes much of.[206]

Pythagoras said that all matter is flowing and unstable; the Stoics, that there is no present time, and that what we call present is only the joint and junction of future and past; Heraclitus, that no man had ever stepped twice into the same river; Epicharmus, that he who borrowed money long ago does not owe it now, and that he who was invited last night to come to dinner this morning comes today uninvited, since they are no longer themselves: they have become others. And he said that a mortal substance could not be found twice in the same state: for by the suddenness and lightness of its change, now it scatters, now it gathers again; it comes, and then it goes; so that what begins to be born never reaches the perfection of being.

For this birth is never completed and never stops, as if it had reached its end; rather, from the seed onward it is always changing and shifting from one thing to another. Thus from human seed there is first made, in the mother's womb, a formless fruit; then a formed child; then, once out of the womb, a nursing infant; after that he becomes a boy; then in turn a youth; after that a grown man; then a man of years; and at last a decrepit old man. So that each later age and generation is always undoing and spoiling the one before.

For time changes the nature of the whole world,
And one state must succeed another in all things,
Nor does anything remain like itself: all things move on,
Nature alters all things and compels them to turn. And

205 From here to the end of the essay's argument Montaigne follows, almost word for word, Amyot's French translation of Plutarch's essay On the E at Delphi.
206 Homer (Iliad, Book XIV) actually names Tethys, the wife of Ocean, as the mother of the gods.

FRENCH

auons desia passé et en passons tant d'autres. Car non seulement, comme disoit Heraclitus, la mort du feu est generation de l'air, et la mort de l'air, generation de l'eau. Mais encor plus manifestement le pouuons nous voir en nous mesmes.

La fleur d'aage se meurt et passe quand la vieillesse suruient: et la ieunesse se termine en fleur d'aage d'homme faict: l'enfance en la ieunesse: et le premier aage meurt en l'enfance: et le iour d'hier meurt en celuy du iourd'huy, et le iourd'huy mourra en celuy de demain: et n'y a rien qui demeure, ne qui soit tousiours vn. Car qu'il soit ainsi, si nous demeurons tousiours mesmes et vns, comment est-ce que nous nous esiouyssons maintenant d'vne chose, et maintenant d'vne autre? comment est-ce que nous aymons choses contraires, ou les hayssons, nous les louons, ou nous les blasmons? comment auons nous differentes affections, ne retenants plus le mesme sentiment en la mesme pensée?

Car il n'est pas vray-semblable que sans mutation nous prenions autres passions: et ce qui souffre mutation ne demeure pas vn mesme: et s'il n'est pas vn mesme, il n'est donc pas aussi: ains quant et l'estre tout vn, change aussi l'estre simplement, deuenant tousiours autre d'vn autre. Et par consequent se trompent et mentent les sens de nature, prenans ce qui apparoist, pour ce qui est, à faute de bien sçauoir que c'est qui est.

2.12.253 Mais qu'est-ce donc qui est veritablement? ce qui est eternel: c'est à dire, qui n'a iamais eu de naissance, ny n'aura iamais fin, à qui le temps n'apporte iamais aucune mutation. Car c'est chose mobile que le temps, et qui apparoist comme en ombre, auec la matiere coulante et fluante tousiours, sans iamais demeurer stable ny permanente: à qui appartiennent ces mots, deuant et apres, et, a esté, ou sera. Lesquels tout de prime face montrent euidemment, que ce n'est pas chose qui soit: car ce seroit grande sottise et fauceté toute apparente, de dire que cela soit, qui n'est pas encore en estre, ou qui desia a cessé d'estre.

Et quant à ces mots, present, instant, maintenant, par lesquels il semble que principalement nous soustenons et fondons l'intelligence du temps, la raison le descouurant, le destruit tout sur le champ: car elle le fend incontinent, et le partit en futur et en passé: comme le voulant voir necessairement desparty en deux. Autant en aduient-il à la nature, qui est mesurée, comme au temps, qui la mesure: car il n'y a non plus en elle rien qui demeure, ne

ENGLISH

then we foolishly fear one kind of death, when we have already passed through so many others, and are passing through them still. For not only, as Heraclitus said, is the death of fire the birth of air, and the death of air the birth of water; we can see it even more plainly in ourselves.

The prime of life dies and passes when old age comes on; youth ends in the prime of the grown man; childhood in youth; infancy dies in childhood; yesterday dies in today, and today will die in tomorrow; and there is nothing that remains or is always one. For that this is so: if we remain always the same and one, how is it that we take delight now in one thing and now in another? How is it that we love contrary things, or hate them, praise them or blame them? How do we have different affections, no longer retaining the same feeling in the same thought?

For it is not likely that we take on different passions without changing; and what undergoes change does not remain one and the same; and if it is not one and the same, then it also is not. Rather, together with its being one and the same, its being outright changes too, as it becomes ever other from another. And consequently our natural senses deceive and lie, taking what appears for what is, for want of really knowing what it is that is.

But what, then, truly is? What is eternal: that is to say, what has never had birth and will never have an end, and to which time never brings any change. For time is a mobile thing, which appears as if in shadow, along with matter that is forever flowing and running, never stable or permanent. To time belong these words, before and after, and has been, or will be. These show plainly at first sight that it is not a thing that is; for it would be great folly and manifest falsehood to say that something is which is not yet in being, or which has already ceased to be.

And as for these words, present, instant, now, on which it seems we chiefly support and ground our understanding of time: reason, discovering what it is, destroys it on the spot. For it immediately splits it and divides it into future and past, as if wishing to see it necessarily parted in two. The same happens to nature, which is measured, as to time, which measures it: for there is nothing in nature

FRENCH

qui soit subsistant, ains y sont toutes choses ou nées, ou naissantes, ou mourantes.

Au moyen dequoy ce seroit peché de dire de Dieu, qui est le seul qui est, que il fut, ou il sera: car ces termes là sont declinaisons, passages, ou vicissitudes de ce qui ne peut durer, ny demeurer en estre. Parquoy il faut conclure Dieu seul est, non point selon aucune mesure du temps, mais selon vne eternité immuable et immobile, non mesurée par temps, ny subjecte à aucune declinaison: deuant lequel rien n'est, ny ne sera apres, ny plus nouueau ou plus recent; ains vn realement estant, qui par vn seul maintenant emplit le tousiours, et n'y a rien, qui veritablement soit, que luy seul: sans qu'on puisse dire, il a esté, ou, il sera, sans commencement et sans fin.

2.12.254 A cette conclusion si religieuse, d'vn homme payen, ie veux ioindre seulement ce mot, d'vn tesmoing de mesme condition, pour la fin de ce long et ennuyeux discours, qui me fourniroit de matiere sans fin. O la vile chose, dit-il, et abiecte, que l'homme, s'il ne s'esleue au dessus de l'humanité! Voyla vn bon mot, et vn vtile desir: mais pareillement absurde. Car de faire la poignée plus grande que le poing, la brassée plus grande que le bras, et d'esperer eniamber plus que de l'estenduë de noz iambes, cela est impossible et monstrueux: ny que l'homme se monte au dessus de soy et de l'humanité: car il ne peut voir que de ses yeux, ny saisir que de ses prises.

Il s'esleuera si Dieu luy preste extraordinairement la main. Il s'esleuera abandonnant et renonçant à ses propres moyens, et se laissant hausser et sousleuer par les moyens purement celestes. C'est à nostre foy Chrestienne, non à sa vertu Stoïque, de pretendre à cette diuine et miraculeuse metamorphose.

ENGLISH

either that remains or that subsists; rather, all things in it are either born, or being born, or dying.

For which reason it would be a sin to say of God, who is the only one who is, that he was or he will be: for those terms are declensions, passages or vicissitudes of what cannot endure or remain in being. Therefore we must conclude that God alone is —not according to any measure of time, but according to an eternity immutable and immobile, not measured by time nor subject to any declension; before whom nothing is, nor will be after, nor is anything newer or more recent; but one who really is, who with a single now fills the always; and there is nothing that truly is but he alone—without our being able to say he has been, or he will be—without beginning and without end.

To this so religious conclusion of a pagan I want only to add this saying of a witness of the same condition, to bring to an end this long and tiresome discourse, which could supply me with endless matter. "Oh, what a vile and abject thing man is," he says, "if he does not raise himself above humanity!" That is a good saying and a useful desire, but equally absurd. For to make the handful bigger than the hand, the armful bigger than the arm, and to hope to stride farther than our legs can reach, is impossible and monstrous; nor can man mount above himself and humanity. For he can see only with his own eyes, and seize only with his own grip.[207]

He will rise if God, by special favor, lends him a hand. He will rise by abandoning and renouncing his own means, and letting himself be raised and lifted up by purely heavenly ones. It is for our Christian faith, not for his Stoic virtue, to aspire to that divine and miraculous metamorphosis.

207 The saying is Seneca's, from the preface to his Natural Questions.

II.13 Of Judging Another's Death

De iuger de la mort d'autruy
A good death is hard to judge, since few believe their end has come; Montaigne weighs Cato's suicide and other deliberate deaths.

FRENCH

2.13.1 QVAND nous iugeons de l'asseurance d'autruy en la mort, qui est sans doubte la plus remerquable action de la vie humaine, il se faut prendre garde d'vne chose, que malaisément on croit estre arriué à ce poinct. Peu de gens meurent resolus, que ce soit leur heure derniere: et n'est endroit où la pipperie de l'esperance nous amuse plus. Elle ne cesse de corner aux oreilles: D'autres ont bien esté plus malades sans mourir, l'affaire n'est pas si desesperé qu'on pense: et au pis aller, Dieu a bien faict d'autres miracles. Et aduient cela de ce que nous faisons trop de cas de nous. Il semble que l'vniuersité des choses souffre aucunement de nostre aneantissement, et qu'elle soit compassionnée à nostre estat.

D'autant que nostre veuë alterée se represente les choses de mesmes, et nous est aduis qu'elles luy faillent à mesure qu'elle leur faut. Comme ceux qui voyagent en mer, à qui les montagnes, les campagnes, les villes, le ciel, et la terre vont mesme bransle, et quant et quant eux: *Prouehimur portu, terræque vrbésque recedunt.* Qui vit iamais vieillesse qui ne louast le temps passé, et ne blasmast le present, chargeant le monde et les mœurs des hommes, de sa misere et de son chagrin? *Iámque caput quassans, grandis suspirat arator,*
Et cùm tempora temporibus præsentia confert
Præteritis, laudat fortunas sæpe parentis,
Et crepat antiquum genus vt pietate repletum.

2.13.2 Nous entrainons tout auec nous: d'où il s'ensuit que nous estimons grande chose nostre mort, et qui ne passe pas si aisément, ny sans solemne consultation des astres: *tot circa vnum caput tumultuantes deos*. Et le pensons d'autant plus, que plus nous nous prisons. Comment, tant de science se perdroit elle auec tant de dommage, sans particulier soucy des destinées? vne ame si rare et

ENGLISH

When we judge another man's assurance in death, which is without doubt the most noteworthy action of human life, we must beware of one thing: that people find it hard to believe they have reached that point. Few men die convinced that it is their last hour, and there is no situation in which the deception of hope beguiles us more. It never stops trumpeting in our ears: "Others have been much sicker than this without dying; the case is not as hopeless as people think; and at worst, God has worked other miracles." And this comes about because we make too much of ourselves. It seems that the universe somehow suffers from our annihilation, and that it takes pity on our condition.

For our altered sight pictures things in the same way, and we suppose that they are failing it as fast as it fails them—like those who travel by sea, for whom the mountains, the fields, the towns, the sky and the earth move with the same motion, and along with them: *We sail out from harbor, and lands and cities recede.* Who ever saw old age that did not praise times past and blame the present, charging the world and the manners of men with its own misery and sullenness? *And now the old plowman shakes his head and sighs,*
And when he compares the present times with times
Past, he often praises his father's fortunes,
And harps on how the old race was full of piety.[1]

We drag everything along with us. From this it follows that we regard our death as a great thing, one that does not pass so easily, nor without solemn consultation of the stars: *so many gods in an uproar over one head*. And we think so all the more, the more highly we prize ourselves. What! Should so much learning be lost, with so much harm,

1 The first quotation is from Virgil, Aeneid; the second from Lucretius, On the Nature of Things.

FRENCH

exemplaire ne couste elle non plus à tuer, qu'vne ame populaire et inutile? cette vie, qui en couure tant d'autres, de qui tant d'autres vies dependent, qui occupe tant de monde par son vsage, remplit tant de place, se desplace elle comme celle qui tient à son simple nœud? Nul de nous ne pense assez n'estre qu'vn.

De là viennent ces mots de Cæsar à son pilote, plus enflez que la mer qui le menassoit: *Italiam si cœlo authore recusas,*
Me pete: sola tibi causa hæc est iusta timoris,
Vectorem non nosse tuum, perrumpe procellas
Tutela secure mei: et ceux-cy, *Credit iam digna pericula Cæsar*
Fatis esse suis: tantúsque euertere, dixit,
Me superis labor est, parua quem puppe sedentem,
Tam magno petiere mari? Et cette resuerie publique, que le soleil porta en son front tout le long d'vn an le deuil de sa mort: *Ille etiam extincto miseratus Cæsare Romam,*
Cùm caput obscura nitidum ferrugini texit. Et mille semblables; dequoy le monde se laisse si aysément pipper, estimant que noz interests alterent le ciel, et que son infinité se formalise de noz menues actions.

Non tanta cœlo societas nobiscum est, vt nostro fato mortalis sit ille quoque siderum fulgor.

2.13.3 Or de iuger la resolution et la constance, en celuy qui ne croit pas encore certainement estre au danger, quoy qu'il y soit, ce n'est pas raison: et ne suffit pas qu'il soit mort en cette desmarche, s'il ne s'y estoit mis iustement pour cet effect. Il aduient à la plus part, de roidir leur contenance et leurs parolles, pour en acquerir reputation, qu'ils esperent encore iouir viuans. D'autant que i'en ay veu mourir, la fortune a disposé les contenances, non leur dessein. Et de ceux mesmes qui se sont anciennement donnez la mort, il y a bien à choisir, si c'est vne mort soudaine, ou mort qui ait du temps.

Ce cruel Empereur Romain, disoit de ses prisonniers, qu'il leur vouloit faire sentir la mort, et si quelqu'vn se

ENGLISH

without the special concern of the Fates? Does so rare and exemplary a soul cost no more to kill than a common, useless one? This life, which shelters so many others, on which so many other lives depend, which keeps so many people busy in its service and fills so much space—is it dislodged like one that hangs by its own single knot? None of us thinks enough that he is only one.[2]

From this come those words of Caesar to his pilot, more swollen than the sea that threatened him: *If you refuse Italy with heaven as your guide,*
Make for it with me as guide: the only just cause of fear for you
Is not knowing whom you carry; break through the storms,
Secure in my protection: and these: *Caesar now believes these dangers worthy*
Of his destiny: "Is it so great a labor," he said,
"For the gods above to overthrow me, that they assail me, sitting in a little boat,
With so vast a sea?" And that public fancy that the sun wore mourning for his death on its brow for a whole year: *He too took pity on Rome when Caesar was extinguished,*
And covered his shining head in dark rust. And a thousand like ones, by which the world lets itself be so easily fooled, thinking that our interests disturb heaven, and that its infinity takes offense at our petty actions.[3]

Heaven has no such fellowship with us that the brightness of the stars should be mortal through our fate as well.[4]

Now it is not reasonable to judge resolution and constancy in a man who does not yet firmly believe he is in danger, even though he is. Nor is it enough that he died in that situation, unless he had put himself there precisely for that purpose. Most men stiffen their bearing and their words to win a reputation that they still hope to enjoy while alive. Of those I have seen die, it was Fortune that arranged their bearing, not their own design. And even among those who took their own lives in ancient times, there is a great difference between a sudden death and a death that takes its time.

That cruel Roman emperor said of his prisoners that he wanted to make them feel death; and if one

2 Seneca the Elder, Suasoriae.

FRENCH

deffaisoit en prison, Celuy là m'est eschappé, disoit-il. Il vouloit estendre la mort, et la faire sentir par les tourmens. *Vidimus et toto quamuis in corpore cæso,*
Nil animæ lethale datum, morémque nefandæ
Durum sæuitiæ, pereuntis parcere morti. De vray, ce n'est pas si grande chose, d'establir tout sain et tout rassis, de se tuer; il est bien aisé de faire le mauuais, auant que de venir aux prises.

De maniere que le plus effeminé homme du monde Heliogabalus, parmy ses plus lasches voluptez, desseignoit bien de se faire mourir delicatement, où l'occasion l'en forceroit: et afin que sa mort ne dementist point le reste de sa vie, auoit faict bastir expres vne tour somptueuse, le bas et le deuant de laquelle estoit planché d'ais enrichis d'or et de pierrerie pour se precipiter: et aussi fait faire des cordes d'or et de soye cramoisie pour s'estrangler: et battre vne espée d'or pour s'enferrer: et gardoit du venin dans des vaisseaux d'emeraude et de topaze, pour s'empoisonner, selon que l'enuie luy prendroit de choisir de toutes ces façons de mourir.

Impiger et fortis virtute coacta. Toutefois quant à cettuy-cy, la mollesse de ses apprests rend plus vray-semblable que le nez luy eust saigné, qui l'en eust mis au propre. Mais de ceux mesmes, qui plus vigoureux, se sont resolus à l'execution, il faut voir, dis-ie, si ç'a esté d'vn coup, qui ostait le loisir d'en sentir l'effect. Car c'est à deuiner, à voir escouler la vie peu à peu, le sentiment du corps se meslant à celuy de l'ame, s'offrant le moyen de se repentir, si la constance s'y fust trouuée, et l'obstination en vne si dangereuse volonté. Aux guerres ciuiles de Cæsar, Lucius Domitius pris en la Prusse, s'estant empoisonné, s'en repentit apres.

Il est aduenu de nostre temps que tel resolu de mourir, et de son premier essay n'ayant donné assez auant, la demangéson de la chair luy repoussant le bras, se reblessa bien fort à deux ou trois fois apres, mais ne peut iamais gaigner sur luy d'enfoncer le coup. Pendant qu'on

ENGLISH

of them did away with himself in prison, "That one has escaped me," he would say. He wanted to stretch death out and make it felt through torments. *We have seen, though the whole body was slashed,*
No fatal blow dealt to the life, and the harsh custom
Of unspeakable cruelty: to withhold death from the dying. In truth, it is no great thing to decide to kill yourself while you are perfectly healthy and perfectly calm. It is very easy to act tough before coming to grips.[5]

So it was that Heliogabalus, the softest man in the world, amid his most dissolute pleasures, fully intended to put himself to death delicately should occasion force him to. So that his death should not belie the rest of his life, he had a sumptuous tower built on purpose to throw himself from, its base and front floored with boards inlaid with gold and precious stones. He also had cords of gold and crimson silk made to strangle himself, and a sword of gold forged to run himself through. And he kept poison in vessels of emerald and topaz to poison himself, depending on which of all these ways of dying he might feel like choosing.[6]

Vigorous and brave with a courage forced upon him. Still, as for this one, the softness of his preparations makes it more likely that he would have lost his nerve had it come to the point. But even among those who were more vigorous and resolved to carry the deed through, we must see, I say, whether it was done at a single stroke, which left no leisure to feel its effect. For it is anyone's guess whether, watching life drain away little by little, with the feeling of the body mingling with that of the soul and the chance to repent presenting itself, they would have shown constancy and obstinacy in so dangerous a resolve. In Caesar's civil wars, Lucius Domitius, captured in Prussia, poisoned himself and then repented of it.[7]

It has happened in our time that a man resolved to die did not strike deep enough at his first attempt, the shrinking of his flesh pushing back his arm. He wounded himself again quite badly two or three times afterward, but could never bring him-

3 The first two quotations are from Lucan, Pharsalia; the third from Virgil, Georgics.
4 Pliny the Elder, Natural History.
5 Montaigne combines sayings that Suetonius gives to Caligula and to Tiberius; the verses are from Lucan's Pharsalia.
6 The story comes from the Augustan History.
7 "Prussia" is Montaigne's slip; in Plutarch, Domitius was taken at Corfinium in Italy in 49 BC.

FRENCH

faisoit le procés à Plantius Syluanus, Vrgulania sa meregrand luy enuoya vn poignard, duquel n'ayant peu venir à bout de se tuer, il se feit coupper les veines à ses gents. Albucilla du temps de Tibere, s'estant pour se tuer frappée trop mollement, donna encores à ses parties moyen de l'emprisonner et faire mourir à leur mode. Autant en fit le Capitaine Demosthenes apres sa route en la Sicile. Et C.

Fimbria s'estant frappé trop foiblement, impetra de son vallet de l'acheuer. Au rebours, Ostorius, lequel pour ne se pouuoir seruir de son bras, desdaigna d'employer celuy de son seruiteur à autre chose qu'à tenir le poignard droit et ferme: et se donnant le branle, porta luy mesme sa gorge à l'encontre, et la transperça.

2.13.4 C'est vne viande à la verité qu'il faut engloutir sans macher, qui n'a le gosier ferré à glace. Et pourtant l'Empereur Adrianus feit que son medecin merquast et circonscriuist en son tetin iustement l'endroit mortel, où celuy eust à viser, à qui il donna la charge de le tuer. Voyla pourquoy Cæsar, quand on luy demandoit quelle mort il trouuoit la plus souhaitable, La moins premeditée, respondit-il, et la plus courte. Si Cæsar l'a osé dire, ce ne m'est plus lascheté de le croire. Vne mort courte, dit Pline, est le souuerain heur de la vie humaine. Il leur fasche de la recognoistre.

Nul ne se peut dire estre resolu à la mort, qui craint à la marchander, qui ne peut la soustenir les yeux ouuerts. Ceux qu'on voit aux supplices courir à leur fin, et haster l'execution, et la presser, ils ne le font pas de resolution, ils se veulent oster le temps de la considerer: l'estre morts ne les fasche pas, mais ouy bien le mourir. *Emori nolo, sed me esse mortuum, nihili æstimo.* C'est vn degré de fermeté, auquel i'ay exprimenté que ie pourrois arriuer, comme ceux qui se iettent dans les dangers, ainsi que dans la mer, à yeux clos.

ENGLISH

self to drive the blow home. While Plautius Silvanus was on trial, his grandmother Urgulania sent him a dagger; unable to finish himself off with it, he had his servants cut his veins. Albucilla, in the time of Tiberius, struck herself too feebly in trying to kill herself, and so gave her enemies the chance to imprison her and put her to death in their own way. The general Demosthenes did the same after his rout in Sicily. And C.[8]

Fimbria, having struck himself too weakly, begged his servant to finish him off. Ostorius, on the contrary, being unable to use his own arm, disdained to use his servant's for anything but holding the dagger straight and firm; and, launching himself, he drove his throat onto it himself and pierced it through.[9]

Death, in truth, is a dish that must be swallowed without chewing, unless your throat is lined with iron. And so the Emperor Hadrian had his physician mark and circle on his breast, just by the nipple, the exact mortal spot at which the man he charged with killing him was to aim. That is why Caesar, when asked what death he thought most desirable, answered: "The least premeditated, and the shortest." If Caesar dared to say it, it is no longer cowardice in me to believe it. "A short death," says Pliny, "is the supreme good fortune of human life." People hate to look it over closely.

No one can be called resolved to die who is afraid to haggle with death, who cannot endure it with open eyes. Those we see at executions running to their end, hurrying the execution and pressing it on, do not do so out of resolution: they want to deprive themselves of the time to consider it. Being dead does not trouble them, but dying certainly does. *I do not want to die, but being dead I count as nothing.* This is a degree of firmness that I have found by experience I could reach—like those who throw themselves into danger as into the sea, with their eyes shut.[10]

8 Plautius Silvanus and Albucilla are from Tacitus' Annals; Demosthenes was the Athenian general defeated at Syracuse in 413 BC.
9 Gaius Fimbria, a Marian general, died in 85 BC; Ostorius Scapula was condemned under Nero in AD 66 (Tacitus).
10 A line of Epicharmus, in Cicero's Latin (Tusculan Disputations).

DEATHS THAT TAKE THEIR TIME

Socrates spent thirty days with his sentence; Atticus, Cleanthes and Marcellinus chose to die slowly and calmly.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
2.13.5	Il n'y a rien, selon moy, plus illustre en la vie de Socrates, que d'auoir eu trente iours entiers à ruminer le decret de sa mort: de l'auoir digerée tout ce temps là, d'vne tres-certaine esperance, sans esmoy, sans alteration: et d'vn train d'actions et de parolles, rauallé plustost et anonchally, que tendu et releué par le poids d'vne telle cogitation.	Nothing in Socrates' life, in my opinion, is more illustrious than his having had thirty whole days to ruminate on the sentence of his death; than his having digested it all that time, in most certain expectation, without anxiety, without change; and with a course of actions and words that was lowered and easygoing rather than strained and heightened by the weight of such a thought.
2.13.6	Ce Pomponius Atticus, à qui Cicero escrit, estant malade, fit appeller Agrippa son gendre, et deux ou trois autres de ses amys; et leur dit, qu'ayant essayé qu'il ne gaignoit rien à se vouloir guerir, et que tout ce qu'il faisoit pour allonger sa vie, allongeoit aussi et augmentoit sa douleur; il estoit deliberé de mettre fin à l'vn et à l'autre, les priant de trouuer bonne sa deliberation, et au pis aller, de ne perdre point leur peine à l'en destourner. Or ayant choisi de se tuer par abstinence, voyla sa maladie guerie par accident: ce remede qu'il auoit employé pour se deffaire, le remet en santé.	That Pomponius Atticus to whom Cicero writes, being ill, sent for Agrippa, his son-in-law, and two or three other friends. He told them that he had found by trial that he gained nothing by trying to get well, and that everything he did to lengthen his life also lengthened and increased his pain; so he was determined to put an end to both. He begged them to approve his decision and, at worst, not to waste their efforts trying to dissuade him. Now, having chosen to kill himself by fasting, lo and behold, his illness was cured by chance: the remedy he had used to do away with himself restored him to health.[11]
	Les medecins et ses amis faisans feste d'vn si heureux euenement, et s'en resiouyssans auec luy, se trouuerent bien trompez: car il ne leur fut possible pour cela de luy faire changer d'opinion, disant qu'ainsi comme ainsi luy falloit il vn iour franchir ce pas, et qu'en estant si auant, il se vouloit oster la peine de recommencer vn' autre fois. Cestuy-cy ayant recognu la mort tout à loisir, non seulement ne se descourage pas au ioindre, mais il s'y acharne: car estant satisfaict en ce pourquoy il estoit entré en combat, il se picque par brauerie d'en voir la fin. C'est bien loing au delà de ne craindre point la mort, que de la vouloir taster et sauourer.	The physicians and his friends, celebrating so happy an outcome and rejoicing with him, found themselves sorely disappointed. For all that, they could not make him change his mind: he said that one way or another he would have to take that step someday, and that, being so far along, he wanted to spare himself the trouble of starting over another time. This man, having surveyed death at full leisure, not only is not discouraged on coming to grips with it, but presses on relentlessly; for, having got what he entered the fight for, he makes it a point of bravado to see it through to the end. It is far beyond not fearing death to want to taste and savor it.
2.13.7	L'histoire du philosophe Cleanthes est fort pareille. Les gengiues luy estoyent enflées et pourries: les medecins luy conseillerent d'vser d'vne grande abstinence. Ayant ieuné deux iours, il est si bien amendé, qu'ils luy declarent sa guarison, et permettent de retourner à son train de viure accoustumé. Luy au rebours, goustant desia quelque douceur en cette defaillance, entreprend de ne	The story of the philosopher Cleanthes is very similar. His gums were swollen and rotting; the physicians advised him to fast strictly. After fasting two days he was so much better that they declared him cured and allowed him to return to his usual way of life. He, on the contrary, already tasting some sweetness in this faintness, resolved not

11 Titus Pomponius Atticus (d. 32 BC), Cicero's friend and correspondent; the story is told by Cornelius Nepos.

FRENCH	ENGLISH
se retirer plus arriere, et franchir le pas, qu'il auoit fort auancé.	to draw back again but to take the step toward which he had already come so far.[12]
2.13.8 Tullius Marcellinus ieune homme Romain, voulant anticiper l'heure de sa destinée, pour se deffaire d'vne maladie, qui le gourmandoit, plus qu'il ne vouloit souffrir: quoy que les medecins luy en promissent guerison certaine, sinon si soudaine, appella ses amis pour en deliberer: les vns, dit Seneca, luy donnoyent le conseil que par lascheté ils eussent prins pour eux mesmes, les autres par flaterie, celuy qu'ils pensoyent luy deuoir estre plus aggreable: mais vn Stoïcien luy dit ainsi: Ne te trauaille pas Marcellinus, comme si tu deliberois de chose d'importance: ce n'est pas grand'chose que viure, tes valets et les bestes viuent: mais c'est grand'chose de mourir honestement, sagement, et constamment.	Tullius Marcellinus, a young Roman, wished to anticipate the hour of his destiny so as to rid himself of an illness that was tormenting him more than he was willing to endure, even though the physicians promised him a sure cure, if not a quick one. He called his friends to deliberate about it. Some, says Seneca, gave him the advice that they themselves would have taken out of cowardice; others, out of flattery, the advice they thought he would like best. But a Stoic spoke to him thus: "Do not trouble yourself, Marcellinus, as if you were deliberating about something important. It is no great thing to live; your servants and the beasts live. But it is a great thing to die honorably, wisely, and steadfastly."[13]
Songe combien il y a que tu fais mesme chose, manger, boire, dormir: boire, dormir, et manger. Nous roüons sans cesse en ce cercle. Non seulement les mauuais accidens et insupportables, mais la satieté mesme de viure donne enuie de la mort.	"Think how long you have been doing the same thing: eating, drinking, sleeping; drinking, sleeping, and eating. We go round and round endlessly in this circle. Not only bad and unbearable misfortunes, but even being sated with living, make one long for death."
Marcellinus n'auoit besoing d'homme qui le conseillast, mais d'homme qui le secourust: les seruiteurs craignoyent de s'en mesler: mais ce philosophe leur fit entendre que les domestiques sont soupçonnez, lors seulement qu'il est en doubte, si la mort du maistre a esté volontaire: autrement qu'il seroit d'aussi mauuais exemple de l'empescher, que de le tuer, d'autant que *Inuitum qui seruat, idem facit occidenti.* Apres il aduertit Marcellinus, qu'il ne seroit pas messeant, comme le dessert des tables se donne aux assistans, nos repas faicts, aussi la vie finie, de distribuer quelque chose à ceux qui en ont esté les ministres. Or estoit Marcellinus de courage franc et liberal: il fit departir quelque somme à ses seruiteurs, et les consola.	Marcellinus did not need a man to advise him but a man to help him. His servants were afraid to get involved; but this philosopher made them understand that members of a household are suspected only when there is doubt whether the master's death was voluntary. Otherwise, he said, it would set as bad an example to prevent him as to kill him, since *he who saves a man against his will does the same as one who kills him.* Then he advised Marcellinus that it would not be unseemly, just as the dessert is given to those standing by when our meal is over, so too, at the end of life, to distribute something to those who had served it. Now Marcellinus was of a frank and generous heart: he had a sum divided among his servants and comforted them.[14]
Au reste, il n'y eut besoing de fer, ny de sang: il entreprit de s'en aller de cette vie, non de s'en fuyr: non d'eschapper à la mort, mais de l'essayer. Et pour se donner loisir de la marchander, ayant quitté toute nourriture, le troisiesme iour suyuant, apres s'estre faict arroser d'eau tiede, il defaillit peu à peu, et non sans	For the rest, there was no need of steel or blood. He set out to depart from this life, not to flee from it; not to escape death but to try it out. And to give himself leisure to haggle with it, he gave up all food; on the third day after, having had himself sprinkled with warm water, he faded away little

12 The story is in Diogenes Laertius.
13 Seneca, Letters to Lucilius 77.
14 Horace, The Art of Poetry.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
	quelque volupté, à ce qu'il disoit. De vray, ceux qui ont eu ces deffaillances de cœur, qui prennent par foiblesse, disent n'y sentir aucune douleur, ains plustost quelque plaisir comme d'vn passage au sommeil et au repos. Voyla des morts estudiées et digerées.	by little, and not without some pleasure, as he said. Indeed, those who have had these faintings of the heart that come from weakness say they feel no pain in them, but rather a kind of pleasure, as of a passage into sleep and rest. Those are deaths studied and digested.
2.13.9	Mais à fin que le seul Caton peust fournir à tout exemple de vertu, il semble que son bon destin luy fit auoir mal en la main, dequoy il se donna le coup: à ce qu'il eust loisir d'affronter la mort et de la colleter, renforceant le courage au danger, au lieu de l'amollir. Et si ç'eust esté à moy, de le representer en sa plus superbe assiete, ç'eust esté deschirant tout ensanglanté ses entrailles, plustost que l'espée au poing, comme firent les statuaires de son temps. Car ce second meurtre, fut bien plus furieux, que le premier.	But so that Cato alone might furnish every example of virtue, it seems his good destiny gave him a sore hand—the one he struck himself with—so that he had leisure to confront death and grapple with it, his courage growing stronger in the danger instead of softer. And if it had been up to me to portray him in his proudest posture, I would have shown him all bloodied, tearing out his entrails, rather than sword in hand, as the sculptors of his time did. For that second killing was far more furious than the first.[15]

15 When his first wound was bandaged, Cato tore it open with his own hands (46 BC).

II.14 How Our Mind Hinders Itself

Comme nostre esprit s'empesche soy-mesmes
A brief puzzle about a mind poised between two equal desires, which Montaigne turns into a reflection on reason's limits.

FRENCH

2.14.1 C'EST vne plaisante imagination, de conceuoir vn esprit balancé iustement entre-deux pareilles enuyes. Car il est indubitable, qu'il ne prendra iamais party: d'autant que l'application et le choix porte inequalité de prix: et qui nous logeroit entre la bouteille et le iambon, auec egal appetit de boire et de manger, il n'y auroit sans doute remede, que de mourir de soif et de faim.

Pour pouruoir à cet inconuenient, les Stoïciens, quand on leur demande d'où vient en nostre ame l'election de deux choses indifferentes (et qui fait que d'vn grand nombre d'escus nous en prenions plustost l'vn que l'autre, n'y ayant aucune raison qui nous incline à la preference) respondent, que ce mouuement de l'ame est extraordinaire et desreglé, venant en nous d'vne impulsion estrangere, accidentale, et fortuite. Il se pourroit dire, ce me semble, plustost, que aucune chose ne se presente à nous, où il n'y ait quelque difference, pour legere qu'elle soit: et que ou à la veuë, ou à l'attouchement, il y a tousiours quelque choix, qui nous tente et attire, quoy que ce soit imperceptiblement.

Pareillement qui presupposera vne fisselle egallement forte par tout, il est impossible de toute impossibilité qu'elle rompe, car par où voulez vous que la faucée commence? et de rompre par tout ensemble, il n'est pas en nature. Qui ioindroit encore à cecy les propositions geometriques, qui concluent par la certitude de leurs demonstrations, le contenu plus grand que le contenant, le centre aussi grand que sa circonference: et qui trouuent deux lignes s'approchans sans cesse l'vne de l'autre, et ne se pouuans iamais ioindre: et la pierre philosophale, et quadrature du cercle, où la raison et l'effect sont si opposites: en tireroit à l'aduenture quelque argument pour secourir ce mot hardy de Pline, *solum certum nihil esse certi, et homine nihil miserius aut superbius*.

ENGLISH

It is an amusing notion to imagine a mind balanced exactly between two equal desires. For it is beyond doubt that it will never make up its mind, since leaning toward one and choosing it imply that they are unequal in value. If we were placed between the bottle and the ham, with an equal appetite for drinking and eating, there would doubtless be no remedy but to die of thirst and hunger.

To get round this difficulty, the Stoics, when asked where our soul gets its choice between two indifferent things (and what makes us take one coin rather than another from a large pile of crowns, when there is no reason to incline us to prefer one), answer that this movement of the soul is extraordinary and irregular, coming into us from an external, accidental, and fortuitous impulse. It might rather be said, it seems to me, that nothing presents itself to us in which there is not some difference, however slight; and that, either to the sight or to the touch, there is always something to choose that tempts and attracts us, even if imperceptibly.

Likewise, if you suppose a cord equally strong throughout, it is utterly and absolutely impossible for it to break; for where would you have the break begin? And to break everywhere at once is not in nature. Suppose someone added to this the geometrical propositions that conclude, with all the certainty of their demonstrations, that the contents are greater than the container and the center as large as its circumference; and that find two lines forever approaching each other and never able to meet; and the philosophers' stone, and the squaring of the circle, where reason and result are so opposed. He might perhaps draw from them some argument in support of that bold saying of Pliny: *the only certainty is that nothing is certain, and nothing is more wretched or more arrogant than man*.

II.15 That Our Desire Is Increased by Difficulty

Que nostre desir s'accroist par la malaisance
Montaigne shows how opposition and difficulty sharpen desire, in love and in everything else, and why he leaves his house unguarded.

FRENCH

2.15.1 IL n'y a raison qui n'en aye vne contraire, dit le plus sage party des philosophes. Ie remaschois tantost ce beau mot, qu'vn ancien allegue pour le mespris de la vie: Nul bien nous peut apporter plaisir, si ce n'est celuy, à la perte duquel nous sommes preparez: *In æquo est dolor amissæ rei, et timor amittendæ*. Voulant gaigner par là, que la fruition de la vie ne nous peut estre vrayement plaisante, si nous sommes en crainte de la perdre. Il se pourroit toutesfois dire au rebours, que nous serrons et embrassons ce bien, d'autant plus estroit, et auecques plus d'affection, que nous le voyons nous estre moins seur, et craignons qu'il nous soit osté.

Car il se sent euidemment, comme le feu se picque à l'assistance du froid, que nostre volonté s'aiguise aussi par le contraste: *Si numquam Danaen habuisset ahenea turris, / Non esset Danae de Ioue facta parens:* et qu'il n'est rien naturellement si contraire à nostre goust que la satieté, qui vient de l'aisance: ny rien qui l'aiguise tant que la rareté et difficulté. *Omnium rerum voluptas ipso quo debet fugare periculo crescit. Galla, nega; satiatur amor, nisi gaudia torquent.*

2.15.2 Pour tenir l'amour en haleine, Lycurgue ordonna que les mariez de Lacedemone ne se pourroient prattiquer qu'à la desrobée, et que ce seroit pareille honte de les rencontrer couchés ensemble qu'auecques d'autres. La difficulté des assignations, le danger des surprises, la honte du lendemain, *Et languor, et silentium, / Et latere petitus imo spiritus,* c'est ce qui donne pointe à la sauce. Combien de ieux tres-lasciuement plaisants, naissent de l'honneste et vergongneuse maniere de parler des ouurages de l'Amour? La volupté mesme cherche à s'irriter par la douleur. Elle est bien plus sucrée, quand elle cuit, et quand elle escorche. La courtisane Flora disoit n'auoir iamais couché auec Pompeius, qu'elle ne luy eust faict porter les merques de ses morsures.

ENGLISH

There is no reason that does not have its contrary, says the wisest school of philosophers. I was just now chewing over that fine saying which an ancient cites in contempt of life: no good can bring us pleasure except the one we are prepared to lose. *The pain of losing a thing and the fear of losing it are equal.* He means to show by this that the enjoyment of life cannot be truly pleasant to us if we are afraid of losing it. Yet it might be said, on the contrary, that we clasp and embrace this good all the more tightly and fondly the less secure we see it to be, and the more we fear it may be taken from us.[1]

For it is plainly felt that, just as fire is quickened by the presence of cold, our will too is sharpened by opposition: *If the bronze tower had never held Danaë, / Danaë would never have been made a mother by Jupiter;* and that nothing is naturally so contrary to our taste as the satiety that comes from ease, nor anything that sharpens it so much as rarity and difficulty. *In all things, pleasure grows with the very danger that ought to make us shun it. Galla, say no: love is soon sated unless its joys are torture.*[2]

To keep love on its toes, Lycurgus decreed that married couples in Sparta could have relations only by stealth, and that it would be as shameful to find them in bed together as with others. The difficulty of assignations, the danger of being caught, the shame of the next morning, *And languor, and silence, / And sighs drawn from deep within* —that is what gives the sauce its spice. How many very lasciviously amusing games arise from the decent and bashful way of speaking about the works of Love? Pleasure itself seeks to be stimulated by pain. It is much sweeter when it smarts and when it chafes the skin. The courtesan Flora

1 The wisest school is the Pyrrhonists; the ancient is Seneca (Letters to Lucilius).
2 Ovid, Amores; then Seneca, On Benefits, and Martial, Epigrams.

FRENCH

ENGLISH

said she had never slept with Pompey without making him carry the marks of her bites.[3]

Quod petiere, premunt arctè, faciúntque dolorem
Corporis, et dentes inlidunt sæpe labellis:
Et stimuli subsunt, qui instigant lædere id ipsum
Quodcunque est, rabies vnde illæ germina surgunt.

What they have sought they squeeze tight, and cause pain
To the body, and often drive their teeth into the lips;
And there are goads beneath that drive them to hurt that very thing,
Whatever it is, from which those seeds of frenzy spring.[4]

2.15.3 Il en va ainsi par tout: la difficulté donne prix aux choses. Ceux de la Marque d'Ancone font plus volontiers leurs vœuz à Sainct Iaques, et ceux de Galice à nostre Dame de Lorete: on fait au Liege grande feste des bains de Luques, et en la Toscane de ceux d'Aspa: il ne se voit guere de Romains en l'escole de l'escrime à Rome, qui est pleine de François. Ce grand Caton se trouua aussi bien que nous, desgousté de sa femme tant qu'elle fut sienne, et la desira quand elle fut à vn autre. I'ay chassé au haras vn vieil cheual, duquel à la senteur des iuments, on ne pouuoit venir à bout.

It is the same everywhere: difficulty gives things their value. People from the March of Ancona would rather make their vows to Saint James, and people from Galicia to Our Lady of Loreto. In Liège they make a great fuss over the baths of Lucca, and in Tuscany over those of Spa. Hardly any Romans are to be seen in the fencing school at Rome, which is full of Frenchmen. The great Cato, too, just like us, was tired of his wife as long as she was his, and desired her when she belonged to another. I have put out to stud an old horse that could not be controlled at the scent of mares.[5]

La facilité l'a incontinent saoulé enuers les siennes: mais enuers les estrangeres et la premiere qui passe le long de son pastis, il reuient à ses importuns hannissements, et à ses chaleurs furieuses comme deuant. Nostre appetit mesprise et outrepasse ce qui luy est en main, pour courir apres ce qu'il n'a pas. *Transuolat in medio posita, et fugientia captat.* Nous defendre quelque chose, c'est nous en donner enuie. *Nisi tu seruare puellam / Incipis, incipiet desinere esse mea.* Nous l'abandonner tout à faict, c'est nous en engendrer mespris. La faute et l'abondance retombent en mesme inconuenient: *Tibi quod superest, mihi quod defit, dolet.* Le desir et la iouyssance nous mettent pareillement en peine.

Ease soon sated him with his own mares; but with strange ones, and the first that passes along his pasture, he goes back to his tiresome neighing and his furious heats as before. Our appetite scorns and passes over what it has in hand, to run after what it does not have. *He flies past what lies in reach and chases what runs away.* To forbid us something is to make us want it. *Unless you begin to guard your girl, / She will begin to stop being mine.* To hand it over to us entirely is to breed contempt for it in us. Lack and abundance come to the same trouble: *You suffer from what you have too much of, I from what I lack.* Desire and enjoyment torment us equally.[6]

La rigueur des maistresses est ennuyeuse, mais l'aisance et la facilité l'est, à vray dire, encores plus, d'autant que le mescontentement et la cholere naissent de l'estimation, en quoy nous auons la chose desirée, aiguisent l'amour, et le reschauffent: mais la satieté engendre le dégoust: c'est vne passion mousse, hebetée, lasse, et endormie. *Si qua volet regnare diu, contemnat amantem,*

The harshness of mistresses is painful; but ease and compliance are, to tell the truth, even more so. For discontent and anger arise from the high value we set on the thing desired; they sharpen love and rekindle it. Satiety, by contrast, breeds distaste: it is a blunt passion, dulled, weary, and asleep. *If a woman wants to reign long, let her scorn her lover.*

3 Horace, Epodes.
4 Lucretius, On the Nature of Things.
5 Saint James's shrine is at Compostela in Galicia; Loreto is near Ancona. Cato gave his wife Marcia to Hortensius and remarried her after his death.
6 Horace, Satires; Ovid, Amores; Terence, Phormio.

FRENCH

Contemnite amantes,
Sic hodie veniet, si qua negauit heri.

2.15.4 Pourquoy inuenta Popæa de masquer les beautez de son visage, que pour les rencherir à ses amants? Pourquoy a lon voilé iusques au dessoubs des talons ces beautez, que chacun desire montrer, que chacun desire voir? Pourquoy couurent elles de tant d'empeschemens, les vns sur les autres, les parties, où loge principallement nostre desir et le leur? Et à quoy seruent ces gros bastions, dequoy les nostres viennent d'armer leurs flancs, qu'à leurrer nostre appetit, et nous attirer à elles en nous esloignant? *Et fugit ad salices, et se cupit antè videri. / Interdum tunica duxit operta moram.* A quoy sert l'art de cette honte virginalle?

cette froideur rassise, cette contenance seuere, cette profession d'ignorance des choses, qu'elles sçauent mieux, que nous qui les en instruisons, qu'à nous accroistre le desir de vaincre, gourmander, et fouler à nostre appetit, toute cette ceremonie, et ces obstacles? Car il y a non seulement du plaisir, mais de la gloire encore, d'affolir et desbaucher cette molle douceur, et cette pudeur infantine, et de ranger à la mercy de nostre ardeur vne grauité froide et magistrale. C'est gloire, disent-ils, de triompher de la modestie, de la chasteté, et de la temperance: et qui desconseille aux Dames, ces parties là, il les trahit, et soy-mesmes.

Il faut croire que le cœur leur fremit d'effroy, que le son de nos mots blesse la pureté de leurs oreilles, qu'elles nous en haissent et s'accordent à nostre importunité d'vne force forcée. La beauté, toute puissante qu'elle est, n'a pas dequoy se faire sauourer sans cette entremise. Voyez en Italie, où il y a plus de beauté à vendre, et de la plus fine, comment il faut qu'elle cherche d'autres moyens estrangers, et d'autres arts pour se rendre aggreable: et si à la verité, quoy qu'elle face estant venale et publique, elle demeure foible et languissante.

Tout ainsi que mesme en la vertu, de deux effects pareils, nous tenons neantmoins celuy-là, le plus beau et plus digne, auquel il y a plus d'empeschement et de hazard proposé.

ENGLISH

Scorn your lovers,
And she who refused yesterday will come today.[7]

Why did Poppaea think of masking the beauties of her face, if not to make them dearer to her lovers? Why have those beauties that everyone wishes to show, that everyone wishes to see, been veiled right down below the heels? Why do women cover with so many obstacles, one on top of another, the parts where our desire and theirs chiefly dwell? And what are those great bastions with which our women have lately taken to arming their hips for, if not to lure our appetite and draw us to them by keeping us at a distance? *And she flees to the willows, and hopes first to be seen. / Sometimes, kept covered by her tunic, she has made me wait.* What is the use of the art of this maidenly shame?[8]

this sedate coldness, this severe countenance, this professed ignorance of things they know better than we who instruct them—what is all this ceremony, and all these obstacles, for, if not to increase our desire to conquer, master, and trample them under our appetite? For there is not only pleasure but glory as well in maddening and corrupting that soft sweetness and that childlike modesty, and in bringing a cold and magisterial gravity to the mercy of our ardor. It is a glory, they say, to triumph over modesty, chastity, and temperance; and whoever advises ladies against those qualities betrays both them and himself.

We must believe that their hearts tremble with fright, that the sound of our words wounds the purity of their ears, that they hate us for it and yield to our importunity only under duress. Beauty, all-powerful as it is, cannot make itself relished without this go-between. Look at Italy, where there is more beauty for sale, and of the finest, and see how it has to seek other outside means and other arts to make itself attractive. And yet, in truth, whatever it does, being for sale and public, it remains feeble and languid.

In just the same way, even in virtue, of two equal deeds we nevertheless consider the finer and worthier the one that faced more obstacles and risk.

7 Ovid, Amores, and Propertius.
8 Poppaea Sabina, wife of Nero (Tacitus). The verses are from Virgil's Eclogues and Propertius.

DIFFICULTY IN FAITH AND MARRIAGE

Persecution wakes the Church; Roman marriages lasted because divorce was allowed; punishment sharpens vice.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
2.15.5	C'est vn effect de la prouidence diuine, de permettre sa saincte Eglise estre agitée, comme nous la voyons de tant de troubles et d'orages, pour esueiller par ce contraste les ames pies, et les r'auoir de l'oisiueté et du sommeil, où les auoit plongees vne si longue tranquillité. Si nous contrepoisons la perte que nous auons faicte, par le nombre de ceux qui se sont desuoyez, au gain qui nous vient pour nous estre remis en haleine, resuscité nostre zele et nos forces, à l'occasion de ce combat, Ie ne sçay si l'vtilité ne surmonte point le dommage.	It is an effect of divine providence to allow its holy Church to be shaken, as we see it, by so many troubles and storms, in order to awaken pious souls by this opposition and rouse them from the idleness and sleep into which so long a tranquillity had plunged them. If we weigh the loss we have suffered, in the number of those who have gone astray, against the gain that comes to us from having been put back on our mettle, with our zeal and strength revived by this combat, I do not know whether the benefit does not outweigh the harm.
2.15.6	Nous auons pensé attacher plus ferme le nœud de nos mariages, pour auoir osté tout moyen de les dissoudre, mais d'autant s'est dépris et relasché le nœud de la volonté et de l'affection, que celuy de la contraincte s'est estrecy. Et au rebours, ce qui tint les mariages à Rome, si long temps en honneur et en seurté, fut la liberté de les rompre, qui voudroit. Ils gardoient mieux leurs femmes, d'autant qu'ils les pouuoient perdre: et en pleine licence de diuorces, il se passa cinq cens ans et plus, auant que nul s'en seruist. *Quod licet, ingratum est: quod non licet, acrius vrit.*	We thought we were tying the knot of our marriages more firmly by removing every means of dissolving them. But the knot of will and affection has loosened and slackened as much as the knot of constraint has been tightened. On the contrary, what kept marriages at Rome so long in honor and security was the freedom of anyone who wished to break them off. The Romans took better care of their wives because they could lose them; and with full license to divorce, five hundred years and more went by before anyone made use of it. *What is allowed has no charm; what is not allowed burns more fiercely.*[9]
2.15.7	A ce propos se pourroit ioindre l'opinion d'vn ancien, que les supplices aiguisent les vices plustost qu'ils ne les amortissent: qu'ils n'engendrent point le soing de bien faire, c'est l'ouurage de la raison, et de la discipline: mais seulement vn soing de n'estre surpris en faisant mal. *Latius excisæ pestis contagia serpunt* Ie ne sçay pas qu'elle soit vraye, mais cecy sçay-ie par experience, que iamais police ne se trouua reformée par là. L'ordre et reglement des mœurs, dépend de quelque autre moyen.	To this point might be added the opinion of an ancient: that punishments sharpen vices rather than deaden them; that they do not produce the concern to do well—that is the work of reason and discipline—but only the concern not to be caught doing ill. *The contagion of a plague that has been cut out spreads more widely.* I do not know that this opinion is true; but this I do know by experience, that no government was ever reformed by that means. The order and regulation of morals depend on some other means.[10]
2.15.8	Les histoires Grecques font mention des Argippees voisins de la Scythie, qui viuent sans verge et sans baston à offenser: que non seulement nul n'entreprend d'aller attaquer: mais quiconque s'y peut sauuer, il est en franchise, à cause de leur vertu et saincteté de vie: et	The Greek histories mention the Argippaeans, neighbors of Scythia, who live without rod or stick to strike with. Not only does no one undertake to attack them, but whoever can take refuge among them is in sanctuary, because of their virtue and

9 Ovid, Amores.
10 The ancient is Seneca (On Clemency); the verse is from Rutilius Namatianus, On His Return.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
	n'est aucun si osé d'y toucher. On recourt à eux pour appoincter les differents, qui naissent entre les hommes d'ailleurs. Il y a nation, où la closture des iardins et des champs, qu'on veut conseruer, se faict d'vn filet de coton, et se trouue bien plus seure et plus ferme que nos fossez et nos hayes. *Furem signata sollicitant. Aperta effractarius præterit.*	holiness of life, and no one is bold enough to touch him. People turn to them to settle the disputes that arise among men elsewhere. There is a nation where the gardens and fields people want to protect are enclosed with a cotton thread, and this proves much safer and firmer than our ditches and hedges. *Things under seal tempt the thief. The burglar passes by what is open.*[11]

AN UNGUARDED HOUSE

Montaigne keeps his house open and unfortified through the civil wars, trusting its safety to heaven.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
2.15.9	A l'aduenture sert entre autres moyens, l'aisance, à couurir ma maison de la violence de noz guerres ciuiles. La defense attire l'entreprise, et la deffiance l'offense. I'ay affoibly le dessein des soldats, ostant à leur exploit, le hazard, et toute matiere de gloire militaire, qui a accoustumé de leur seruir de titre et d'excuse. Ce qui est faict courageusement, est tousiours faict honorablement, en temps où la iustice est morte. Ie leur rens la conqueste de ma maison lasche et traistresse. Elle n'est close à personne, qui y heurte. Il n'y a pour toute prouision, qu'vn portier, d'ancien vsage et ceremonie: qui ne sert pas tant à defendre ma porte, qu'à l'offrir plus decemment et gratieusement.	Perhaps, among other things, its very openness helps to shield my house from the violence of our civil wars. Defense invites attack, and distrust invites offense. I have weakened the soldiers' purpose by taking from their exploit all risk and all matter for military glory, which usually serves them as title and excuse. Whatever is done courageously is always done honorably, in times when justice is dead. I make the conquest of my house a cowardly and treacherous act for them. It is closed to no one who knocks. For all its defenses there is only a porter, kept by ancient usage and ceremony, who serves not so much to defend my door as to offer it more decently and graciously.
	Ie n'ay ny garde ny sentinelle, que celle que les astres font pour moy. Vn Gentil-homme a tort de faire montre d'estre en deffense, s'il ne l'est bien à poinct. Qui est ouuert d'vn costé, l'est par tout. Noz peres ne penserent pas à bastir des places frontieres. Les moyens d'assaillir, ie dy sans batterie et sans armée, et de surprendre noz maisons, croissent touts les iours, au dessus des moyens de se garder. Les esprits s'aiguisent generalement de ce costé là. L'inuasion touche touts, la defense non, que les riches. La mienne estoit forte selon le temps qu'elle fut faitte: ie n'y ay rien adiousté de ce costé là, et craindroy que sa force se tournast contre moy-mesme.	I have no guard or sentinel but the one the stars keep for me. A gentleman is wrong to make a show of being in a state of defense unless he is fully so. Whoever is open on one side is open everywhere. Our fathers did not think of building frontier fortresses. The means of assaulting and surprising our houses—I mean without artillery and without an army—are growing every day beyond the means of guarding them. Men's wits are generally being sharpened in that direction. Invasion concerns everyone; defense, only the rich. My house was strong for the time when it was built. I have added nothing to it in that respect, and I would fear that its strength might be turned against me myself.
	Ioint qu'vn temps paisible requerra, qu'on les defortifie. Il est dangereux de ne les pouuoir regaigner: et est difficile de s'en asseurer. Car en matiere de guerres intestines, vostre vallet peut estre du party que vous craignez. Et où la religion sert de pretexte, les parentez mesmes deuiennent infiables auec couuerture de iustice.	Besides, peaceful times will require such houses to be dismantled. It is dangerous to be unable to win them back, and it is hard to be sure of them. For in civil wars your own servant may belong to the party you fear. And where religion serves as a pretext, even kinsmen become untrustworthy un-

11 Herodotus, Histories IV; the Latin is from Seneca's Letters to Lucilius.

FRENCH

Les finances publiques n'entretiendront pas noz garnisons domestiques. Elles s'y espuiseroient. Nous n'auons pas dequoy le faire sans nostre ruine: ou plus incommodeement et iniurieusement encore, sans celle du peuple. L'estat de ma perte ne seroit guere pire. Au demeurant, vous y perdez vous, voz amis mesmes s'amusent à accuser vostre inuigilance et improuidence, plus qu'à vous pleindre, et l'ignorance ou nonchalance aux offices de vostre profession.

Ce que tant de maisons gardées se sont perduës, où ceste cy dure: me fait soupçonner, qu'elles se sont perduës de ce, qu'elles estoyent gardées. Cela donne et l'enuie et la raison à l'assaillant. Toute garde porte visage de guerre. Qui se iettera, si Dieu veut, chez moy: mais tant y a, que ie ne l'y appelleray pas. C'est la retraitte à me reposer des guerres. I'essaye de soustraire ce coing, à la tempeste publique, comme ie fay vn autre coing en mon ame. Nostre guerre a beau changer de formes, se multiplier et diuersifier en nouueaux partis: pour moy ie ne bouge.

Entre tant de maisons armées, moy seul, que ie sçache, de ma condition, ay fié purement au ciel la protection de la mienne. Et n'en ay iamais osté ny vaisselle d'argent, ny titre, ny tapisserie. Ie ne veux ny me craindre, ny me sauuer à demy. Si vne pleine recognoissance acquiert la faueur diuine, elle me durera iusqu'au bout: sinon, i'ay tousiours assez duré, pour rendre ma durée remerquable et enregistrable. Comment? Il y a bien trente ans.

ENGLISH

der cover of justice. Public funds will not maintain our household garrisons; they would be drained by it. We do not have the means to do it without ruining ourselves—or, more harmfully and unjustly still, without ruining the people. Losing my house would leave me hardly worse off. Moreover, if you do come to grief, even your friends are busier blaming your lack of vigilance and foresight, and your ignorance or carelessness in the duties of your profession, than pitying you.

That so many guarded houses have been lost while this one survives makes me suspect that they were lost because they were guarded. That gives the attacker both the desire and the justification. Every guard wears the face of war. Anyone may hurl himself into my house, if God so wills; but at any rate I shall not invite him. It is my retreat, where I rest from the wars. I try to keep this corner out of the public storm, as I do another corner in my soul. Our war may change its forms as it likes, multiply and split into new factions: as for me, I do not budge.

Among so many armed houses, I alone of my rank, as far as I know, have entrusted the protection of mine purely to heaven. And I have never removed from it either silver plate, or title deeds, or tapestry. I want neither to be afraid for myself nor to save myself by halves. If full gratitude wins divine favor, it will last me to the end; if not, I have still lasted long enough to make my lasting remarkable and worth recording. How long? A good thirty years.

II.16 Of Glory

De la gloire

Glory belongs to God alone, Montaigne argues; human fame is fickle and accidental, and virtue should be pursued for conscience, not reputation.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
2.16.1	IL y a le nom et la chose: le nom, c'est vne voix qui remerque et signifie la chose: le nom, ce n'est pas vne partie de la chose, ny de la substance: c'est vne piece estrangere ioincte à la chose, et hors d'elle.	There is the name and there is the thing. The name is a sound that marks and signifies the thing. The name is not a part of the thing, nor of its substance; it is a foreign piece attached to the thing, and outside it.
2.16.2	Dieu qui est en soy toute plenitude, et le comble de toute perfection, il ne peut s'augmenter et accroistre au dedans: mais son nom se peut augmenter et accroistre, par la benediction et loüange, que nous donnons à ses ouurages exterieurs. Laquelle loüange, puis que nous ne la pouuons incorporer en luy, d'autant qu'il n'y peut auoir accession de bien, nous l'attribuons à son nom, qui est la piece hors de luy, la plus voisine. Voylà comment c'est à Dieu seul, à qui gloire et honneur appartient.	God, who is in himself all fullness and the summit of all perfection, cannot increase or grow within. But his name can increase and grow through the blessing and praise we give to his outward works. Since we cannot incorporate this praise in him, inasmuch as no good can be added to him, we attribute it to his name, which is the part outside him that is nearest to him. That is how glory and honor belong to God alone.
	Et n'est rien si esloigné de raison, que de nous en mettre en queste pour nous: car estans indigens et necessiteux au dedans, nostre essence estant imparfaicte, et ayant continuellement besoing d'amelioration, c'est là, à quoy nous nous deuons trauailler. Nous sommes tous creux et vuides: ce n'est pas de vent et de voix que nous auons à nous remplir: il nous faut de la substance plus solide à nous reparer. Vn homme affamé seroit bien simple de chercher à se pouruoir plustost d'vn beau vestement, que d'vn bon repas: il faut courir au plus pressé. Comme disent nos ordinaires prieres, *Gloria in excelcis Deo, et in terra pax hominibus.*	And nothing is so contrary to reason as for us to go in quest of glory for ourselves. For since we are needy and destitute within, and our essence is imperfect and continually in need of improvement, that is what we ought to be working at. We are all hollow and empty. It is not with wind and sound that we have to fill ourselves; we need more solid substance to restore us. A starving man would be very foolish to try to provide himself with a fine garment rather than a good meal: we must run to what is most urgent. As our daily prayers say, *Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men.*[1]
	Nous sommes en disette de beauté, santé, sagesse, vertu, et telles parties essentieles: les ornemens externes se chercheront apres que nous aurons proueu aux choses necessaires. La theologie traicte amplement et plus pertinemment ce subiect, mais ie n'y suis guere versé.	We are short of beauty, health, wisdom, virtue, and such essential qualities. Outward ornaments can be sought once we have provided for necessary things. Theology treats this subject at length and more pertinently, but I am hardly versed in it.
2.16.3	Chrysippus et Diogenes ont esté les premiers autheurs et les plus fermes du mespris de la gloire. Et entre toutes les voluptez, ils disoient qu'il n'y en auoit point de plus	Chrysippus and Diogenes were the first and firmest advocates of contempt for glory. And among all pleasures, they said, there was none

1 Luke 2:14, sung in the Gloria of the Mass.

FRENCH

dangereuse, ny plus à fuir, que celle qui nous vient de l'approbation d'autruy. De vray l'experience nous en fait sentir plusieurs trahisons bien dommageables. Il n'est chose qui empoisonne tant les Princes que la flatterie, ny rien par où les meschans gaignent plus aiséement credit autour d'eux: ny maquerelage si propre et si ordinaire à corrompre la chasteté des femmes, que de les paistre et entretenir de leurs loüanges.

Le premier enchantement que les Sirenes employent à piper Vlysses, est de cette nature: *Deça vers nous, deça, ô tresloüable Vlysse, / Et le plus grand honneur dont la Grece fleurisse.* Ces philosophes là disoient, que toute la gloire du monde ne meritoit pas qu'vn homme d'entendement estendist seulement le doigt pour l'acquerir: *Gloria quantalibet quid erit, si gloria tantúm est?* Ie dis pour elle seule: car elle tire souuent à sa suite plusieurs commoditez, pour lesquelles elle se peut rendre desirable: elle nous acquiert de la bienvueillance: elle nous rend moins exposez aux iniures et offences d'autruy, et choses semblables.

2.16.4 C'estoit aussi des principaux dogmes d'Epicurus: car ce precepte de sa secte, cache ta vie, qui deffend aux hommes de s'empescher des charges et negotiations publiques, presuppose aussi necessairement qu'on mesprise la gloire: qui est vne approbation que le monde fait des actions que nous mettons en euidence. Celuy qui nous ordonne de nous cacher, et de n'auoir soing que de nous, et qui ne veut pas que nous soyons connus d'autruy, il veut encores moins que nous en soyons honorez et glorifiez. Aussi conseille il à Idomeneus, de ne regler aucunement ses actions, par l'opinion ou reputation commune: si ce n'est pour euiter les autres incommoditez accidentales, que le mespris des hommes luy pourroit apporter.

2.16.5 Ces discours là sont infiniment vrais, à mon aduis, et raisonnables. Mais nous sommes, ie ne sçay comment, doubles en nous mesmes, qui fait que ce que nous croyons, nous ne le croyons pas: et ne nous pouuons deffaire de ce que nous condamnons. Voyons les dernieres paroles d'Epicurus, et qu'il dit en mourant: elles sont grandes et dignes d'vn tel philosophe: mais si ont elles quelque merque de la recommendation de son nom, et de cette humeur qu'il auoit descriée par ses

ENGLISH

more dangerous or more to be avoided than the one that comes to us from others' approval. Indeed, experience makes us feel many very harmful betrayals from it. Nothing poisons princes so much as flattery, nor is there anything by which the wicked more easily gain credit around them. Nor is there any pandering so apt and so common for corrupting women's chastity as feeding and entertaining them with their own praises.[2]

The first enchantment the Sirens use to beguile Ulysses is of this kind: *Come this way, come to us, O most praiseworthy Ulysses, / The greatest honor that makes Greece flourish.* Those philosophers said that all the glory in the world did not deserve that a man of understanding should so much as stretch out a finger to acquire it: *Glory, however great, what will it be, if it is only glory?* I mean for itself alone; for it often draws in its train many advantages for which it may become desirable: it wins us goodwill; it makes us less exposed to the insults and injuries of others; and the like.[3]

This was also one of Epicurus' chief doctrines. For that precept of his school, "Hide your life," which forbids men to burden themselves with public offices and business, also necessarily presupposes contempt for glory, which is the world's approval of the actions we bring into view. He who orders us to hide ourselves and to care only for ourselves, and who does not want us to be known by others, wants still less that we be honored and glorified by them. So he advises Idomeneus not to regulate his actions in any way by common opinion or reputation, except to avoid the other incidental inconveniences that men's contempt might bring him.[4]

Those arguments are infinitely true, in my opinion, and reasonable. But we are, I know not how, double within ourselves, so that what we believe we do not believe, and we cannot rid ourselves of what we condemn. Let us look at Epicurus' last words, what he said as he was dying. They are great and worthy of such a philosopher; and yet they bear some mark of concern for the renown of his name, and of that disposition he had decried in

2 Diogenes of Babylon, a Stoic of the 2nd century BC; Montaigne follows Cicero, On Ends.
3 Homer, Odyssey XII, in Montaigne's own French verse; the Latin is from Juvenal, Satires.
4 The advice is reported by Seneca.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
	preceptes. Voicy vne lettre qu'il dicta vn peu auant son dernier souspir. Epicvrvs a Hermachvs salvt.	his precepts. Here is a letter he dictated a little before his last breath. Epicurus to Hermarchus, greeting.[5]
2.16.6	Ce pendant que ie passois l'heureux, et celuy-là mesmes le dernier iour de ma vie, i'escriuois cecy, accompaigné toutesfois de telle douleur en la vessie et aux intestins, qu'il ne peut rien estre adiousté à sa grandeur. Mais elle estoit compensée par le plaisir qu'apportoit à mon ame la souuenance de mes inuentions et de mes discours. Or toy comme requiert l'affection que tu as eu dés ton enfance enuers moy, et la philosophie, embrasse la protection des enfans de Metrodorus.	While I was passing the happy day of my life, which is also the last, I wrote this, though accompanied by such pain in the bladder and intestines that nothing could be added to its intensity. But it was offset by the pleasure my soul took in remembering my discoveries and my reasonings. Now you, as the affection you have shown since childhood toward me and toward philosophy requires, take upon yourself the protection of the children of Metrodorus.[6]
2.16.7	Voila sa lettre. Et ce qui me fait interpreter que ce plaisir qu'il dit sentir en son ame, de ses inuentions, regarde aucunement la reputation qu'il en esperoit acquerir apres sa mort, c'est l'ordonnance de son testament, par lequel il veut que Aminomachus et Timocrates ses heritiers, fournissent pour la celebration de son iour natal tous les mois de Ianuier, les frais que Hermachus ordonneroit: et aussi pour la despence qui se feroit le vingtiesme iour de chasque lune, au traittement des philosophes ses familiers, qui s'assembleroient à l'honneur de la memoire de luy et de Metrodorus.	That is his letter. And what makes me interpret this pleasure he says he felt in his soul from his discoveries as having something to do with the reputation he hoped to gain from them after his death is a provision of his will. By it he directs that Amynomachus and Timocrates, his heirs, should furnish, for the celebration of his birthday every January, whatever expenses Hermarchus might prescribe; and also the cost, on the twentieth day of each moon, of entertaining the philosophers of his circle who would gather in honor of his memory and that of Metrodorus.

GLORY FOR ITS OWN SAKE

Carneades and Aristotle defend glory, but virtue that works only for show is no virtue.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
2.16.8	Carneades a esté chef de l'opinion contraire: et a maintenu que la gloire estoit pour elle mesme desirable, tout ainsi que nous embrassons nos posthumes pour eux-mesmes, n'en ayans aucune cognoissance ny iouyssance. Cette opinion n'a pas failly d'estre plus communement suyuie, comme sont volontiers celles qui s'accommodent le plus à nos inclinations. Aristote luy donne le premier rang entre les biens externes: Euite, comme deux extremes vicieux, l'immoderation, et à la rechercher, et à la fuyr. Ie croy que si nous auions les liures que Cicero auoit escrit sur ce subiect, il nous en conteroit de belles: car cet homme là fut si forcené de cette passion, que s'il eust osé, il fust, ce crois-ie, volontiers tombé en l'excez où tomberent d'autres, que la vertu mesme n'estoit	Carneades was the leader of the opposite opinion. He maintained that glory was desirable for its own sake, just as we cherish those who will come after our death for their own sake, though we shall have no knowledge or enjoyment of them. This opinion has not failed to be more commonly followed, as those that best suit our inclinations readily are. Aristotle gives glory first rank among external goods. He shuns, as two vicious extremes, immoderation both in seeking it and in fleeing it. I believe that if we had the books Cicero wrote on this subject, he would tell us some fine things. For that man was so frantic with this passion that, had he dared, he would, I believe, readily have fallen into the excess others fell into: that virtue itself

5 Hermarchus succeeded Epicurus as head of his school; Montaigne takes the letter from Cicero, On Ends.
6 Metrodorus died before Epicurus.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
	desirable, que pour l'honneur qui se tenoit tousiours à sa suitte: *Paulum sepultæ distat inertiæ / Celata virtus.* Qui est vn' opinion si fauce, que ie suis dépit qu'elle ait iamais peu entrer en l'entendement d'homme, qui eust cet honneur de porter le nom de philosophe.	was desirable only for the honor that always followed in its train. *Hidden virtue differs little / From buried sloth.* This is an opinion so false that I am vexed it could ever have entered the understanding of a man who had the honor of bearing the name of philosopher.[7]
2.16.9	Si cela estoit vray, il ne faudroit estre vertueux qu'en public: et les operations de l'ame, où est le vray siege de la vertu, nous n'aurions que faire de les tenir en regle et en ordre, sinon autant qu'elles deburoient venir à la cognoissance d'autruy. N'y va il donc que de faillir finement et subtilement? Si tu sçais, dit Carneades, vn serpent caché en ce lieu, auquel sans y penser, se va seoir celuy, de la mort duquel tu esperes profit: tu fais meschamment, si tu ne l'en aduertis: et d'autant plus que ton action ne doibt estre cognuë que de toy.	If that were true, we would need to be virtuous only in public; and the workings of the soul, where the true seat of virtue lies, we would need to keep in rule and order only insofar as they were going to come to others' knowledge. Is it, then, only a matter of doing wrong cleverly and subtly? If you know, says Carneades, of a snake hidden in a place where, without a thought, a man is about to sit whose death you hope to profit from, you act wickedly if you do not warn him—and all the more so since your action can be known by no one but you.
	Si nous ne prenons de nous mesmes la loy de bien faire: si l'impunité nous est iustice, à combien de sortes de meschancetez auons nous tous les iours à nous abandonner? Ce que S. Peduceus fit, de rendre fidelement cela que C. Plotius auoit commis à sa seule science, de ses richesses, et ce que i'en ay faict souuent de mesme, ie ne le trouue pas tant loüable, comme ie trouueroy execrable, que nous y eussions failly. Et trouue bon et vtile à ramenteuoir en noz iours, l'exemple de P. Sextilius Ruffus, que Cicero accuse pour auoir recueilly vne heredité contre sa conscience: non seulement, non contre les loix, mais par les loix mesmes. Et M. Crassus, et Q.	If we do not take the law of doing good from ourselves, if impunity counts as justice for us, to how many kinds of wickedness must we abandon ourselves every day? What S. Peducaeus did, in faithfully returning that part of his wealth which C. Plotius had entrusted to him alone without anyone's knowledge—and I have often done the same—I do not find so praiseworthy as I would find it execrable to have failed to do it. And I find it good and useful to recall in our day the example of P. Sextilius Rufus, whom Cicero accuses of having taken up an inheritance against his conscience—not merely not against the laws, but by the laws themselves. And M. Crassus and Q.[8]
	Hortensius, lesquels à cause de leur authorité et puissance, ayants esté pour certaines quotitez appellez par vn estranger à la succession d'vn testament faux, à fin que par ce moyen il y establist sa part: se contenterent de n'estre participants de la fauceté, et ne refuserent d'en tirer du fruit: assez couuerts, s'ils se tenoient à l'abry des accusations, et des tesmoins, et des loix. *Meminerint Deum se habere testem, id est, vt ego arbitror, mentem suam.*	Hortensius, who, because of their authority and power, were named by a foreigner as heirs for certain shares of a forged will, so that he might secure his own share by this means. They were content not to be party to the forgery, and did not refuse to reap its fruit—well enough covered, they thought, if they kept sheltered from accusations, from witnesses, and from the laws. *Let them remember that they have God as their witness, that is, as I take it, their own mind.*[9]
2.16.10	La vertu est chose bien vaine et friuole, si elle tire sa recommendation de la gloire. Pour neant	Virtue is a very vain and frivolous thing if it draws its worth from glory. In vain would we try to give

7 Cicero's treatise On Glory is lost; the verses are from Horace, Odes.
8 These Roman examples come from Cicero, On Ends II and On Duties III.
9 Cicero, On Duties.

FRENCH

entreprendrions nous de luy faire tenir son rang à part, et la déioindrions de la Fortune: car qu'est-il plus fortuite que la reputation? *Profectò fortuna in omni re dominatur: ea res cunctas ex libidine magis quàm ex vero celebrat obscurátque.* De faire que les actions soyent cognues et veuës, c'est le pur ouurage de la Fortune. C'est le sort qui nous applique la gloire, selon sa temerité. Ie l'ay veuë fort souuent marcher auant le merite: et souuent outrepasser le merite d'vne longue mesure. Celuy qui premier s'aduisa de la ressemblance de l'ombre à la gloire, fit mieux qu'il ne vouloit. Ce sont choses excellemment vaines.

Elle va aussi quelque fois deuant son corps: et quelque fois l'excede de beaucoup en longueur. Ceux qui apprennent à la noblesse de ne chercher en la vaillance que l'honneur: *quasi non sit honestum quod nobilitatum non sit*: que gaignent-ils par là, que de les instruire de ne se hazarder iamais, si on ne les voit, et de prendre bien garde, s'il y a des tesmoins, qui puissent rapporter nouuelles de leur valeur, là où il se presente mille occasions de bien faire, sans qu'on en puisse estre remerqué? Combien de belles actions particulieres s'enseuelisent dans la foule d'vne bataille?

Quiconque s'amuse à contreroller autruy pendant vne telle meslée, il n'y est guere embesoigné: et produit contre soy mesmes le tesmoignage qu'il rend des deportemens de ses compaignons. *Vera et sapiens animi magnitudo, honestum illud quod maximè naturam sequitur, in factis positum, non in gloria, iudicat.* Toute la gloire, que ie pretens de ma vie, c'est de l'auoir vescue tranquille. Tranquille non selon Metrodorus, ou Arcesilas, ou Aristippus, mais selon moy. Puisque la philosophie n'a sçeu trouuer aucune voye pour la tranquillité, qui fust bonne en commun, que chacun la cherche en son particulier.

ENGLISH

it a rank of its own and separate it from Fortune; for what is more fortuitous than reputation? *Truly, Fortune rules in all things: she makes everything famous or obscure according to her whim rather than the truth.* Making actions known and seen is purely the work of Fortune. It is chance that bestows glory on us, as blindly as it pleases. I have very often seen glory walk ahead of merit, and often outstrip merit by a long way. The man who first noticed the resemblance between shadow and glory did better than he meant to. They are supremely vain things.[10]

A shadow, too, sometimes goes ahead of its body, and sometimes far exceeds it in length. Those who teach the nobility to seek nothing in valor but honor—*as if nothing were honorable that is not famous*—what do they gain by it, except to teach them never to take a risk unless they are seen, and to take good care that there are witnesses who can carry back news of their valor, when a thousand occasions present themselves for doing well without anyone being able to notice? How many fine individual deeds are buried in the crush of a battle?[11]

Whoever amuses himself checking up on others in the middle of such a melee is hardly busy fighting himself; the testimony he gives of his comrades' conduct is evidence against himself. *True and wise greatness of soul judges that the honorable, which most closely follows nature, lies in deeds, not in glory.* All the glory I aspire to from my life is to have lived it in tranquillity—tranquillity not according to Metrodorus, or Arcesilaus, or Aristippus, but according to me. Since philosophy has not been able to find any road to tranquillity that would be good for everyone in common, let each man seek it for himself.[12]

FORTUNE MAKES REPUTATIONS

Countless brave deeds die without witnesses; only Fortune decides whose name survives.

FRENCH

2.16.11 A qui doiuent Cæsar et Alexandre cette grandeur infinie de leur renommée, qu'à la Fortune? Combien d'hommes a elle esteint, sur le commencement de leur progrés,

ENGLISH

To whom do Caesar and Alexander owe the infinite greatness of their renown, if not to Fortune? How many men has she snuffed out at the very

10 Sallust, The War with Catiline.
11 Cicero, On Duties.
12 Cicero, On Duties.

FRENCH

desquels nous n'auons aucune cognoissance, qui y apportoient mesme courage que le leur, si le malheur de leur sort ne les eust arrestez tout court, sur la naissance mesme de leurs entreprinses? Au trauers de tant et si extremes dangers il ne me souuient point auoir leu que Cæsar ait esté iamais blessé. Mille sont morts de moindres perils, que le moindre de ceux qu'il franchit. Infinies belles actions se doiuent perdre sans tesmoignage, auant qu'il en vienne vne à profit.

On n'est pas tousiours sur le haut d'vne bresche, ou à la teste d'vne armée, à la veuë de son general, comme sur vn eschaffaut. On est surpris entre la haye et le fossé: il faut tenter fortune contre vn poullailler: il faut dénicher quatre chetifs harquebusiers d'vne grange: il faut seul s'escarter de la trouppe et entreprendre seul, selon la necessité qui s'offre. Et si on prend garde, on trouuera, à mon aduis, qu'il aduient par experience, que les moins esclattantes occasions sont les plus dangereuses: et qu'aux guerres, qui se sont passées de notre temps, il s'est perdu plus de gens de bien, aux occasions legeres et peu importantes, et à la contestation de quelque bicoque, qu'és lieux dignes et honnorables.

2.16.12 Qui tient sa mort pour mal employée, si ce n'est en occasion signalée: au lieu d'illustrer sa mort, il obscurcit volontiers sa vie: laissant eschapper ce pendant plusieurs iustes occasions de se hazarder. Et toutes les iustes sont illustres assez: sa conscience les trompettant suffisamment à chacun. *Gloria nostra est testimonium conscientiæ nostræ.* Qui n'est homme de bien que par ce qu'on le sçaura, et par ce qu'on l'en estimera mieux, apres l'auoir sçeu, qui ne veut bien faire qu'en condition que sa vertu vienne à la cognoissance des hommes, celuy-là n'est pas personne de qui on puisse tirer beaucoup de seruice.

Credo che'l resto di quel verno cose
Facesse degne di tener ne conto;
Ma fur sin'à quel tempo si nascose,
Che non è colpa mia s'hor' non le conto:
Perche Orlando a far l'opre virtuose,
Piu ch'à narrarle poi, sempre era pronto,
Nè mai fu alcun'de li suoi fatti espresso,
Senon quando hebbe i testimonij appresso. Il faut aller à la guerre pour son deuoir, et en attendre cette recompense, qui ne peut faillir à toutes belles actions, pour occultes

ENGLISH

start of their progress, men of whom we know nothing, who brought to it the same courage as theirs, had not the misfortune of their lot stopped them short at the very birth of their enterprises? Through so many and such extreme dangers, I do not remember reading that Caesar was ever wounded. A thousand men have died from perils smaller than the least of those he came through. Countless fine deeds must be lost without witness before one of them yields any profit.

You are not always at the top of a breach or at the head of an army, in sight of your general, as if on a stage. You are caught between hedge and ditch; you have to try your luck against a henhouse; you have to dislodge four wretched arquebusiers from a barn; you have to break away from the troop and act alone, as necessity arises. And if you pay attention, you will find, in my opinion, that experience shows the least brilliant occasions to be the most dangerous; and that in the wars of our time more good men have been lost on slight and unimportant occasions, and in the struggle over some petty shack of a fort, than in worthy and honorable places.

The man who considers his death ill spent unless it comes on some signal occasion is apt, instead of making his death illustrious, to obscure his life, letting slip meanwhile many just occasions for risking himself. And all just occasions are illustrious enough, since each man's conscience trumpets them loudly enough to him. *Our glory is the testimony of our conscience.* The man who is good only because people will know it, and because they will think better of him once they know it; who will do good only on condition that his virtue comes to men's knowledge—that is not a person from whom much service can be expected.[13]

I believe that for the rest of that winter he did
Things worthy of being recorded;
But up to that time they were so hidden
That it is not my fault if I do not tell them now:
For Orlando was always readier
To do valiant deeds than to tell of them afterward,
Nor was any of his deeds ever made known
Except when he had witnesses at hand. We must go to war out of duty and expect from it the reward that

13 Saint Paul, 2 Corinthians 1:12.

FRENCH

qu'elles soyent, non pas mesmes aux vertueuses pensées: c'est le contentement qu'vne conscience bien reglée reçoit en soy, de bien faire.

Il faut estre vaillant pour soy-mesmes, et pour l'auantage que c'est d'auoir son courage logé en vne assiette ferme et asseurée, contre les assauts de la Fortune. *Virtus,*
repulsæ nescia sordidæ,
Intaminatis fulget honoribus:
Nec sumit aut ponit secures
Arbitrio popularis auræ. Ce n'est pas pour la montre, que nostre ame doit iouër son rolle, c'est chez nous au dedans, où nuls yeux ne donnent que les nostres: là elle nous couure de la crainte de la mort, des douleurs et de la honte mesme: elle nous asseure là, de la perte de nos enfans, de nos amis, et de nos fortunes: et quand l'opportunité s'y presente, elle nous conduit aussi aux hazards de la guerre.

Non emolumento aliquo, sed ipsius honestatis decore. Ce profit est bien plus grand, et bien plus digne d'estre souhaité et esperé, que l'honneur et la gloire, qui n'est autre chose qu'vn fauorable iugement qu'on fait de nous.

2.16.13 Il faut trier de toute vne nation, vne douzaine d'hommes, pour iuger d'vn arpent de terre, et le iugement de nos inclinations, et de nos actions, la plus difficile matiere, et la plus importante qui soit, nous la remettons à la voix de la commune et de la tourbe, mere d'ignorance, d'iniustice, et d'inconstance. Est-ce raison de faire dependre la vie d'vn sage, du iugement des fols? *An quidquam stultius, quàm quos singulos contemnas, eos aliquid putare esse vniuersos?* Quiconque vise à leur plaire, il n'a iamais faict, c'est vne bute qui n'a ny forme ny prise.

Nil tam inæstimabile est, quàm animi multitudinis. Demetrius disoit plaisamment de la voix du peuple, qu'il ne faisoit non plus de recette, de celle qui luy sortoit par en haut, que de celle qui luy sortoit par en bas. Celuy la dit encore plus: *Ego hoc iudico, si quando turpe non sit, tamen non esse non turpe, quum id à multitudine laudetur.* Null'art, nulle soupplesse d'esprit pourroit conduire nos pas à la suitte d'vn guide si desuoyé et si desreglé. En cette confusion venteuse de bruits de rapports et opinions vulgaires, qui

ENGLISH

cannot fail any fine deed, however hidden, nor even virtuous thoughts: the contentment that a well-ordered conscience feels within itself at doing well.[14]

We must be valiant for our own sake, and for the advantage of having our courage lodged in a firm and secure position against the assaults of Fortune. *Virtue, knowing nothing of shameful defeat,*
Shines with untarnished honors,
And neither takes up nor lays down the axes
At the whim of the popular breeze. It is not for show that our soul must play its part; it is at home, within, where no eyes reach but our own. There it shields us from the fear of death, of pain, and even of shame; there it steadies us against the loss of our children, our friends, and our fortunes; and when the opportunity arises, it also leads us into the hazards of war.[15]

Not for any gain, but for the beauty of honor itself. This profit is far greater, and far more worth wishing and hoping for, than honor and glory, which is nothing but a favorable judgment others make of us.[16]

To judge an acre of land, a dozen men are picked out of a whole nation. Yet the judgment of our inclinations and our actions, the most difficult and the most important matter there is, we leave to the voice of the common people and the mob, mother of ignorance, injustice and inconstancy. Is it reasonable to make a wise man's life depend on the judgment of fools? *Is anything more foolish than to think that those whom you despise one by one amount to something all together?* Whoever aims to please them will never be done: it is a target with neither shape nor hold.[17]

Nothing is so incalculable as the minds of the multitude. Demetrius said wittily of the voice of the people that he set no more store by the sound it let out from above than by the sound it let out from below. Another goes further still: *My judgment is this: even if a thing is not shameful, it cannot help being shameful when it is praised by the multitude.* No skill, no suppleness of mind could guide our steps in the wake of so wayward and disorderly a guide.

14 Ariosto, Orlando Furioso.
15 Horace, Odes; the axes are the fasces carried before Roman magistrates.
16 Cicero, On Ends.
17 The Latin is Cicero, Tusculan Disputations 5.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
	nous poussent, il ne se peut establir aucune route qui vaille.	In this windy confusion of rumors, reports and common opinions that push us about, no route worth anything can be laid down.[18]
	Ne nous proposons point vne fin si flotante et volage: allons constamment apres la raison: que l'approbation publique nous suyue par là, si elle veut: et comme elle despend toute de la Fortune, nous n'auons point loy de l'esperer plustost par autre voye que par celle là.	Let us not set ourselves so floating and fickle an end. Let us follow reason steadily, and let public approval follow us along that path if it will. And since it depends entirely on Fortune, we have no ground to hope for it by any other road than that one.
2.16.14	Quand pour sa droiture ie ne suyurois le droit chemin, ie le suyurois pour auoir trouué par experience, qu'au bout du compte, c'est communement le plus heureux, et le plus vtile. *Dedit hoc prouidentia hominibus munus, vt honesta magis iuuarent.* Le marinier ancien disoit ainsin à Neptune, en vne grande tempeste: O Dieu tu me sauueras si tu veux, si tu veux tu me perdras: mais si tiendray-ie tousiours droit mon timon.	Even if I did not follow the straight road because it is straight, I would follow it because I have found by experience that in the end it is usually the happiest and the most useful. *Providence has granted men this gift: that honorable things should be the most profitable.* The sailor of old spoke thus to Neptune in a great storm: "O God, you will save me if you will; if you will, you will destroy me; but still I shall always hold my tiller straight."[19]
	I'ay veu de mon temps mill' hommes soupples, mestis, ambigus, et que nul ne doubtoit plus prudens mondains que moy, se perdre où ie me suis sauué: *Risi successu posse carere dolos.* Paul Æmyle allant en sa glorieuse expedition de Macedoine, aduertit sur tout le peuple à Rome, de contenir leur langue de ses actions, pendant son absence. Que la licence des iugements, est vn grand destourbier aux grands affaires! D'autant que chacun n'a pas la fermeté de Fabius à l'encontre des voix communes, contraires et iniurieuses qui ayma mieux laisser desmembrer son authorité aux vaines fantasies des hommes, que faire moins bien sa charge, auec fauorable reputation, et populaire consentement.	In my time I have seen a thousand men, supple, two-faced, ambiguous, whom no one doubted to be more worldly-wise than I, come to ruin where I came through safe: *I laughed to see that cunning can fail of success.* Paulus Aemilius, setting out on his glorious expedition to Macedonia, warned the people of Rome above all to hold their tongues about his actions while he was away. What a great hindrance the license of judgments is to great affairs! For not everyone has the firmness of Fabius against the common voices, hostile and abusive: he preferred to let his authority be torn to pieces by men's idle notions rather than do his task less well with a favorable reputation and popular consent.[20]
2.16.15	Il y a ie ne sçay quelle douceur naturelle à se sentir louër, mais nous luy prestons trop de beaucoup. *Laudari haud metuam, neque enim mihi cornea fibra es;* *Sed recti finémqve extremúmque esse recuso* *Euge tuum et bellè.* Ie ne me soucie pas tant, quel ie sois chez autruy, comme ie me soucie quel ie sois en moy-mesme. Ie veux estre riche par moy, non par emprunt. Les estrangers ne voyent que les euenemens et apparences externes: chacun peut faire bonne mine par	There is some natural sweetness in feeling oneself praised, but we lend it far too much. *I would not fear praise, for my heart is not made of horn;* *But I refuse to take your "Bravo!" and your "Well done!"* *As the end and the limit of what is right.* I do not care so much what I am in other people's eyes as I care what I am in myself. I want to be rich through myself, not by borrowing. Outsiders see only outcomes and outward appearances; anyone can put

18 The first Latin is Livy, History of Rome 31; Demetrius is the Cynic philosopher whose saying Seneca reports. The second Latin is Cicero, On Ends 2.
19 The Latin is Quintilian, Institutes of Oratory 1. The sailor's prayer is reported by Seneca in his Letters.
20 The Latin is Ovid, Heroides 1. Fabius Maximus, called the Delayer, held to his cautious strategy against Hannibal although he was mocked for it at Rome.

FRENCH

le dehors, plein au dedans de fiebure et d'effroy. Ils ne voyent pas mon cœur, ils ne voyent que mes contenances.

On a raison de descrier l'hypocrisie, qui se trouue en la guerre: car qu'est il plus aisé à vn homme pratic, que de gauchir aux dangers, et de contrefaire le mauuais, ayant le cœur plein de mollesse? Il y a tant de moyens d'euiter les occasions de se hazarder en particulier, que nous aurons trompé mille fois le monde, auant que de nous engager à vn dangereux pas: et lors mesme, nous y trouuant empétrez, nous sçaurons bien pour ce coup, couurir nostre ieu d'vn bon visage, et d'vne parolle asseurée, quoy que l'ame nous tremble au dedans.

Et qui auroit l'vsage de l'anneau Platonique, rendant inuisible celuy qui le portoit au doigt, si on luy donnoit le tour vers le plat de la main: assez de gents souuent se cacheroyent, où il se faut presenter le plus: et se repentiroyent d'estre placez en lieu si honorable, auquel la necessité les rend asseurez. *Falsus honor iuuat, et mendax infamia terret / Quem, nisi mendosum et mendacem?* Voyla comment tous ces iugemens qui se font des apparences externes, sont merueilleusement incertains et douteux: et n'est aucun si asseuré tesmoing, comme chacun à soy-mesme. En celles là combien auons nous de goujats, compaignons de nostre gloire?

Celuy qui se tient ferme dans vne tranchée descouuerte, que fait il en cela, que ne facent deuant luy cinquante pauures pionniers, qui luy ouurent le pas, et le couurent de leurs corps, pour cinq sols de paye par iour? *Non quicquid turbida Roma*
Eleuet, accedas, examénque improbum in illa
Castiges trutina: nec te quæsiueris extrà.

ENGLISH

a good face on things outside while full of fever and terror inside. They do not see my heart; they see only my bearing.[21]

People are right to decry the hypocrisy found in war. For what is easier for a practiced man than to dodge dangers and play the fierce fighter while his heart is full of softness? There are so many ways of avoiding occasions to risk ourselves individually that we will have deceived the world a thousand times before committing ourselves to a dangerous pass. And even then, finding ourselves caught in it, we will know well enough how to cover our game for the moment with a bold face and a confident word, though our soul trembles within.

And if anyone had the use of Plato's ring, which made its wearer invisible when it was turned toward the palm of the hand, plenty of people would often hide just where they most ought to show themselves, and would regret being placed in so honorable a post, where it is necessity that makes them steady. *False honor delights, and lying slander frightens / Whom but the faulty and the liar?* See how wonderfully uncertain and doubtful all these judgments made from outward appearances are; and there is no witness so sure as each man to himself. In those appearances, how many camp servants do we have as partners in our glory?[22]

The man who stands firm in an open trench—what does he do there that fifty poor sappers have not done before him, who open the way for him and cover him with their bodies for five sous' pay a day? *If muddled Rome makes light of something,*
Do not side with it, nor try to set right the faulty needle
On that scale; do not look for yourself outside yourself.

TO BE TALKED ABOUT

Men want to be talked about at any price, though fame cannot reach us after death.

FRENCH

2.16.16 Nous appellons aggrandir nostre nom, l'estendre et semer en plusieurs bouches: nous voulons qu'il y soit receu en bonne part, et que cette sienne accroissance luy vienne à profit: voyla ce qu'il y peut auoir de plus excusable en ce dessein. Mais l'exces de cette maladie en va iusques là, que plusieurs cherchent de faire parler d'eux en quelque façon que ce soit. Trogus Pompeius dit

ENGLISH

We call it enlarging our name to spread it and sow it in many mouths. We want it to be well received there, and we want this growth of it to bring it profit: that is what may be most excusable in this design. But the excess of this malady goes so far that many seek to get themselves talked about in any way whatever. Trogus Pompeius says of Hero-

21 Persius, Satires 1.
22 The ring of Gyges, told in Plato's Republic, Book 2. The Latin is Horace, Epistles 1.16.

FRENCH

de Herostratus, et Titus Liuius de Manlius Capitolinus, qu'ils estoyent plus desireux de grande, que de bonne reputation. Ce vice est ordinaire. Nous nous soignons plus qu'on parle de nous, que comment on en parle: et nous est assez que nostre nom coure par la bouche des hommes, en quelque condition qu'il y coure.

Il semble que l'estre conneu, ce soit aucunement auoir sa vie et sa durée en la garde d'autruy.

2.16.17 Moy, ie tiens que ie ne suis que chez moy, et de cette autre mienne vie qui loge en la cognoissance de mes amis, à la considerer nuë, et simplement en soy, ie sçay bien que ie n'en sens fruict ny iouyssance, que par la vanité d'vne opinion fantastique. Et quand ie seray mort, ie m'en resentiray encores beaucoup moins. Et si perdray tout net, l'vsage des vrayes vtilitez, qui accidentalement la suyuent par fois: ie n'auray plus de prise par où saisir la reputation: ny par où elle puisse me toucher ny arriuer à moy.

Car de m'attendre que mon nom la reçoiue: premierement ie n'ay point de nom qui soit assez mien: de deux que i'ay, l'vn est commun à toute ma race, voire encore à d'autres. Il y a vne famille à Paris et à Montpelier, qui se surnomme Montaigne: vne autre en Bretaigne, et en Xaintonge, de la Montaigne. Le remuement d'vne seule syllabe, meslera noz fusées, de façon que i'auray part à leur gloire, et eux à l'aduenture à ma honte. Et si, les miens se sont autresfois surnommez Eyquem, surnom qui touche encore vne maison cogneuë en Angleterre. Quant à mon autre nom, il est, à quiconque aura enuie de le prendre. Ainsi i'honoreray peut estre, vn crocheteur en ma place.

Et puis quand i'aurois vne merque particuliere pour moy, que peut elle merquer quand ie n'y suis plus? peut elle designer et fauorir l'inanité? *Nunc leuior cippus non imprimit ossa*
Laudat posteritas, nunc non è manibus illis,
Nunc non è tumulo fortunatáque fauilla
Nascuntur violæ? Mais de cecy i'en ay parlé ailleurs.

2.16.18 Au demeurant en toute vne bataille où dix mill' hommes sont stropiez ou tuez, il n'en est pas quinze dequoy lon parle. Il faut que ce soit quelque grandeur bien eminente,

ENGLISH

stratus, and Livy of Manlius Capitolinus, that they were more eager for a great reputation than for a good one. This vice is common. We care more that people talk about us than how they talk about us; and it is enough for us that our name runs in men's mouths, in whatever condition it runs.[23]

It seems that to be known is in some way to have one's life and its duration in other people's keeping.

For my part, I hold that I exist only within myself. As for that other life of mine that lodges in my friends' knowledge, considered bare and simply in itself, I know well that I get no fruit or enjoyment from it except through the vanity of a fanciful opinion. And when I am dead I shall feel it much less still. Besides, I shall lose outright the use of the real benefits that sometimes follow it by accident: I shall no longer have any handle by which to seize reputation, nor any by which it can touch me or reach me.

For if I expect my name to receive it—first of all, I have no name that is sufficiently my own. Of the two I have, one is common to my whole line, and indeed to others as well. There is a family in Paris and Montpellier called Montaigne, another in Brittany and Saintonge called de la Montaigne. Shifting a single syllable will tangle our skeins, so that I shall have a share in their glory, and they perhaps in my shame. What is more, my people were once surnamed Eyquem, a surname that also belongs to a well-known house in England. As for my other name, it belongs to anyone who cares to take it. So I may perhaps be honoring a porter in my place.[24]

And then, even if I had a mark of my own, what can it mark when I am no longer there? Can it designate and favor emptiness? *Does the gravestone not press more lightly on his bones now?*
Posterity praises him: do not violets now spring
From those remains, from that tomb
And those blessed ashes? But I have spoken of this elsewhere.

For the rest, in a whole battle where ten thousand men are maimed or killed, there are not fifteen who get talked about. It must be some very emin-

23 Herostratus burned the temple of Artemis at Ephesus in 356 BC to make himself famous; Manlius Capitolinus, who saved the Capitol from the Gauls, was later put to death for aiming at kingship.
24 Eyquem was the surname of Montaigne's merchant ancestors; his "other name" is his Christian name, Michel.

FRENCH

ou quelque consequence d'importance, que la Fortune y ait iointe, qui face valoir vn' action priuée, non d'vn harquebuzier seulement, mais d'vn Capitaine: car de tuer vn homme, ou deux, ou dix, de se presenter courageusement à la mort, c'est à la verité quelque chose à chacun de nous, car il y va de tout: mais pour le monde, ce sont choses si ordinaires, il s'en voit tant tous les iours, et en faut tant de pareilles pour produire vn effect notable, que nous n'en pouuons attendre aucune particuliere recommendation.

Casus multis hic cognitus, ac iam / Tritus, et è medio fortunæ ductus aceruo.

2.16.19 De tant de miliasses de vaillans hommes qui sont morts depuis quinze cens ans en France, les armes en la main, il n'y en a pas cent, qui soyent venus à nostre cognoissance. La memoire non des chefs seulement, mais des battailles et victoires est enseuelie. Les fortunes de plus de la moitié du monde, à faute de registre, ne bougent de leur place, et s'esuanoüissent sans durée. Si i'auois en ma possession les euenemens incognus, i'en penserois tresfacilement supplanter les cognus, en toute espece d'exemples. Quoy, que des Romains mesmes, et des Grecs, parmy tant d'escriuains et de tesmoings, et tant de rares et nobles exploicts, il en est venu si peu iusques à nous?

Ad nos vix tenuis famæ perlabitur aura. Ce sera beaucoup si d'icy à cent ans on se souuient en gros, que de nostre temps il y a eu des guerres ciuiles en France. Les Lacedemoniens sacrifioient aux Muses entrans en battaille, afin que leurs gestes fussent bien et dignement escris, estimants que ce fust vne faueur diuine, et non commune, que les belles actions trouuassent des tesmoings qui leur sçeussent donner vie et memoire.

2.16.20 Pensons nous qu'à chasque harquebusade qui nous touche, et à chasque hazard que nous courons, il y ait soudain vn greffier qui l'enrolle? et cent greffiers outre cela le pourront escrire, desquels les commentaires ne dureront que trois iours, et ne viendront à la veuë de personne. Nous n'auons pas la milliesme partie des escrits anciens; c'est la Fortune qui leur donne vie, ou plus courte, ou plus longue, selon sa faueur: et ce que nous en auons, il nous est loisible de doubter, si c'est le pire, n'ayans pas veu le demeurant.

ENGLISH

ent greatness, or some important consequence that Fortune has attached to it, that gives value to a private action—not only of an arquebusier, but of a captain. For to kill a man, or two, or ten, to face death bravely, is indeed something to each of us, since everything is at stake; but for the world these are such ordinary things, so many of them are seen every day, and it takes so many like them to produce a notable effect, that we cannot expect any special recognition from them.

A case known to many, already / Worn threadbare, drawn from the middle of Fortune's heap.[25]

Of the many thousands upon thousands of valiant men who have died in France over the last fifteen hundred years with arms in their hands, not a hundred have come to our knowledge. The memory not only of the leaders but of battles and victories is buried. The fortunes of more than half the world, for lack of a record, never stir from their place and vanish without lasting. If I had the unknown events in my possession, I think I could very easily supplant the known ones with them, in every kind of example. What! Even of the Romans and the Greeks, with so many writers and witnesses and so many rare and noble exploits, so few have come down to us?

Barely a faint breath of their fame drifts down to us. It will be a great deal if, a hundred years from now, people remember in a general way that in our time there were civil wars in France. The Spartans sacrificed to the Muses as they went into battle, so that their deeds might be well and worthily written, considering it a divine and uncommon favor that fine actions should find witnesses able to give them life and memory.[26]

Do we think that at every arquebus shot that hits us, and every risk we run, there is suddenly a clerk on hand to enter it in the rolls? And besides, a hundred clerks may write it down, and their accounts will last only three days and come before no one's eyes. We do not have a thousandth part of ancient writings; it is Fortune who gives them life, shorter or longer according to her favor. And as for what we do have, we may well doubt whether it is the worst, since we have not seen the rest.

25 Juvenal, Satires 13.
26 Virgil, Aeneid 7.

FRENCH

On ne fait pas des histoires de choses de si peu: il faut auoir esté chef à conquerir vn Empire, ou vn Royaume, il faut auoir gaigné cinquante deux battailles assignées, tousiours plus foible en nombre, comme Cæsar. Dix mille bons compagnons et plusieurs grands Capitaines, moururent à sa suitte, vaillamment et courageusement, desquels les noms n'ont duré qu'autant que leurs femmes et leurs enfans vesquirent: *Quos fama obscura recondit.* De ceux mesme, que nous voyons bien faire, trois mois, ou trois ans apres qu'ils y sont demeurez, il ne s'en parle non plus que s'ils n'eussent iamais esté.

Quiconque considerera auec iuste mesure et proportion, de quelles gens et de quels faits, la gloire se maintient en la memoire des liures, il trouuera qu'il y a de nostre siecle, fort peu d'actions, et fort peu de personnes, qui y puissent pretendre nul droict. Combien auons nous veu d'hommes vertueux, suruiure à leur propre reputation, qui ont veu et souffert esteindre en leur presence, l'honneur et la gloire tres-iustement acquise en leurs ieunes ans? Et pour trois ans de cette vie fantastique et imaginaire, allons nous perdant nostre vraye vie et essentielle, et nous engager à vne mort perpetuelle? Les sages se proposent vne plus belle et plus iuste fin, à vne si importante entreprise.

Rectè facti, fecisse merces est: Officij fructus, ipsum officium est. Il seroit à l'aduanture excusable à vn peintre ou autre artisan, ou encores à vn rhetoricien ou grammairien, de se trauailler pour acquerir nom, par ses ouurages: mais les actions de la vertu, elles sont trop nobles d'elles mesmes, pour rechercher autre loyer, que de leur propre valeur: et notamment pour la chercher en la vanité des iugemens humains.

ENGLISH

Histories are not written about such trifles. One must have been the leader in conquering an empire or a kingdom; one must have won fifty-two pitched battles, always outnumbered, like Caesar. Ten thousand good comrades and many great captains died valiantly and courageously in his service, and their names lasted only as long as their wives and children lived: *Whom an obscure fame hides away.* Even of those we see do well, three months or three years after they have fallen, there is no more talk than if they had never existed.

Whoever considers, with fair measure and proportion, what kind of people and what kind of deeds glory keeps alive in the memory of books will find that in our age there are very few actions and very few persons that can claim any right to it. How many virtuous men have we seen outlive their own reputation, who have seen and endured the extinction, before their very eyes, of the honor and glory they very justly earned in their youth? And for three years of this fanciful and imaginary life, are we to go and lose our true and essential life, and commit ourselves to a perpetual death? The wise set themselves a finer and juster end for so important an undertaking.

The reward of a good deed is to have done it. The fruit of duty is duty itself. It might perhaps be excusable for a painter or some other craftsman, or even for a rhetorician or grammarian, to labor to win a name through his works. But the actions of virtue are too noble in themselves to seek any other wage than their own worth—and above all to seek it in the vanity of human judgments.[27]

A USEFUL FALSEHOOD

If the love of glory keeps men dutiful, lawgivers may feed it, as they fed people religious fables.

FRENCH

2.16.21 Si toute-fois cette fauce opinion sert au public à contenir les hommes en leur deuoir: si le peuple en est esueillé à la vertu: si les Princes sont touchez, de voir le monde benir la memoire de Traian, et abominer celle de Neron: si cela les esmeut, de voir le nom de ce grand pendart, autresfois si effroyable et si redoubté, maudit et outragé si librement par le premier escolier qui l'entreprend: qu'elle accroisse hardiment, et qu'on la nourrisse entre nous le plus qu'on pourra. Et Platon employant toutes

ENGLISH

If, however, this false opinion serves the public by keeping men to their duty; if the people are roused by it to virtue; if princes are moved to see the world bless the memory of Trajan and abhor that of Nero; if it stirs them to see the name of that great scoundrel, once so frightful and so dreaded, cursed and reviled so freely by the first schoolboy who takes it on—then let it grow boldly, and let us

27 Seneca, Letters 81, and Cicero, On Ends 2.

FRENCH

choses à rendre ses citoyens vertueux, leur conseille aussi, de ne mespriser la bonne estimation des peuples.

Et dit, que par quelque diuine inspiration il aduient, que les meschans mesmes sçauent souuent tant de parole, que d'opinion, iustement distinguer les bons des mauuais. Ce personnage et son pedagogue sont merueilleux, et hardis ouuriers à faire ioindre les operations et reuelations diuines tout par tout où faut l'humaine force. Et pour cette cause peut estre, l'appelloit Timon en l'iniuriant, le grand forgeur de miracles. *Vt traijei poetæ confugiunt ad Deum, cùm explicare argumenti exitum non possunt.*

2.16.22 Puis que les hommes par leur insuffisance ne se peuuent assez payer d'vne bonne monnoye, qu'on y employe encore la fauce. Ce moyen a esté practiqué par tous les legislateurs: et n'est police, où il n'y ait quelque meslange, ou de vanité ceremonieuse, ou d'opinion mensongere, qui serue de bride à tenir le peuple en office. C'est pour cela que la pluspart ont leurs origines et commencemens fabuleux, et enrichis de mysteres supernaturels. C'est cela, qui a donné credit aux religions bastardes, et les a faictes fauorir aux gens d'entendement.

Et pour cela, que Numa et Sertorius, pour rendre leurs hommes de meilleure creance, les paissoyent de cette sottise, l'vn que la nymphe Egeria, l'autre que sa biche blanche, luy apportoit de la part des Dieux, tous les conseils qu'il prenoit. Et l'authorité que Numa donna à ses loix soubs tiltre du patronage de cette Deesse, Zoroastre legislateur des Bactrians et des Perses, la donna aux siennes, soubs le nom du Dieu Oromazis: Trismegiste des Ægyptiens, de Mercure: Zamolxis des Scythes, de Vesta: Charondas des Chalcides, de Saturne: Minos des Candiots, de Iuppiter: Lycurgus des Lacedemoniens, d'Apollo: Dracon et Solon des Atheniens, de Minerue.

Et toute police a vn Dieu à sa teste: faucement les autres: veritablement celle, que Moïse dressa au peuple de Iudée sorty d'Ægypte. La religion des Bedoins, comme dit le sire de Iouinuille, portoit entre autres choses, que l'ame de celuy d'entre eux qui mouroit pour son Prince, s'en alloit en vn autre corps plus heureux, plus beau et plus fort que

ENGLISH

nourish it among us as much as we can. And Plato, using every means to make his citizens virtuous, also advises them not to despise the good esteem of the people.

And he says that by some divine inspiration it happens that even the wicked often know how to distinguish the good from the bad rightly, both in word and in opinion. This man and his teacher are wonderful and bold workmen at bringing in divine operations and revelations wherever human strength falls short. And that is perhaps why Timon, insulting him, called him the great forger of miracles. *As tragic poets take refuge in a god when they cannot work out the ending of their plot.*[28]

Since men, through their inadequacy, cannot be paid well enough in good coin, let counterfeit be used as well. This method has been practiced by all lawgivers, and there is no government without some admixture either of ceremonial vanity or of lying opinion, to serve as a bridle to keep the people to their duty. That is why most of them have fabulous origins and beginnings, enriched with supernatural mysteries. That is what has given credit to spurious religions and made men of understanding favor them.

That is also why Numa and Sertorius, to make their men more believing, fed them this nonsense: the one that the nymph Egeria, the other that his white doe, brought him from the gods all the counsel he followed. And the authority that Numa gave his laws under the title of this goddess's patronage, Zoroaster, lawgiver of the Bactrians and the Persians, gave to his under the name of the god Oromazes; Trismegistus of the Egyptians, under that of Mercury; Zamolxis of the Scythians, of Vesta; Charondas of the Chalcidians, of Saturn; Minos of the Cretans, of Jupiter; Lycurgus of the Spartans, of Apollo; Draco and Solon of the Athenians, of Minerva.[29]

And every state has a god at its head: falsely, all the others; truly, the one that Moses set up for the people of Judea when they came out of Egypt. The religion of the Bedouins, as the Sire de Joinville says, held among other things that the soul of any one of them who died for his prince went into an-

28 His teacher is Socrates; Timon of Phlius was a skeptic poet who mocked the philosophers. The Latin is Cicero, On the Nature of the Gods 1.

29 Oromazes is Ahura Mazda, the supreme god of the Persians.

FRENCH

le premier: au moyen dequoy ils en hazardoyent beaucoup plus volontiers leur vie; *In ferrum mens prona viris, animæque capaces / Mortis, et ignauum est redituræ parcere vitæ.* Voyla vne creance tressalutaire, toute vaine qu'elle soit. Chasque nation a plusieurs tels exemples chez soy: mais ce subject meriteroit vn discours à part.

2.16.23 Pour dire encore vn mot sur mon premier propos: ie ne conseille non plus aux Dames, d'appeller honneur, leur deuoir, *vt enim consuetudo loquitur, id solum dicitur honestum, quod est populari fama gloriosum*: leur deuoir est le marc: leur honneur n'est que l'escorce. Ny ne leur conseille de nous donner cette excuse en payement de leur refus: car ie presuppose, que leurs intentions, leur desir, et leur volonté, qui sont pieces où l'honneur n'a que voir, d'autant qu'il n'en paroist rien au dehors, soyent encore plus reglées que les effects. *Quæ, quia non liceat, non facit, illa facit.* L'offence et enuers Dieu, et en la conscience, seroit aussi grande de le desirer que de l'effectuer.

Et puis ce sont actions d'elles mesmes cachées et occultes, il seroit bien-aysé qu'elles en desrobassent quelqu'vne à la cognoissance d'autruy, d'où l'honneur depend, si elles n'auoyent autre respect à leur deuoir, et à l'affection qu'elles portent à la chasteté, pour elle mesme. Toute personne d'honneur choisit de perdre plus tost son honneur, que de perdre sa conscience.

ENGLISH

other body, happier, more beautiful and stronger than the first; and for that reason they risked their lives much more willingly: *Men's minds are eager for the sword, their souls able to face / Death, and it is cowardly to spare a life that will return.* There is a very salutary belief, empty as it may be. Every nation has many such examples at home; but this subject would deserve a discussion of its own.[30]

To say one more word on my first subject: no more do I advise ladies to call their duty honor—*for, as common usage has it, only that is called honorable which is glorious in popular repute*. Their duty is the pith; their honor is only the bark. Nor do I advise them to give us this excuse in payment for their refusal. For I presuppose that their intentions, their desire and their will—parts honor has nothing to do with, since nothing of them shows outwardly—are even better regulated than their deeds. *She who does not do it because she may not, does it.* The offense, both toward God and in conscience, would be as great in desiring it as in doing it.[31]

And then these are actions hidden and secret in themselves. It would be easy for women to steal some of them from the knowledge of others, on which honor depends, if they had no other regard for their duty and for the love they bear chastity for its own sake. Every person of honor chooses to lose his honor rather than to lose his conscience.

30 The Latin is Lucan, Pharsalia 1.
31 The first Latin is Cicero, On Ends 2; the verse is Ovid, Amores 3.

II.17 Of Presumption

De la presumption

Montaigne examines the opposite fault of underrating oneself, then sketches a candid, often unflattering self-portrait of his body, mind and talents.

FRENCH

ENGLISH

2.17.1 IL y a vne autre sorte de gloire, qui est vne trop bonne opinion, que nous conceuons de nostre valeur. C'est vn'affection inconsiderée, dequoy nous nous cherissons, qui nous represente à nous mesmes, autres que nous ne sommes. Comme la passion amoureuse preste des beautez, et des graces, au subject qu'elle embrasse, et fait que ceux qui en sont espris, trouuent d'vn iugement trouble et alteré, ce qu'ils ayment, autre et plus parfaict qu'il n'est.

There is another kind of glory, which is an over-good opinion we form of our own worth. It is an ill-considered affection with which we cherish ourselves, which represents us to ourselves as other than we are. It is like the passion of love, which lends beauties and graces to the object it embraces, and makes those smitten with it find what they love, with troubled and altered judgment, other and more perfect than it is.

2.17.2 Ie ne veux pas, que de peur de faillir de ce costé là, vn homme se mescognoisse pourtant, ny qu'il pense estre moins que ce qu'il est: le iugement doit tout par tout maintenir son droit. C'est raison qu'il voye en ce subject comme ailleurs, ce que la verité luy presente. Si c'est Cæsar, qu'il se treuue hardiment le plus grand Capitaine du monde. Nous ne sommes que ceremonie, la ceremonie nous emporte, et laissons la substance des choses: nous nous tenons aux branches et abandonnons le tronc et le corps.

I do not want a man, for fear of erring on that side, to fail to know himself on that account, or to think he is less than he is: judgment must maintain its rights everywhere. It is right that he should see in this matter, as elsewhere, what truth shows him. If he is Caesar, let him boldly find himself the greatest captain in the world. We are nothing but ceremony; ceremony carries us away, and we leave the substance of things. We cling to the branches and abandon the trunk and the body.

Nous auons appris aux Dames de rougir, oyants seulement nommer, ce qu'elles ne craignent aucunement à faire: nous n'osons appeller à droict noz membres, et ne craignons pas de les employer à toute sorte de desbauche.

We have taught ladies to blush at merely hearing named what they are not in the least afraid to do. We dare not call our members by their right names, and we are not afraid to use them in every kind of debauchery.

2.17.3 La ceremonie nous deffend d'exprimer par parolles les choses licites et naturelles, et nous l'en croyons: la raison nous deffend de n'en faire point d'illicites et mauuaises, et personne ne l'en croit. Ie me trouue icy empestré és loix de la ceremonie: car elle ne permet, ny qu'on parle bien de soy, ny qu'on en parle mal. Nous la lairrons là pour ce coup. Ceux de qui la Fortune, bonne ou mauuaise qu'on la doiue appeller, a faict passer la vie en quelque eminent degré, ils peuuent par leurs actions publiques tesmoigner quels ils sont.

Ceremony forbids us to express in words things that are lawful and natural, and we believe it; reason forbids us to do things that are unlawful and wicked, and no one believes it. I find myself entangled here in the laws of ceremony, for it allows us neither to speak well of ourselves nor to speak ill. We shall leave it aside for this once. Those whose lives Fortune—whether we should call it good or bad—has made pass in some eminent rank can show by their public actions what they are.

Mais ceux qu'elle n'a employez qu'en foule, et de qui personne ne parlera, si eux mesmes n'en parlent, ils sont excusables, s'ils prennent la hardiesse de parler d'eux,

But those whom she has employed only in the crowd, and of whom no one will speak unless they speak themselves, are excusable if they make bold

FRENCH

mesmes enuers ceux qui ont interest de les cognoistre; à l'exemple de Lucilius: *Ille velut fidis arcana sodalibus olim*
Credebat libris, neque si malè cesserat, vsquam
Decurrens alio, neque si benè: quo fit, vt omnis
Votiua pateat veluti descripta tabella
Vita senis. Celuy la commettoit à son papier ses actions et ses pensées, et s'y peignoit tel qu'il se sentoit estre. *Nec id Rutilio et Scauro citra fidem, aut obtrectationi fuit.*

ENGLISH

to speak of themselves to those who have an interest in knowing them, following the example of Lucilius: *He used to confide his secrets to his books as to faithful friends,*
Never turning elsewhere, whether things had gone badly
Or well; so that the old man's whole life
Lies open to view, as if painted
On a votive tablet. That man entrusted his actions and his thoughts to his paper, and portrayed himself there as he felt himself to be. *Nor did Rutilius and Scaurus lose credit or meet with disparagement for doing so.*[1]

GESTURES OF PRIDE

Montaigne asks whether his bearing betrayed pride, and notes the unconscious mannerisms of great men.

FRENCH

2.17.4 Il me souuient donc, que dés ma plus tendre enfance, on remerquoit en moy ie ne sçay quel port de corps, et des gestes tesmoignants quelque vaine et sotte fierté. I'en veux dire premierement cecy, qu'il n'est pas inconuenient d'auoir des conditions et des propensions, si propres et si incorporées en nous, que nous n'ayons pas moyen de les sentir et recognoistre. Et de telles inclinations naturelles, le corps en retient volontiers quelque ply, sans nostre sçeu et consentement.

C'estoit vne affetterie consente de sa beauté, qui faisoit vn peu pancher la teste d'Alexandre sur vn costé, et qui rendoit le parler d'Alcibiades mol et gras: Iulius Cæsar se grattoit la teste d'vn doigt, qui est la contenance d'vn homme remply de pensemens penibles: et Cicero, ce me semble, auoit accoustumé de rincer le nez, qui signifie vn naturel mocqueur. Tels mouuemens peuuent arriuer imperceptiblement en nous. Il y en a d'autres artificiels, dequoy ie ne parle point. Comme les salutations, et reuerences, par où on acquiert le plus souuent à tort, l'honneur d'estre bien humble et courtois: on peut estre humble de gloire.

Ie suis assez prodigue de bonnettades, notamment en esté, et n'en reçois iamais sans reuenche, de quelque qualité d'hommes que ce soit, s'il n'est à mes gages. Ie desirasse d'aucuns Princes que ie cognois, qu'ils en fussent plus espargnans et iustes dispensateurs; car

ENGLISH

I remember, then, that from my earliest childhood people noticed in me a certain bearing of the body, and gestures that betrayed some vain and foolish pride. First I want to say this about it: it is quite possible to have qualities and propensities so much our own and so built into us that we have no means of sensing and recognizing them. And the body readily keeps some crease from such natural inclinations, without our knowledge or consent.

It was an affectation conscious of his beauty that made Alexander tilt his head a little to one side, and that made Alcibiades' speech soft and lisping. Julius Caesar scratched his head with one finger, which is the gesture of a man full of painful thoughts; and Cicero, it seems to me, had the habit of wrinkling his nose, which signifies a mocking nature. Such movements can arise in us imperceptibly. There are others, artificial ones, which I am not talking about, such as salutations and bows, by which people most often win, undeservedly, the honor of being very humble and courteous: one can be humble out of vainglory.

I am rather lavish with raising my hat, especially in summer, and I never receive such a greeting without returning it, whatever the rank of the man, unless he is in my pay. I could wish that some princes I know were more sparing with them and fairer in dispensing them; for, scattered

1 Horace, Satires 2.1, on the satirist Lucilius (2nd century BC). The last Latin is Tacitus, Agricola 1, on Romans who wrote their own lives.

FRENCH

ainsin indiscretement espanduës, elles ne portent plus de coup: si elles sont sans esgard, elles sont sans effect.

Entre les contenances desreglées, n'oublions pas la morgue de l'Empereur Constantius, qui en publicq tenoit tousiours la teste droicte, sans la contourner ou flechir ny çà ny là, non pas seulement pour regarder ceux qui le saluoient à costé, ayant le corps planté immobile, sans se laisser aller au bransle de son coche, sans oser ny cracher, ny se moucher, n'y essuyer le visage deuant les gens. Ie ne sçay si ces gestes qu'on remerquoit en moy, estoient de cette premiere condition, et si à la verité i'auoy quelque occulte propension à ce vice; comme il peut bien estre: et ne puis pas respondre des bransles du corps. Mais quant aux bransles de l'ame, ie veux icy confesser ce que i'en sens.

ENGLISH

so indiscriminately, they no longer carry any weight. If they are given without regard, they are without effect.

Among unruly bearings, let us not forget the haughtiness of the Emperor Constantius, who in public always held his head straight, without turning or bending it this way or that, not even to look at those who greeted him from the side; he kept his body planted motionless, not letting himself sway with the motion of his coach, not daring to spit, or blow his nose, or wipe his face in front of people. I do not know whether those gestures people noticed in me were of that first kind, and whether in truth I had some hidden propensity to this vice, as may well be; and I cannot answer for the movements of the body. But as for the movements of the soul, I want to confess here what I feel about them.[2]

VALUING WHAT IS NOT MINE

He rates his own things below others' and embraces the opinions that most humble mankind.

FRENCH

2.17.5 Il y a deux parties en cette gloire: sçauoir est, de s'estimer trop, et n'estimer pas assez autruy. Quant à l'vne, il me semble premierement, ces considerations deuoir estre mises en compte. Ie me sens pressé d'vne erreur d'ame, qui me desplaist, et comme inique, et encore plus comme importune. I'essaye à la corriger: mais l'arracher ie ne puis. C'est, que ie diminue du iuste prix des choses, que ie possede: et hausse le prix aux choses, d'autant qu'elles sont estrangeres, absentes, et non miennes. Cette humeur s'espand bien loing. Comme la prerogatiue de l'authorité fait, que les maris regardent les femmes propres d'vn vicieux desdein, et plusieurs peres leurs enfants: ainsi fay-ie: et entre deux pareils ouurages, poiseroy tousiours contre le mien.

Non tant que la ialousie de mon auancement et amendement trouble mon iugement, et m'empesche de me satisfaire, comme que, d'elle mesme la maistrise engendre mespris de ce qu'on tient et regente. Les polices, les mœurs loingtaines me flattent, et les langues. Et m'apperçoy que le Latin me pippe par la faueur de sa dignité, au delà de ce qui luy appartient, comme aux enfants et au vulgaire. L'œconomie, la maison, le cheual de mon voisin, en egale valeur, vault mieux que le mien,

ENGLISH

There are two parts to this glory: namely, to esteem oneself too highly, and not to esteem others highly enough. As to the first, it seems to me that these considerations should be taken into account first. I feel myself burdened by an error of the soul that displeases me, both as unjust and still more as troublesome. I try to correct it, but I cannot root it out. It is that I lower the just value of the things I possess, and raise the value of things because they are foreign, absent and not mine. This temperament spreads very far. Just as the prerogative of authority makes husbands look upon their own wives with a vicious disdain, and many fathers their children, so do I; and between two equal works I would always weigh against my own.

Not so much because jealousy for my progress and improvement troubles my judgment and keeps me from being satisfied with myself, as because mastery in itself breeds contempt for what one holds and governs. Distant governments and manners appeal to me, and so do distant languages. And I notice that Latin beguiles me, through the favor of its dignity, beyond what is its due, as it does children and the common people. My neighbor's man-

2 Constantius II, Roman emperor (AD 337–361), as described by the historian Ammianus Marcellinus.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
	de ce qu'il n'est pas mien. Dauantage, que ie suis tres-ignorant en mon faict: i'admire l'asseurance et promesse, que chacun a de soy: là où il n'est quasi rien que ie sçache sçauoir, ny que i'ose me respondre pouuoir faire.	agement, his house, his horse, though of equal value, are better than mine because they are not mine. Moreover, I am very ignorant about my own affairs. I admire the assurance and confidence that everyone has in himself, whereas there is hardly anything that I know I know, or that I dare promise myself I can do.
	Ie n'ay point mes moyens en proposition et par estat: et n'en suis instruit qu'apres l'effect: autant doubteux de ma force que d'vne autre force. D'où il aduient, si ie rencontre louablement en vne besongne, que ie le donne plus à ma fortune, qu'à mon industrie: d'autant que ie les desseigne toutes au hazard et en crainte.	I do not have my capacities set out and itemized in advance; I learn of them only after the event, as doubtful of my own strength as of anyone else's. Hence, if I succeed creditably in some task, I put it down more to my luck than to my skill, since I plan every task at random and in fear.
2.17.6	Pareillement i'ay en general cecy, que de toutes les opinions que l'ancienneté a euës de l'homme en gros, celles que i'embrasse plus volontiers, et ausquelles ie m'attache le plus, ce sont celles qui nous mesprisent, auilissent, et aneantissent le plus. La philosophie ne me semble iamais auoir si beau ieu, que quand elle combat nostre presomption et vanité; quand elle recognoist de bonne foy son irresolution, sa foiblesse, et son ignorance. Il me semble que la mere nourrice des plus fausses opinions, et publiques et particulieres, c'est la trop bonne opinion que l'homme a de soy.	Likewise I have this in general: of all the opinions antiquity has held of man as a whole, those I embrace most willingly and cling to most are those that most despise, debase and annihilate us. Philosophy never seems to me to have so fine a game as when it combats our presumption and vanity, when it acknowledges in good faith its irresolution, its weakness and its ignorance. It seems to me that the nursing mother of the falsest opinions, both public and private, is man's overgood opinion of himself.
	Ces gens qui se perchent à cheuauchons sur l'epicycle de Mercure, qui voient si auant dans le ciel, ils m'arrachent les dents: car en l'estude que ie fay, duquel le subject, c'est l'homme, trouuant vne si extreme varieté de iugemens, vn si profond labyrinthe de difficultez les vnes sur les autres, tant de diuersité et incertitude, en l'eschole mesme de la sapience: vous pouuez penser, puis que ces gens là n'ont peu se resoudre de la cognoissance d'eux mesmes, et de leur propre condition, qui est continuellement presente à leurs yeux, qui est dans eux; puis qu'ils ne sçauent comment bransle ce qu'eux mesmes font bransler, ny comment nous peindre et deschiffrer les ressorts qu'ils tiennent et manient eux mesmes, comment ie les croirois de la cause du flux et reflux de la riuiere du Nil.	Those people who perch astride the epicycle of Mercury, who see so far into the heavens, set my teeth on edge. For in the study I pursue, whose subject is man, I find so extreme a variety of judgments, so deep a labyrinth of difficulties piled one upon another, so much diversity and uncertainty in the very school of wisdom. You can imagine, then: since those people have not been able to settle the knowledge of themselves and of their own condition, which is continually before their eyes and within them; since they do not know how that moves which they themselves set moving, nor how to portray and decipher for us the springs they themselves hold and handle—how could I believe them about the cause of the rise and fall of the river Nile?[3]
	La curiosité de cognoistre les choses, a esté donnée aux hommes pour fleau, dit la saincte Escriture.	The curiosity to know things was given to men as a scourge, says Holy Scripture.[4]
2.17.7	Mais pour venir à mon particulier, il est bien difficile, ce me semble, qu'aucun autre s'estime moins, voire	But to come to my own case, it is very hard, it seems to me, for anyone else to esteem himself

3 In Ptolemaic astronomy an epicycle was the small circle on which a planet was thought to move while that circle itself circled the earth.
4 Ecclesiastes 1:13.

FRENCH

qu'aucun autre m'estime moins, que ce que ie m'estime. Ie me tien de la commune sorte, sauf en ce que ie m'en tiens: coulpable des deffectuositez plus basses et populaires: mais non desaduoüées, non excusées. Et ne me prise seulement que de ce que ie sçay mon prix. S'il y a de la gloire, elle est infuse en moy superficiellement, par la trahison de ma complexion: et n'a point de corps, qui comparoisse à la veuë de mon iugement. I'en suis arrosé, mais non pas teint.

Car à la verité, quant aux effects de l'esprit, en quelque façon que ce soit, il n'est iamais party de moy chose qui me contentast. Et l'approbation d'autruy ne me paye pas. I'ay le iugement tendre et difficile, et notamment en mon endroit. Ie me sens flotter et fleschir de foiblesse. Ie n'ay rien du mien, dequoy satisfaire mon iugement: i'ay la veue assez claire et reglée, mais à l'ouurer elle se trouble: comme i'essaye plus euidemment en la poësie. Ie l'ayme infiniment; ie me cognois assez aux ouurages d'autruy: mais ie fay à la verité l'enfant quand i'y veux mettre la main; ie ne me puis souffrir. On peut faire le sot par tout ailleurs, mais non en la poësie.

Mediocribus esse poetis
Non dij, non homines, non concessere columnæ. Pleust à Dieu que cette sentence se trouuast au front des boutiques de tous noz imprimeurs, pour en deffendre l'entrée à tant de versificateurs. *Verùm*
Nil securius est malo poeta.

2.17.8 Que n'auons nous de tels peuples? Dionysius le pere n'estimoit rien tant de soy, que sa poësie. A la saison des jeux Olympiques, auec des chariots surpassant tous autres en magnificence, il enuoya aussi des poëtes et des musiciens, pour presenter ses vers, auec des tentes et pauillons dorez et tapissez royalement. Quand on vint à mettre ses vers en auant, la faueur et excellence de la prononciation attira sur le commencement l'attention du peuple. Mais quand par apres il vint à poiser l'ineptie de l'ouurage, il entra premierement en mespris: et continuant d'aigrir son iugement, il se ietta tantost en furie, et courut abbattre et deschirer par despit tous ces pauillons.

ENGLISH

less—or indeed for anyone else to esteem me less—than I esteem myself. I hold myself to be of the common sort, except in holding myself so; guilty of the lowest and most commonplace defects, but not disowning them, not excusing them. And I value myself only in that I know my value. If there is any glory in me, it is infused superficially, by the treachery of my constitution, and has no body that appears before the eye of my judgment. I am sprinkled with it, but not dyed in it.

For in truth, as regards the products of the mind, of whatever kind, nothing has ever come from me that satisfied me. And other people's approval does not repay me. My judgment is tender and hard to please, especially about myself. I feel myself wavering and bending with weakness. I have nothing of my own with which to satisfy my judgment. My sight is clear and orderly enough, but when I set to work it grows blurred, as I find most plainly in poetry. I love it infinitely; I am a fair judge of other people's work; but in truth I act like a child when I try to set my own hand to it; I cannot bear myself. One may play the fool anywhere else, but not in poetry.

Neither gods, nor men, nor booksellers' columns
Have allowed poets to be mediocre. Would to God this maxim were posted over the doors of all our printers' shops, to bar the way to so many versifiers! *But*
Nothing is more self-assured than a bad poet.[5]

Why do we not have peoples like that? Dionysius the Elder valued nothing in himself so much as his poetry. At the season of the Olympic Games, along with chariots surpassing all others in magnificence, he also sent poets and musicians to present his verses, with tents and pavilions gilded and royally hung with tapestries. When they came to put his verses forward, the charm and excellence of the delivery at first caught the people's attention. But when afterward the people came to weigh the ineptitude of the work, they first turned to contempt; and as their judgment grew ever more sour, they soon flew into a fury and rushed to pull down and tear up all those pavilions in spite.

5 Horace, Art of Poetry; the columns were pillars on which booksellers posted their wares. The second Latin is Martial, Epigrams 12.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
	Et ce que ces chariots ne feirent non plus, rien qui vaille en la course, et que la nauire, qui rapportoit ses gents, faillit la Sicile, et fut par la tempeste poussée et fracassée contre la coste de Tarante: il tint pour certain que c'estoit l'ire des Dieux irritez comme luy, contre ce mauuais poëme: et les mariniers mesmes, eschappez du naufrage, alloient secondant l'opinion de ce peuple: à laquelle, l'oracle qui predit sa mort, sembla aussi aucunement soubscrire. Il portoit, que Dionysius seroit pres de sa fin, quand il auroit vaincu ceux qui vaudroyent mieux que luy. Ce qu'il interpreta des Carthaginois, qui le surpassoyent en puissance.	And since those chariots likewise did nothing worthwhile in the race, and the ship bringing his people home missed Sicily and was driven by the storm and smashed against the coast of Taranto, the people held it for certain that this was the wrath of the gods, angered as they were against that bad poem. And the very sailors who escaped the shipwreck went about seconding the people's opinion, to which the oracle that foretold his death also seemed in some way to subscribe. It declared that Dionysius would be near his end when he had defeated those who were better than he. This he took to mean the Carthaginians, who surpassed him in power.
	Et ayant affaire à eux, gauchissoit souuent la victoire, et la temperoit, pour n'encourir le sens de cette prediction. Mais il l'entendoit mal: car le Dieu marquoit le temps de l'aduantage, que par faueur et iniustice il gaigna à Athenes sur les poëtes tragiques, meilleurs que luy: ayant faict iouer à l'enuy la sienne, intitulée les Leneïens. Soudain apres laquelle victoire, il trepassa: et en partie pour l'excessiue ioye, qu'il en conceut.	And in dealing with them he often sidestepped victory and tempered it, so as not to incur the meaning of this prediction. But he misunderstood it: for the god was marking the moment of the advantage he won at Athens, by favor and injustice, over tragic poets better than himself, when he had his tragedy, entitled *The Lenaeans*, performed in the competition. Immediately after this victory he died—and partly from the excessive joy it gave him.[6]
2.17.9	Ce que ie treuue excusable du mien, ce n'est pas de soy, et à la verité: mais c'est à la comparaison d'autres choses pires, ausquelles ie voy qu'on donne credit. Ie suis enuieux du bon-heur de ceux, qui se sçauent resiouyr et gratifier en leur besongne; car c'est vn moyen aysé de se donner du plaisir, puis qu'on le tire de soy-mesmes. Specialement s'il y a vn peu de fermeté en leur opiniastrise. Ie sçay vn poëte, à qui fort et foible, en foulle et en chambre, et le ciel et la terre, crient qu'il n'y entend guere. Il n'en rabat pour tout cela rien de la mesure à quoy il s'est taillé.	What I find excusable in my own work is not excusable in itself and in truth, but only in comparison with other, worse things that I see given credit. I envy the good fortune of those who know how to rejoice in their work and take pleasure in it, for it is an easy way to give oneself pleasure, since one draws it from oneself—especially if there is a little firmness in their stubbornness. I know a poet to whom strong and weak, in public and in private, heaven and earth, all cry out that he knows little about it. For all that, he takes nothing off the measure he has cut himself to.
	Tousiours recommence, tousiours reconsulte: et tousiours persiste, d'autant plus ahurté en son aduis, qu'il touche à luy seul, de le maintenir.	He is always starting again, always reconsidering, and always persisting, all the more stubborn in his opinion because it is up to him alone to uphold it.

NEVER PLEASED WITH MY WORK

His writings never satisfy him; he describes his rough, unruly style and his Gascon and Latin.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
2.17.10	Mes ouurages, il s'en faut tant qu'ils me rient, qu'autant de fois que ie les retaste, autant de fois ie m'en despite.	As for my works, they are so far from smiling on me that every time I go over them again, I am

6 His play won at the Athenian festival of the Lenaea in 367 BC; Montaigne's source takes the festival's name for the play's title.

FRENCH

Cùm relego, scripsisse pudet, quia plurima cerno, / Me quoque qui feci, iudice, digna lini. I'ay tousiours vne idée en l'ame, qui me presente vne meilleure forme, que celle que i'ay mis en besongne, mais ie ne la puis saisir ny exploicter. Et cette idée mesme n'est que du moyen estage. I'argumente par là, que les productions de ces riches et grandes ames du temps passé, sont bien loing au delà de l'extreme estenduë de mon imagination et souhaict. Leurs escris ne me satisfont pas seulement et me remplissent, mais ils m'estonnent et transissent d'admiration.

Ie iuge leur beauté, ie la voy, sinon iusques au bout, au moins si auant qu'il m'est impossible d'y aspirer. Quoy que i'entreprenne, ie doibs vn sacrifice aux Graces, comme dit Plutarque de quelqu'vn, pour practiquer leur faueur. *Si quid enim placet,*
Si quid dulce hominum sensibus influit,
Debentur lepidis omnia Gratiis. Elles m'abandonnent par tout. Tout est grossier chez moy, il y a faute de polissure et de beauté. Ie ne sçay faire valoir les choses pour le plus que ce qu'elles valent. Ma façon n'ayde rien à la matiere. Voyla pourquoy il me la faut forte, qui aye beaucoup de prise, et qui luyse d'elle mesme.

Quand i'en saisi des populaires et plus gayes, c'est pour me suiure, moy, qui n'aime point vne sagesse ceremonieuse et triste, comme fait le monde: et pour m'egayer, non pour egayer mon stile, qui les veut plustost graues et seueres. Aumoins si ie doy nommer stile, vn parler informe et sans regle: vn iargon populaire, et vn proceder sans definition, sans partition, sans conclusion, trouble, à la façon de celuy d'Amafanius et de Rabirius. Ie ne sçay ny plaire, ny resiouyr, ny chatouiller. Le meilleur compte du monde se seche entre mes mains, et se ternit. Ie ne sçay parler qu'en bon escient.

Et suis du tout desnué de cette facilité, que ie voy en plusieurs de mes compagnons, d'entretenir les premiers venus, et tenir en haleine toute vne trouppe, ou amuser sans se lasser, l'oreille d'vn Prince, de toute sorte de propos; la matiere ne leur faillant iamais, pour cette grace qu'ils ont de sçauoir employer la premiere venue, et l'accommoder à l'humeur et portée de ceux à qui ils ont affaire. Les Princes n'ayment guere les discours

ENGLISH

vexed with them. *When I reread, I am ashamed to have written, for I see much / That even I, who wrote it, judge worth erasing*. I always have an idea in my soul that presents me with a better form than the one I have put to work, but I cannot grasp it or make use of it. And that very idea is only of the middling sort. I conclude from this that the productions of those rich and great souls of times past lie far beyond the farthest reach of my imagination and my wishes. Their writings not only satisfy and fill me; they stun me and transfix me with admiration.[7]

I judge their beauty; I see it, if not to the very end, at least so far that it is impossible for me to aspire to it. Whatever I undertake, I owe a sacrifice to the Graces, as Plutarch says of someone, to win their favor. *For if anything pleases,*
If anything sweet flows into men's senses,
All of it is owed to the charming Graces. They forsake me everywhere. Everything is coarse with me; there is a lack of polish and beauty. I do not know how to make things worth more than they are worth. My manner adds nothing to the matter. That is why I need matter that is strong, that has plenty of grip, and that shines of itself.[8]

When I seize on popular and lighter subjects, it is to follow my own bent—I do not love a ceremonious and gloomy wisdom, as the world does—and to cheer myself, not to cheer my style, which would rather have them grave and severe. At least, if I should call style a formless, unruled way of talking, a popular jargon, a way of proceeding without definition, without division, without conclusion, muddled, after the fashion of Amafanius and Rabirius. I do not know how to please, or delight, or tickle. The best story in the world dries up in my hands and goes dull. I know how to speak only in earnest.[9]

And I am wholly lacking in that facility I see in many of my companions, of entertaining all comers, holding a whole company in suspense, or tirelessly amusing a prince's ear with all sorts of talk. Matter never fails them, thanks to the gift they have of knowing how to use the first that comes to hand and suit it to the temperament and

7 Ovid, Letters from the Black Sea 1.
8 Plutarch tells how Plato urged the austere Xenocrates to sacrifice to the Graces. The author of the Latin verses is unknown.
9 Amafanius and Rabirius were early Latin writers on Epicurean philosophy whom Cicero faulted for their artless style.

FRENCH

fermes, ny moy à faire des comptes. Les raisons premieres et plus aisées, qui sont communément les mieux prinses, ie ne sçay pas les employer. Mauuais prescheur de commune. De toute matiere ie dy volontiers les plus extremes choses, que i'en sçay.

Cicero estime, qu'és traictez de la philosophie, le plus difficile membre soit l'exorde. S'il est ainsi, ie me prens à la conclusion sagement. Si faut-il sçauoir relascher la corde à toute sorte de tons: et le plus aigu est celuy qui vient le moins souuent en ieu. Il y a pour le moins autant de perfection à releuer vne chose vuide, qu'à en soutenir vne poisante. Tantost il faut superficiellement manier les choses, tantost les profonder. Ie sçay bien que la plus part des hommes se tiennent en ce bas estage, pour ne conceuoir les choses que par cette premiere escorse.

Mais ie sçay aussi que les plus grands maistres, et Xenophon et Platon, on les void souuent se relascher à cette basse façon, et populaire, de dire et traitter les choses, la soustenans des graces qui ne leur manquent iamais.

2.17.11 Au demeurant mon langage n'a rien de facile et fluide: il est aspre, ayant ses dispositions libres et desreglées. Et me plaist ainsi; sinon par mon iugement, par mon inclination. Mais ie sens bien que par fois ie m'y laisse trop aller, et qu'à force de vouloir euiter l'art et l'affection, i'y retombe d'vne autre part; *Breuis esse laboro, / Obscurus fio.* Platon dit que le long ou le court, ne sont proprietez qui ostent ny qui donnent prix au langage. Quand i'entreprendrois de suiure cet autre stile æquable, vny et ordonné, ie n'y sçaurois aduenir. Et encore que les coupures et cadences de Saluste reuiennent plus à mon humeur, si est-ce que ie treuue Cæsar et plus grand, et moins aisé à representer.

Et si mon inclination me porte plus à l'imitation du parler de Seneque, ie ne laisse pas d'estimer dauantage celuy de Plutarque. Comme à taire, à dire aussi, ie suy tout simplement ma forme naturelle. D'où c'est à l'aduanture que ie puis plus, à parler qu'à escrire. Le mouuement et action animent les parolles, notamment à ceux qui se remuent brusquement, comme ie fay, et qui s'eschauffent. Le port, le visage, la voix, la robbe, l'assiette, peuuent donner quelque prix aux choses, qui d'elles mesmes n'en ont guere, comme le babil. Messala

ENGLISH

capacity of the people they are dealing with. Princes do not much like solid discourse, nor do I like telling stories. The first and easiest reasons, which are usually the best received, I do not know how to use. A poor preacher for the common crowd. On any subject I am inclined to say the most extreme things I know about it.

Cicero holds that in philosophical treatises the hardest part is the opening. If so, I am wise to take hold of the conclusion. Yet one must know how to tune the string to every kind of pitch; and the highest is the one that comes into play least often. There is at least as much perfection in raising up an empty thing as in holding up a weighty one. Sometimes one must handle things on the surface, sometimes go deep into them. I know well that most men stay on this low level, grasping things only by that outer bark.

But I also know that the greatest masters, Xenophon and Plato, are often seen relaxing into this low and popular way of speaking about things and treating them, sustaining it with graces that never fail them.

For the rest, my language has nothing easy or fluent about it; it is rough, with its free and unruly arrangements. And I like it so—if not by my judgment, then by my inclination. But I clearly feel that I sometimes let myself go too far that way, and that by dint of trying to avoid art and affectation I fall back into them from another side: *I strive to be brief, / I become obscure.* Plato says that length or brevity are not qualities that take away or give value to language. Even if I undertook to follow that other style, even, smooth and orderly, I could not attain it. And although the clipped phrases and cadences of Sallust suit my temperament better, still I find Caesar both greater and harder to imitate.

And though my inclination leads me more to imitate Seneca's way of speaking, I nonetheless esteem Plutarch's more highly. As in keeping silent, so in speaking, I simply follow my natural form. That is perhaps why I am better at speaking than at writing. Movement and action bring words to life, especially in those who move about briskly, as I do, and grow heated. Bearing, face, voice, dress, posture can give some value to things that have little of their own, such as chatter. Messala complains

FRENCH

se pleint en Tacitus de quelques accoustremens estroits de son temps, et de la façon des bancs où les orateurs auoient à parler, qui affoiblissoient leur eloquence.

2.17.12 Mon langage François est alteré, et en la prononciation et ailleurs, par la barbarie de mon creu. Ie ne vis iamais homme des contrées de deçà, qui ne sentist bien euidemment son ramage, et qui ne blessast les oreilles qui sont pures Françoises. Si n'est-ce pas pour estre fort entendu en mon Perigourdin: car ie n'en ay non plus d'vsage que de l'Allemand; et ne m'en chault gueres. C'est vn langage, comme sont autour de moy d'vne bande et d'autre, le Poitteuin, Xaintongeois, Angoulemoisin, Lymosin, Auuergnat, brode, trainant, esfoiré.

Il y a bien au dessus de nous, vers les montagnes, vn Gascon, que ie treuue singulierement beau, sec, bref, signifiant, et à la verité vn langage masle et militaire, plus qu'aucun autre, que i'entende: autant nerueux, et puissant, et pertinent, comme le François est gracieux, delicat, et abondant. Quant au Latin, qui m'a esté donné pour maternel, i'ay perdu par des-accoustumance, la promptitude de m'en pouuoir seruir à parler: ouï, et à escrire, en quoy autrefois ie me faisoy appeller maistre Iean. Voylla combien peu ie vaux de ce costé là.

ENGLISH

in Tacitus of certain tight garments of his day, and of the arrangement of the benches from which orators had to speak, which weakened their eloquence.[10]

My French is corrupted, both in pronunciation and otherwise, by the barbarism of my native soil. I never saw a man from these parts who did not quite plainly smack of his local warble, and who did not grate on purely French ears. Yet this is not because I am well versed in my Périgord dialect, for I have no more use of it than of German, and I hardly care. It is a language—like those around me on every side, Poitevin, Saintongeais, Angoumois, Limousin, Auvergnat—limp, drawling, flabby.

Above us, toward the mountains, there is indeed a Gascon that I find singularly beautiful: dry, brief, expressive, and in truth a manly and military language, more than any other I understand; as sinewy, powerful and to the point as French is graceful, delicate and abundant. As for Latin, which was given me as my mother tongue, I have lost through disuse the readiness to use it in speaking—yes, and in writing, in which I once got myself called Master John. That shows how little I am worth on that side.[11]

BEAUTY AND THE BODY

Body and soul must not be separated; Montaigne regrets his short stature and describes his build.

FRENCH

2.17.13 La beauté est vne piece de grande recommendation au commerce des hommes. C'est le premier moyen de conciliation des vns aux autres; et n'est homme si barbare et si rechigné, qui ne se sente aucunement frappé de sa douceur. Le corps a vne grand'part à nostre estre, il y tient vn grand rang: ainsi sa structure et composition sont de bien iuste consideration. Ceux qui veulent desprendre noz deux pieces principales, et les sequestrer l'vne de l'autre, ils ont tort. Au rebours, il les faut r'accoupler et reioindre.

Il faut ordonner à l'ame, non de se tirer à quartier, de s'entretenir à part, de mespriser et abandonner le corps (aussi ne le sçauroit elle faire que par quelque singerie contrefaicte) mais de se r'allier à luy, de l'embrasser, le

ENGLISH

Beauty is a quality of great recommendation in human dealings. It is the first means by which people are won over to one another, and there is no man so barbarous and so surly as not to feel himself somewhat struck by its sweetness. The body has a great share in our being; it holds a high rank there; so its structure and composition deserve very careful consideration. Those who want to detach our two principal parts and sequester them from each other are wrong. On the contrary, they must be coupled and joined together again.

We must order the soul not to withdraw to one side, not to keep its own company apart, not to despise and abandon the body (nor could it do so

10 Tacitus, Dialogue on Orators.
11 Montaigne's father had him taught Latin from infancy as his first language. "Master John" was a nickname for a schoolmaster or learned clerk.

FRENCH

cherir, luy assister, le contreroller, le conseiller, le redresser, et ramener quand il fouruoye; l'espouser en somme, et luy seruir de mary: à ce que leurs effects ne paroissent pas diuers et contraires, ains accordans et vniformes.

Les Chrestiens ont vne particuliere instruction de cette liaison, car ils sçauent, que la iustice diuine embrasse cette societé et ioincture du corps et de l'ame, iusques à rendre le corps capable des recompenses eternelles: et que Dieu regarde agir tout l'homme, et veut qu'entier il reçoiue le chastiement, ou le loyer, selon ses demerites.

La secte Peripatetique, de toutes sectes la plus sociable, attribue à la sagesse ce seul soing, de pouruoir et procurer en commun, le bien de ces deux parties associées: et montre les autres sectes, pour ne s'estre assez attachées à la consideration de ce meslange, s'estre partializées, cette-cy pour le corps, cette autre pour l'ame, d'vne pareille erreur: et auoir escarté leur subject, qui est l'homme; et leur guide, qu'ils aduouent en general estre Nature. La premiere distinction, qui aye esté entre les hommes, et la premiere consideration, qui donna les præeminences aux vns sur les autres, il est vraysemblable que ce fut l'aduantage de la beauté. *Agros*
diuisere atque dedere
Pro facie cuiusque et viribus ingenióque:
Nam facies multum valuit, virésque vigebant.

2.17.14 Or ie suis d'vne taille vn peu au dessoubs de la moyenne. Ce deffaut n'a pas seulement de la laideur, mais encore de l'incommodité: à ceux mesmement, qui ont des commandements et des charges: car l'authorité que donne vne belle presence et majesté corporelle, en est à dire. C. Marius ne receuoit pas volontiers des soldats, qui n'eussent six pieds de haulteur. Le Courtisan a bien raison de vouloir pour ce Gentilhomme qu'il dresse, vne taille commune, plustost que toute autre: et de refuser pour luy, toute estrangeté, qui le face montrer au doigt. Mais de choisir, s'il faut à cette mediocrité, qu'il soit plustost au deçà, qu'au delà d'icelle, ie ne le ferois pas, à vn homme militaire.

Les petits hommes, dit Aristote, sont bien iolis, mais non pas beaux: et se cognoist en la grandeur, la grande ame, comme la beauté, en vn grand corps et hault. Les Æthiopes et les Indiens, dit-il, elisants leurs Roys et

ENGLISH

except by some counterfeit aping), but to rally to it, embrace it, cherish it, assist it, supervise it, counsel it, set it right and bring it back when it goes astray—in short, to marry it and serve it as a husband, so that their actions may not appear different and contrary, but harmonious and uniform.

Christians have special instruction about this bond, for they know that divine justice embraces this union and joining of body and soul, even to making the body capable of eternal rewards; and that God watches the whole man act, and wills that he receive punishment or reward whole, according to his deserts.

The Peripatetic school, the most sociable of all schools, assigns to wisdom this one care: to provide for and procure in common the good of these two associated parts. And it shows that the other schools, through not having attached themselves enough to the consideration of this mixture, have taken sides, this one for the body, that one for the soul, with equal error, and have lost sight of their subject, which is man, and of their guide, which they generally acknowledge to be Nature. The first distinction there ever was among men, and the first consideration that gave some preeminence over others, was probably the advantage of beauty. *They divided the fields and gave them out*
According to each man's looks and strength and wit;
For looks counted for much, and strength was prized.[12]

Now, I am a little below average height. This defect is not only ugly but also inconvenient, especially for those who hold commands and offices, for they lack the authority that a fine presence and bodily majesty confer. Gaius Marius was reluctant to accept soldiers who were not six feet tall. The Courtier is quite right to want, for the gentleman he is shaping, an ordinary stature rather than any other, and to reject for him any oddity that would make people point at him. But if he must miss that middle measure, to choose that he fall short of it rather than go beyond it—that I would not do, for a military man.[13]

Little men, says Aristotle, are pretty but not handsome; and a great soul shows itself in greatness, as beauty does in a large, tall body. The Ethiopians

12 The Peripatetics were the school of Aristotle. The Latin is Lucretius, On the Nature of Things 5.
13 Gaius Marius (157–86 BC) was a Roman general.

FRENCH

Magistrats, auoyent esgard à la beauté et procerité des personnes.

Ils auoient raison: car il y a du respect pour ceux qui le suiuent, et pour l'ennemy de l'effroy, de voir à la teste d'vne trouppe, marcher vn chef de belle et riche taille: *Ipse inter primos præstanti corpore Turnus / Vertitur, arma tenens, et toto vertice suprà est.* Nostre grand Roy diuin et celeste, duquel toutes les circonstances doiuent estre remerquées auec soing, religion et reuerence, n'a pas refusé la recommandation corporelle, *speciosus forma præ filiis hominum*. Et Platon auec la temperance et la fortitude, desire la beauté aux conseruateurs de sa republique.

C'est vn grand despit qu'on s'addresse à vous parmy voz gens, pour vous demander où est Monsieur: et que vous n'ayez que le reste de la bonnetade, qu'on fait à vostre barbier ou à vostre secretaire. Comme il aduint au pauure Philopœmen: estant arriué le premier de sa trouppe en vn logis, où on l'attendoit, son hostesse, qui ne le cognoissoit pas, et le voyoit d'assez mauuaise mine, l'employa d'aller vn peu aider à ses femmes à puiser de l'eau, ou attiser du feu, pour le seruice de Philopœmen.

Les Gentils-hommes de sa suitte estans arriuez, et l'ayants surpris embesongné à cette belle vacation, car il n'auoit pas failly d'obeïr au commandement qu'on luy auoit faict, luy demanderent ce qu'il faisoit-là: Ie paie, leur respondit-il, la peine de ma laideur. Les autres beautez, sont pour les femmes: la beauté de la taille, est la seule beauté des hommes.

Où est la petitesse, ny la largeur et rondeur du front, ny la blancheur et douceur des yeux, ny la mediocre forme du nez, ny la petitesse de l'oreille, et de la bouche, ny l'ordre et blancheur des dents, ny l'espesseur bien vnie d'vne barbe brune à escorce de chataigne, ny le poil releué, ny la iuste proportion de teste, ny la fraischeur du teint, ny l'air du visage aggreable, ny vn corps sans senteur, ny la iuste proportion de membres, peuuent faire vn bel homme.

2.17.15 I'ay au demeurant, la taille forte et ramassée, le visage, non pas gras, mais plein, la complexion entre le iovial et le melancholique, moyennement sanguine et chaude, *Vnde rigent setis mihi crura, et pectora villis:* la santé, forte et

ENGLISH

and the Indians, he says, when electing their kings and magistrates, paid attention to people's beauty and tallness.

They were right. For it inspires respect in those who follow him, and terror in the enemy, to see a leader of fine, ample stature marching at the head of a troop: *Turnus himself, of surpassing frame, moves among the foremost, / Weapons in hand, and towers a whole head above the rest.* Our great King, divine and heavenly, every circumstance of whose life should be noted with care, devotion and reverence, did not reject bodily commendation: *fairer than the children of men*. And Plato, along with temperance and fortitude, wants beauty in the guardians of his republic.[14]

It is very galling when someone comes up to you among your own people to ask where the master is, and you get only the leftovers of the hat-doffing they make to your barber or your secretary. That is what happened to poor Philopoemen. Having arrived first of his party at a lodging where he was expected, his hostess, who did not know him and thought him rather unprepossessing, set him to go and help her women draw water or stoke the fire, to serve Philopoemen.[15]

When the gentlemen of his retinue arrived and caught him busy at this fine task—for he had not failed to obey the order he had been given—they asked him what he was doing there. "I am paying," he answered, "the penalty for my ugliness." Other kinds of beauty are for women; beauty of stature is the only beauty of men.

Where there is smallness, neither a broad, rounded forehead, nor clear, gentle eyes, nor a well-proportioned nose, nor a small ear and mouth, nor even, white teeth, nor a thick, smooth beard brown as chestnut bark, nor hair that curls up, nor a well-proportioned head, nor a fresh complexion, nor a pleasing face, nor a body free of odor, nor well-proportioned limbs, can make a handsome man.

For the rest, I have a strong, compact build; a face not fat but full; a temperament between the jovial and the melancholic, moderately sanguine and warm, *Whence my legs bristle with hairs, and my*

14 Virgil, Aeneid VII; then Psalm 45 (44 in the Vulgate), applied to Christ.
15 The story is from Plutarch's Life of Philopoemen.

FRENCH

allegre, iusques bien auant en mon aage, rarement troublée par les maladies. I'estois tel, car ie ne me considere pas à cette heure, que ie suis engagé dans les auenues de la vieillesse, ayant pieça franchy les quarante ans. *Minutatim vires et robur adultum / Frangit, et in partem peiorem liquitur ætas.* Ce que ie seray doresnauant, ce ne sera plus qu'vn demy estre: ce ne sera plus moy. Ie m'eschappe tous les iours, et me desrobbe à moy: *Singula de nobis anni prædantur euntes.*

ENGLISH

chest with shaggy fleece; health strong and lively until well on in years, rarely troubled by illness. I was like that—for I am not considering myself as I am now, when I have entered the approaches of old age, having long since passed forty. *Little by little age breaks down our strength and full-grown vigor, / And melts away into a worse condition.* What I shall be from now on will be no more than half a being; it will no longer be me. Every day I escape and steal away from myself: *One by one the passing years rob us of what is ours.*[16]

CLUMSY HANDS, A FREE SOUL

He has no bodily skills and will work only of his own free will, never under constraint.

FRENCH

2.17.16 D'addresse et de disposition, ie n'en ay point eu; et si suis fils d'vn pere dispost, et d'vne allegresse qui luy dura iusques à son extreme vieillesse. Il ne trouua guere homme de sa condition, qui s'egalast à luy en tout exercice de corps: comme ie n'en ay trouué guere aucun, qui ne me surmontast; sauf au courir, en quoy i'estoy des mediocres. De la musique, ny pour la voix, que i'y ay tres-inepte, ny pour les instrumens, on ne m'y a iamais sçeu rien apprendre. A la danse, à la paulme, à la lucte, ie n'y ay peu acquerir qu'vne bien fort legere et vulgaire suffisance: à nager, à escrimer, à voltiger, et à saulter, nulle du tout.

Les mains, ie les ay si gourdes, que ie ne sçay pas escrire seulement pour moy; de façon, que ce que i'ay barbouillé, i'ayme mieux le refaire que de me donner la peine de le demesler, et ne ly guere mieux. Ie me sens poiser aux escoutans: autrement bon clerc. Ie ne sçay pas clorre à droit vne lettre, ny ne sçeuz iamais tailler plume, ny trancher à table, qui vaille, ny equipper vn cheval de son harnois, ny porter à poinct vn oyseau, et le lascher: ny parler aux chiens, aux oyseaux, aux cheuaux. Mes conditions corporelles sont en somme tresbien accordantes à celles de l'ame, il n'y a rien d'allegre: il y a seulement vne vigueur pleine et ferme.

Ie dure bien à la peine, mais i'y dure, si ie m'y porte moy-mesme, et autant que mon desir m'y conduit: *Molliter austerum studio fallente laborem.* Autrement, si ie n'y suis alleché par quelque plaisir, et si i'ay autre guide que ma

ENGLISH

Of dexterity and agility I have had none; and yet I am the son of a very agile father, whose liveliness lasted him into extreme old age. He scarcely found a man of his rank who could equal him in any bodily exercise, just as I have found scarcely any who did not surpass me—except at running, at which I was middling. In music, no one has ever managed to teach me anything, either in singing, for which my voice is very unapt, or in playing instruments. At dancing, tennis and wrestling, I have been able to acquire only a very slight and ordinary competence; at swimming, fencing, vaulting and jumping, none at all.[17]

My hands are so clumsy that I cannot even write legibly for myself, so that what I have scrawled I would rather write over again than take the trouble to make it out; and I read aloud hardly any better: I feel I weigh on my listeners. Otherwise, a good scholar. I do not know how to fold and close a letter properly, and I could never cut a pen, or carve at table to any purpose, or saddle and harness a horse, or carry a hawk properly and fly it, or speak to dogs, birds or horses. In short, my bodily qualities are very much in keeping with those of my soul. There is nothing lively about them; there is only a full, firm vigor.

I endure hard work well, but only if I go to it of my own accord, and as far as my desire leads me: *Eagerness gently beguiling the harshness of the toil.* Otherwise, if I am not lured to it by some pleasure,

16 The quotations are from Martial, Lucretius (On the Nature of Things) and Horace (Epistles).
17 The "tennis" is real tennis, the old indoor game (jeu de paume).

FRENCH

pure et libre volonté, ie n'y vauls rien. Car i'en suis là, que sauf la santé et la vie, il n'est chose pourquoy ie vueille ronger mes ongles, et que ie vueill' acheter au prix du tourment d'esprit et de la contrainte: *Tanti mihi non sit opaci / Omnis arena Tagi, quódque in mare voluitur aurum.* Extrememement oisif, extrememement libre, et par nature et par art. Ie presteroy aussi volontiers mon sang, que mon soing.

I'ay vne ame libre et toute sienne, accoustumée à se conduire à sa mode. N'ayant eu iusques à cett' heure ny commandant ny maistre forcé, i'ay marché aussi auant, et le pas qu'il m'a pleu. Cela m'a amolli et rendu inutile au seruice d'autruy, et ne m'a faict bon qu'à moy.

2.17.17 Et pour moy, il n'a esté besoin de forcer ce naturel poisant, paresseux et fay-neant. Car m'estant trouué en tel degré de fortune dés ma naissance, que i'ay eu occasion de m'y arrester: (vne occasion pourtant, que mille autres de ma cognoissance eussent prinse, pour planche plustost, à se passer à la queste, à l'agitation et inquietude) ie n'ay rien cherché, et n'ay aussi rien pris: *Non agimur tumidis velis Aquilone secundo,*
Non tamen aduersis ætatem ducimus Austris:
Viribus, ingenio, specie, virtute, loco, re,
Extremi primorum, extremis vsque priores. Ie n'ay eu besoin que de la suffisance de me contenter.

Qui est toutesfois vn reglement d'ame, à le bien prendre, esgalement difficile en toute sorte de condition, et que par vsage, nous voyons se trouuer plus facilement encores en la disette qu'en l'abondance. D'autant, à l'aduanture, que selon le cours de noz autres passions, la faim des richesses est plus aiguisée par leur vsage, que par leur besoin: et la vertu de la moderation, plus rare, que celle de la patience. Et n'ay eu besoin que de iouyr doucement des biens que Dieu par sa liberalité m'auoit mis entre mains. Ie n'ay gousté aucune sorte de trauail ennuieux.

Ie n'ay eu guere en maniement que mes affaires: ou, si i'en ay eu, ç'a esté en condition de les manier à mon heure et à ma façon: commis par gents, qui s'en fioyent à moy, et qui ne me pressoyent pas, et me cognoissoyent.

ENGLISH

and if I have any other guide than my own pure and free will, I am good for nothing. For I have come to this: except for health and life, there is nothing for which I am willing to bite my nails, nothing I am willing to buy at the price of torment of mind and constraint: *Not at such a price would I have all the sands of shady Tagus / And the gold it rolls down to the sea.* Extremely idle, extremely free, both by nature and by art. I would as soon lend my blood as my care.[18]

I have a free soul, entirely its own, used to conducting itself in its own way. Having had until now neither commander nor master forced on me, I have gone as far as I pleased, and at the pace I pleased. That has made me soft and useless in the service of others, and good for no one but myself.

And for my part, there has been no need to force this heavy, lazy, do-nothing nature of mine. For having found myself from birth at such a level of fortune that I had reason to stop there (a reason, however, which a thousand others I know would rather have taken as a plank to cross over to seeking, agitation and restlessness), I have sought nothing, and have also taken nothing: *We are not borne along with swelling sails by a favoring north wind,*
Nor yet do we pass our lives against contrary winds from the south:
In strength, wit, looks, virtue, rank and wealth,
Last of the first, but still ahead of the last. I have needed only the ability to be content.[19]

Which is, however, rightly understood, a discipline of the soul equally difficult in every kind of condition, and one that experience shows us is found more easily still in want than in plenty. Perhaps because, following the course of our other passions, the hunger for riches is sharpened more by having them than by needing them, and the virtue of moderation is rarer than that of patience. And I have needed only to enjoy quietly the goods that God in his bounty had put into my hands. I have never tasted any kind of irksome toil.

I have had scarcely anything to manage except my own affairs; or if I have had others, it has been on condition of managing them in my own time and

18 Horace, Satires; then Juvenal, Satires. The Tagus, in Spain and Portugal, was famed for its gold-bearing sands.
19 Horace, Epistles.

FRENCH

Car encore tirent les experts, quelque seruice d'vn cheual restif et poussif.

2.17.18 Mon enfance mesme a esté conduicte d'vne façon molle et libre, et lors mesme exempte de subjection rigoureuse. Tout cela m'a donné vne complexion delicate et incapable de sollicitude; iusques là, que i'ayme qu'on me cache mes pertes, et les desordres qui me touchent. Au chapitre de mes mises, ie loge ce que ma nonchalance me couste à nourrir et entretenir: *Hæc nempe supersunt, / Quæ dominum fallunt, quæ prosint furibus.* I'ayme à ne sçauoir pas le compte de ce que i'ay, pour sentir moins exactement ma perte. Ie prie ceux qui viuent auec moy, où l'affection leur manque, et les bons effects, de me pipper et payer de bonnes apparences.

A faute d'auoir assez de fermeté, pour souffrir l'importunité des accidens contraires, ausquels nous sommes subjects, et pour ne me pouuoir tenir tendu à regler et ordonner les affaires, ie nourris autant que ie puis en moy cett' opinion: m'abandonnant du tout à la Fortune, de prendre toutes choses au pis; et ce pis là, me resoudre à le porter doucement et patiemment. C'est à cela seul, que ie trauaille, et le but auquel i'achemine tous mes discours. A vn danger, ie ne songe pas tant comment i'en eschapperay, que combien peu il importe que i'en eschappe. Quand i'y demeurerois, que seroit ce? Ne pouuant regler les euenements, ie me regle moy-mesme: et m'applique à eux, s'ils ne s'appliquent à moy.

Ie n'ay guere d'art pour sçauoir gauchir la Fortune, et luy eschapper, ou la forcer; et pour dresser et conduire par prudence les choses à mon poinct. I'ay encore moins de tolerance, pour supporter le soing aspre et penible qu'il faut à cela. Et la plus penible assiette pour moy, c'est estre suspens és choses qui pressent, et agité entre la crainte et l'esperance.

2.17.19 Le deliberer, voire és choses plus legeres, m'importune. Et sens mon esprit plus empesché à souffrir le bransle, et les secousses diuerses du doute, et de la consultation, qu'à se rassoir et resoudre à quelque party que ce soit, apres que la chance est liurée. Peu de passions m'ont troublé le sommeil, mais des deliberations, la moindre me le trouble. Tout ainsi que des chemins, i'en euite volontiers

ENGLISH

my own way, entrusted to me by people who relied on me, who did not press me, and who knew me. For experts can still get some service out of a restive, broken-winded horse.

Even my childhood was conducted in a gentle, free way, and even then exempt from strict subjection. All this has given me a delicate temperament, incapable of worry—so much so that I like my losses, and the disorders that concern me, to be kept from me. Under the heading of my expenses I enter what my carelessness costs me to feed and maintain: *That, surely, is what is left over: / What escapes the master's notice and benefits the thieves.* I like not knowing the count of what I have, so as to feel my loss less exactly. I beg those who live with me, where they lack affection and good deeds, to cheat me and pay me in good appearances.[20]

For want of firmness enough to bear the vexation of the adverse accidents we are subject to, and because I cannot keep myself keyed up to regulating and ordering my affairs, I nurture in myself, as much as I can, this attitude: abandoning myself wholly to Fortune, I expect the worst in everything, and resolve to bear that worst gently and patiently. That is the only thing I work at, and the goal toward which I direct all my reasoning. In a danger, I do not think so much about how I shall escape it as about how little it matters whether I escape it. Suppose I were to stay there for good—what of it? Being unable to rule events, I rule myself, and I adapt myself to them if they do not adapt to me.

I have hardly any skill at dodging Fortune and escaping her, or at forcing her, or at arranging and steering things my way by prudence. I have even less patience to bear the harsh and painful care that this requires. And the most painful position for me is to be in suspense about pressing matters, tossed between fear and hope.

Deliberating, even about the slightest things, bothers me. And I feel my mind more hampered in enduring the swaying and the various jolts of doubt and consultation than in settling down and resolving on any course whatever, once the die is cast. Few passions have disturbed my sleep; but of deliberations, the least disturbs it. Just as with roads,

20 Horace, Epistles.

FRENCH	ENGLISH
les costez pendants et glissans, et me iette dans le battu, le plus boüeux, et enfondrant, d'où ie ne puisse aller plus bas, et y cherche seurté. Aussi i'ayme les malheurs tous purs, qui ne m'exercent et tracassent plus, apres l'incertitude de leur rabillage: et qui du premier saut me poussent droictement en la souffrance.	I gladly avoid the sloping and slippery edges and throw myself into the beaten track, however muddy and boggy, where I cannot sink any lower, and there I look for safety. So too I like misfortunes that are pure and simple, which no longer try and harass me with uncertainty about whether they can be mended, and which at the first leap push me straight into suffering.
Dubia plus torquent mala.	*Uncertain evils torment us more.*[21]
2.17.20 Aux euenemens, ie me porte virilement, en la conduicte puerilement. L'horreur de la cheute me donne plus de fiebure que le coup. Le ieu ne vaut pas la chandelle. L'auaritieux a plus mauvais conte de sa passion, que n'a le pauure: et le ialoux, que le cocu. Et y a moins de mal souuent, à perdre sa vigne, qu'à la plaider. La plus basse marche, est la plus ferme: c'est le siege de la constance. Vous n'y auez besoing que de vous. Elle se fonde là, et appuye toute en soy. Cet exemple, d'vn Gentil-homme que plusieurs ont cogneu, a il pas quelque air philosophique? Il se marya bien auant en l'aage, ayant passé en bon compaignon sa ieunesse, grand diseur, grand gaudisseur.	In the face of events I bear myself manfully; in the handling of them, childishly. The dread of the fall gives me more fever than the blow. The game is not worth the candle. The miser has a worse time of it from his passion than the poor man, and the jealous man than the cuckold. And there is often less harm in losing your vineyard than in going to law over it. The lowest step is the firmest: it is the seat of constancy. There you need no one but yourself. Constancy is founded there and rests wholly on itself. This example of a gentleman whom many people knew—does it not have something of the philosopher about it? He married well on in years, having spent his youth as a jolly fellow, a great talker, a great joker.
Se souuenant combien la matiere de cornardise luy auoit donné dequoy parler et se moquer des autres: pour se mettre à couuert, il espousa vne femme, qu'il print au lieu, où chacun en trouue pour son argent, et dressa auec elle ses alliances: Bon iour putain, bon iour cocu: et n'est chose dequoy plus souuent et ouuertement, il entretinst chez luy les suruenans, que de ce sien dessein: par où il bridoit les occultes caquets des moqueurs, et esmoussoit la poincte de ce reproche.	Remembering how much the subject of cuckoldry had given him to talk about and to mock others for, he took cover by marrying a woman he found in the place where anyone can get one for his money, and with her he set up the terms of their alliance: "Good day, hussy; good day, cuckold." And there was nothing he talked about more often and more openly with visitors to his house than this plan of his. In this way he curbed the mockers' secret gossip and blunted the point of that reproach.

WITHOUT AMBITION

Content with his inheritance, Montaigne never sought advancement; his frank virtues would be useless at court anyway.

FRENCH	ENGLISH
2.17.21 Quant à l'ambition, qui est voisine de la presumption, ou fille plustost, il eust fallu pour m'aduancer, que la Fortune me fust venu querir par le poing: car de me mettre en peine pour vn' esperance incertaine, et me soubmettre à toutes les difficultez, qui accompaignent ceux qui cherchent à se pousser en credit, sur le	As for ambition, which is a neighbor of presumption, or rather its daughter, Fortune would have had to come and take me by the hand to advance me. For to put myself to trouble for an uncertain hope, and to submit to all the difficulties that beset those who are trying to push their way into fa-

21 Seneca, Agamemnon.

FRENCH

commencement de leur progrez, ie ne l'eusse sçeu faire, *Spem pretio non emo.* Ie m'attache à ce que ie voy, et que ie tiens, et ne m'eslongne guere du port: *Alter remus aquas, alter tibi radat arenas.* Et puis on arriue peu à ces auancements, qu'en hazardant premierement le sien.

Et ie suis d'aduis, que si ce qu'on a, suffit à maintenir la condition en laquelle on est nay, et dressé, c'est folie d'en lascher la prise, sur l'incertitude de l'augmenter. Celuy à qui la Fortune refuse dequoy planter son pied, et establir vn estre tranquille et reposé, il est pardonnable s'il iette au hazard ce qu'il a, puis qu'ainsi comme ainsi la necessité l'enuoye à la queste. *Capienda rebus in malis præceps via est.* Et i'excuse plustost vn cabdet, de mettre sa legitime au vent, que celuy à qui l'honneur de la maison est en charge, qu'on ne peut point voir necessiteux qu'à sa faute.

I'ay bien trouué le chemin plus court et plus aisé, auec le conseil de mes bons amis du temps passé, de me défaire de ce desir, et de me tenir coy: *Cui sit conditio dulcis, sine puluere palmæ.* Iugeant aussi bien sainement, de mes forces, qu'elles n'estoient pas capables de grandes choses. Et me souuenant de ce mot du feu Chancelier Oliuier, que les François semblent des guenons, qui vont grimpant contremont vn arbre, de branche en branche, et ne cessent d'aller, iusques à ce qu'elles soyent arriuées à la plus haute branche: et y montrent le cul, quand elles y sont. *Turpe est, quòd nequeas, capiti committere pondus, / Et pressum inflexo mox dare terga genu.*

2.17.22 Les qualitez mesmes qui sont en moy non reprochables, ie les trouuois inutiles en ce siecle. La facilité de mes mœurs, on l'eust nommée lascheté et foiblesse: la foy et la conscience s'y feussent trouuées scrupuleuses et superstitieuses: la franchise et la liberté, importune, inconsiderée et temeraire. A quelque chose sert le mal'heur. Il fait bon naistre en vn siecle fort depraué: car par comparaison d'autruy, vous estes estimé vertueux à bon marché.

Qui n'est que parricide en nos iours et sacrilege, il est homme de bien et d'honneur: *Nunc, si depositum non inficiatur amicus,*

ENGLISH

vor at the start of their career—that I could never have done: *I do not pay cash for hope.* I cling to what I see and hold, and I hardly stray from port: *Let one oar sweep the water, and the other the sand.* And besides, one seldom attains such advancement except by first risking what one has.[22]

And I am of the opinion that if what you have is enough to maintain the condition in which you were born and brought up, it is folly to let go of it on the uncertain chance of increasing it. The man to whom Fortune refuses a place to set his foot and establish a quiet, settled existence is pardonable if he gambles what he has, since one way or another necessity sends him out on the quest. *In bad times one must take the headlong road.* And I would sooner excuse a younger son for throwing his portion to the winds than the man charged with the honor of the house, who cannot be seen in want except through his own fault.[23]

I did indeed find it the shorter and easier way, with the advice of my good friends of times past, to rid myself of this desire and keep still: *Whose happy lot is the palm without the dust.* Judging also, quite soundly, that my powers were not capable of great things. And remembering that saying of the late Chancellor Olivier, that the French are like monkeys that go climbing up a tree from branch to branch and never stop until they have reached the highest branch—and there, once they are up, they show their backside. *It is shameful to load on your head a weight you cannot bear, / And soon, buckling at the knee, to turn your back and give way.*[24]

Even those qualities in me that are not blameworthy I found useless in this age. The easiness of my manners would have been called cowardice and weakness; good faith and conscience would have been thought scrupulous and superstitious; frankness and freedom, tiresome, thoughtless and rash. Misfortune is good for something. It is a fine thing to be born in a thoroughly depraved age, for by comparison with others you are reckoned virtuous at a bargain price.

Anyone who in our day is no worse than a parricide and a desecrator of churches is a good and honorable man: *Now, if a friend does not deny a de-*

22 Terence, The Brothers; then Propertius, Elegies.
23 Seneca, Agamemnon.
24 Horace, Epistles; then Propertius. François Olivier (1497–1560) was Chancellor of France.

FRENCH

Si reddat veterem cum tota ærugine follem,
Prodigiosa fides, et Tuscis digna libellis,
Quæque coronata lustrari debeat agna. Et ne fut iamais temps et lieu, où il y eust pour les Princes loyer plus certain et plus grand, proposé à la bonté, et à la iustice. Le premier qui s'auisera de se pousser en faueur, et en credit par cette voye là, ie suis bien deçeu si à bon compte il ne deuance ses compaignons. La force, la violence, peuuent quelque chose: mais non pas tousiours tout.

Les marchans, les iuges de village, les artisans, nous les voyons aller à pair de vaillance et science militaire, auec la noblesse. Ils rendent des combats honorables et publiques et priuez: ils battent, ils defendent villes en noz guerres presentes. Vn Prince estouffe sa recommendation emmy cette presse. Qu'il reluise d'humanité, de verité, de loyauté, de temperance, et sur tout de iustice: marques rares, incognuës et exilées. C'est la seule volonté des peuples dequoy il peut faire ses affaires: et nulles autres qualitez ne peuuent attirer leur volonté comme celles là: leur estant les plus vtiles. *Nihil est tam populare quàm bonitas.*

2.17.23 Par cette proportion ie me fusse trouué grand et rare: comme ie me trouue pygmée et populaire, à la proportion d'aucuns siecles passez: ausquels il estoit vulgaire, si d'autres plus fortes qualitez n'y concurroient, de veoir vn homme moderé en ses vengeances, mol au ressentiment des offences, religieux en l'obseruance de sa parolle: ny double ny soupple, ny accommodant sa foy à la volonté d'autruy et aux occasions. Plustost lairrois-ie rompre le col aux affaires, que de plier ma foy pour leur seruice.

ENGLISH

posit,
If he returns an old purse with all its rust,
That is prodigious honesty, worthy of the Etruscan books,
And calls for purification with a garlanded lamb. And there was never a time or place where a surer and greater reward was offered to princes for goodness and justice. The first who takes it into his head to push his way into favor and credit by that road, I am much mistaken if he does not easily outstrip his fellows. Force and violence can do something, but not always everything.[25]

Merchants, village judges, artisans—we see them matching the nobility in valor and military science. They fight honorable combats, both public and private; they batter and defend towns in our present wars. A prince's distinction is smothered in this throng. Let him shine with humanity, truthfulness, loyalty, temperance, and above all justice: rare marks, unknown and exiled. It is solely through the goodwill of the peoples that he can get his business done, and no other qualities can win their goodwill like those, since they are the most useful to them. *Nothing is so popular as goodness.*[26]

By that measure I would have found myself great and rare, just as I find myself a pygmy and commonplace by the measure of certain past ages, in which it was ordinary—unless other, stronger qualities went with it—to see a man moderate in his revenge, slow to resent offenses, scrupulous in keeping his word, neither double nor pliant, nor fitting his faith to the will of others and to circumstances. I would rather let affairs break their necks than bend my faith to serve them.

AGAINST DISSIMULATION

Montaigne hates the new art of feigning and holds that a prince who breaks his word ruins himself.

FRENCH

2.17.24 Car quant à cette nouuelle vertu de faintise et dissimulation, qui est à cett'heure si fort en credit, ie la hay capitalement: et de tous les vices, ie n'en trouue aucun qui tesmoigne tant de lascheté et bassesse de cœur. C'est vn' humeur coüarde et seruile de s'aller desguiser et cacher sous vn masque, et de n'oser se faire veoir tel

ENGLISH

For as for this new virtue of feigning and dissimulation, which is now so highly in favor, I hate it mortally; and of all the vices, I find none that shows so much cowardice and baseness of heart. It is a cowardly and servile disposition to go dis-

25 Juvenal, Satires. The "Etruscan books" recorded prodigies and the rites for expiating them.
26 Cicero, For Ligarius.

FRENCH

qu'on est. Par là nos hommes se dressent à la perfidie. Estans duicts à produire des parolles fauces, ils ne font pas conscience d'y manquer. Vn cœur genereux ne doit point desmentir ses pensées: il se veut faire voir iusques au dedans: tout y est bon, ou aumoins, tout y est humain.

Aristote estime office de magnanimité, hayr et aymer à descouuert: iuger, parler auec toute franchise: et au prix de la verité, ne faire cas de l'approbation ou reprobation d'autruy. Apollonius disoit que c'estoit aux serfs de mentir, et aux libres de dire verité. C'est la premiere et fondamentale partie de la vertu. Il la faut aymer pour elle mesme. Celuy qui dit vray, par ce qu'il y est d'ailleurs obligé, et par ce qu'il sert: et qui ne craind point à dire mensonge, quand il n'importe à personne, il n'est pas veritable suffisamment. Mon ame de sa complexion refuit la menterie, et haït mesme à la penser.

I'ay vn' interne vergongne et vn remors piquant, si par fois elle m'eschappe, comme par fois elle m'eschappe, les occasions me surprenans et agitans impremeditement. Il ne faut pas tousiours dire tout, car ce seroit sottise. Mais ce qu'on dit, il faut qu'il soit tel qu'on le pense: autrement, c'est meschanceté.

2.17.25 Ie ne sçay quelle commodité ils attendent de se faindre et contrefaire sans cesse: si ce n'est, de n'en estre pas creus, lors mesmes qu'ils disent verité. Cela peut tromper vne fois ou deux les hommes: mais de faire profession de se tenir couuert: et se vanter, comme ont faict aucuns de nos Princes, qu'ils ietteroient leur chemise au feu, si elle estoit participante de leurs vrayes intentions, qui est vn mot de l'ancien Metellus Macedonicus: et qui ne sçait se faindre, ne sçait pas regner: c'est tenir aduertis ceux qui ont à les praticquer, que ce n'est que piperie et mensonge qu'ils disent.

Quo quis versutior et callidior est, hoc inuisior et suspectior, detracta opinione probitatis. Ce seroit vne grande simplesse à qui se lairroit amuser ny au visage ny aux parolles de celuy, qui fait estat d'estre tousiours autre au dehors, qu'il n'est au dedans: comme faisoit Tibere. Et ne sçay

ENGLISH

guising oneself and hiding behind a mask, not daring to let oneself be seen as one is. That is how our men train themselves for treachery. Being practiced at uttering false words, they have no qualms about breaking them. A generous heart should not belie its thoughts; it wants to be seen right to its depths. Everything there is good, or at least everything is human.

Aristotle considers it the part of magnanimity to hate and love openly, to judge and speak with complete frankness, and, compared with the truth, to set no store by the approval or disapproval of others. Apollonius used to say that lying was for slaves and telling the truth for free men. Truthfulness is the first and fundamental part of virtue. We must love it for its own sake. The man who tells the truth because he is obliged to for some other reason, and because it serves him, and who is not afraid to tell a lie when it matters to nobody, is not truthful enough. My soul by its very nature shrinks from lying and hates even to think of it.

I feel an inward shame and a stinging remorse if a lie sometimes slips out of me—as sometimes it does, when occasions take me by surprise and stir me before I can think. We need not always say everything, for that would be foolish. But what we do say must be what we think; otherwise it is wickedness.

I do not know what advantage they expect from constantly feigning and dissembling, unless it is not to be believed even when they tell the truth. That may deceive people once or twice. But to make a profession of keeping oneself covered, and to boast, as some of our princes have done, that they would throw their shirt into the fire if it were privy to their true intentions (a saying of the ancient Metellus Macedonicus), and that he who does not know how to dissemble does not know how to reign—this is to give fair warning to those who have to deal with them that everything they say is nothing but trickery and lies.[27]

The craftier and more cunning a man is, the more he is hated and suspected, once his reputation for honesty is gone. It would be great simplicity in anyone to let himself be taken in by either the face or the words

27 Quintus Caecilius Metellus Macedonicus was a Roman general of the 2nd century BC. The maxim about dissembling and reigning was attributed to Louis XI.

FRENCH

quelle part telles gens peuuent auoir au commerce des hommes, ne produisans rien qui soit receu pour comptant. Qui est desloyal enuers la verité, l'est aussi enuers le mensonge.

2.17.26 Ceux qui de nostre temps ont consideré en l'establissement du deuoir d'vn Prince, le bien de ses affaires seulement: et l'ont preferé au soing de sa foy et conscience, diroyent quelque chose à vn Prince, de qui la Fortune auroit rengé à tel poinct les affaires, que pour tout iamais il les peust establir par vn seul manquement et faute à sa parole. Mais il n'en va pas ainsin. On rechet souuent en pareil marché: on fait plus d'vne paix, plus d'vn traitté en sa vie.

Le gain, qui les conuie à la premiere desloyauté, et quasi tousiours il s'en presente, comme à toutes autres meschancetez: les sacrileges, les meurtres, les rebellions, les trahisons, s'entreprennent pour quelque espece de fruit: mais ce premier gain apporte infinis dommages suyuants: iettant ce Prince hors de tout commerce, et de tout moyen de negotiation par l'exemple de cette infidelité.

Solyman de la race des Ottomans, race peu soigneuse de l'obseruance des promesses et paches, lors que de mon enfance, il fit descendre son armée à Otrante, ayant sçeu que Mercurin de Gratinare, et les habitants de Castro, estoyent detenus prisonniers, apres auoir rendu la place, contre ce qui auoit esté capitulé par ses gents auec eux, manda qu'on les relaschast: et qu'ayant en main d'autres grandes entreprises en cette contrée là, cette desloyauté, quoy qu'elle eust apparence d'vtilité presente, luy apporteroit pour l'aduenir, vn descri et vne deffiance d'infini preiudice.

2.17.27 Or de moy i'ayme mieux estre importun et indiscret, que flateur et dissimulé. I'aduoüe qu'il se peut mesler quelque poincte de fierté, et d'opiniastreté, à se tenir ainsin entier et ouuert comme ie suis sans consideration d'autruy. Et me semble que ie deuiens vn peu plus libre, où il le faudroit moins estre: et que ie m'eschauffe par l'opposition du respect. Il peut estre aussi, que ie me laisse aller apres ma nature à faute d'art. Presentant aux

ENGLISH

of a man who makes a point of always being different outside from what he is within, as Tiberius did. And I do not know what part such people can have in human dealings, since they produce nothing that is accepted as ready money. Whoever is disloyal to truth is disloyal to falsehood too.[28]

Those in our time who, in establishing a prince's duty, have considered only the good of his affairs, and have put it ahead of care for his good faith and conscience, would have something to say to a prince whose affairs Fortune had so arranged that he could settle them forever by a single breach and failure of his word. But that is not how things go. You often fall back into the same kind of bargain; you make more than one peace, more than one treaty, in your life.[29]

The gain that tempts them to the first breach of faith—and some gain almost always presents itself, as with every other kind of wickedness: sacrilege, murder, rebellion and treason are all undertaken for some sort of profit—this first gain brings countless losses after it, shutting that prince out of all dealings and every means of negotiation because of the example of this faithlessness.

Suleiman, of the Ottoman race—a race not very careful about keeping promises and pacts—when in my childhood he landed his army at Otranto, learned that Mercurino de Gattinara and the inhabitants of Castro were being held prisoner after surrendering the place, contrary to the terms his men had agreed with them. He sent orders that they be released, saying that since he had other great enterprises in hand in that region, this breach of faith, though it looked advantageous for the moment, would bring him in future a discredit and a distrust that would do him infinite harm.[30]

As for me, I would rather be tiresome and indiscreet than a flatterer and a dissembler. I admit that some touch of pride and stubbornness may be mixed in with keeping myself as whole and open as I do, without regard for others. And it seems to me that I become a little freer where I ought to be less so, and that the respect I am expected to show

28 Cicero, On Duties.
29 Montaigne is probably thinking of Machiavelli's The Prince (1532) and its followers.
30 Suleiman the Magnificent (reigned 1520–1566); his forces raided the coast near Otranto, in southern Italy, in 1537. Castro is a small town nearby.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
	grands cette mesme licence de langue et de contenance que i'apporte de ma maison: ie sens combien elle decline vers l'indiscretion et inciuilité.	provokes me by contrast. It may also be that, for lack of art, I let myself follow my nature. Bringing to the great the same freedom of tongue and bearing that I bring from my own house, I feel how much it tends toward indiscretion and incivility.
	Mais outre ce que ie suis ainsi faict, ie n'ay pas l'esprit assez souple pour gauchir à vne prompte demande, et pour en eschapper par quelque destour: ny pour feindre vne verité, ny assez de memoire pour la retenir ainsi feinte: ny certes assez d'asseurance pour la maintenir: et fais le braue par foiblesse. Parquoy ie m'abandonne à la nayfueté, et à tousiours dire ce que ie pense, et par complexion, et par dessein: laissant à la Fortune d'en conduire l'euenement. Aristippus disoit le principal fruit, qu'il eust tiré de la philosophie, estre, qu'il parloit librement et ouuertement à chacun.	But besides the fact that I am made this way, I do not have a mind supple enough to sidestep a sudden question and slip out of it by some detour, nor to make up a truth, nor memory enough to retain it once made up, nor, certainly, assurance enough to keep it up; and I play the bold man out of weakness. So I give myself up to naturalness and to always saying what I think, both by temperament and by design, leaving it to Fortune to manage the outcome. Aristippus used to say that the chief fruit he had drawn from philosophy was that he spoke freely and openly to everyone.

A MEMORY FULL OF HOLES

His memory fails him constantly, along with a slow wit and ignorance of everyday household matters.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
2.17.28	C'est vn outil de merueilleux seruice, que la memoire, et sans lequel le iugement fait bien à peine son office: elle me manque du tout. Ce qu'on me veut proposer, il faut que ce soit à parcelles: car de respondre à vn propos, où il y eust plusieurs diuers chefs, il n'est pas en ma puissance. Ie ne sçaurois receuoir vne charge sans tablettes. Et quand i'ay vn propos de consequence à tenir, s'il est de longue haleine, ie suis reduit à cette vile et miserable necessité, d'apprendre par cœur mot à mot ce que i'ay à dire: autrement ie n'auroy ny façon, ny asseurance, estant en crainte que ma memoire vinst à me faire vn mauuais tour. Mais ce moyen m'est non moins difficile.	Memory is a tool of wonderful service, without which judgment can barely do its job; and I lack it entirely. Whatever anyone wants to put to me must come in small pieces, for answering a proposal with several different heads is beyond my power. I could not take on a commission without notebooks. And when I have a speech of some consequence to make, if it is a long one, I am reduced to the vile and wretched necessity of learning by heart, word for word, what I have to say; otherwise I would have neither poise nor assurance, being afraid that my memory might play me a nasty trick. But this method is no less difficult for me.
	Pour apprendre trois vers, il m'y faut trois heures. Et puis en vn propre ouurage la liberté et authorité de remuer l'ordre, de changer vn mot, variant sans cesse la matiere, la rend plus malaisée à arrester en la memoire de son autheur. Or plus ie m'en defie, plus elle se trouble: elle me sert mieux par rencontre, il faut que ie la solicite nonchalamment: car si ie la presse, elle s'estonne: et depuis qu'ell' a commencé à chanceler, plus ie la sonde, plus elle s'empestre et embarrasse: elle me sert à son heure, non pas à la mienne.	To learn three lines of verse takes me three hours. And then, in one's own work, the freedom and authority to shift the order and change a word, constantly varying the material, make it harder for the author to fix in his memory. Now, the more I distrust my memory, the more confused it gets. It serves me better when I happen upon things; I have to court it casually, for if I press it, it is stunned; and once it has begun to falter, the more I sound it, the more it tangles and muddles itself. It serves me in its own time, not in mine.
2.17.29	Cecy que ie sens en la memoire, ie le sens en plusieurs autres parties. Ie fuis le commandement, l'obligation, et	What I feel in my memory I feel in several other parts. I flee command, obligation and constraint.

FRENCH

la contrainte. Ce que ie fais aysément et naturellement, si ie m'ordonne de le faire, par vne expresse et prescrite ordonnance, ie ne sçay plus le faire. Au corps mesme, les membres qui ont quelque liberté et iurisdiction plus particuliere sur eux, me refusent par fois leur obeyssance, quand ie les destine et attache à certain poinct et heure de seruice necessaire. Cette preordonnance contraincte et tyrannique les rebute: ils se croupissent d'effroy ou de despit, et se transissent.

Autresfois estant en lieu, où c'est discourtoisie barbaresque, de ne respondre à ceux qui vous conuient à boire: quoy qu'on m'y traitast auec toute liberté, i'essaiay de faire le bon compagnon, en faueur des Dames qui estoyent de la partie, selon l'vsage du pays. Mais il y eut du plaisir: car cette menasse et preparation, d'auoir à m'efforcer outre ma coustume, et mon naturel, m'estoupa de maniere le gosier, que ie ne sçeuz aualler vne seule goute: et fus priué de boire, pour le besoing mesme de mon repas. Ie me trouuay saoul et desalteré, par tant de breuuage que mon imagination auoit preoccupé.

Cet effaict est plus apparent en ceux qui ont l'imagination plus vehemente et puissante: mais il est pourtant naturel: et n'est aucun qui ne s'en ressente aucunement. On offroit à vn excellent archer condamné à la mort, de luy sauuer la vie, s'il vouloit faire voir quelque notable preuue de son art: il refusa de s'en essayer, craignant que la trop grande contention de sa volonté, luy fist fouruoyer la main, et qu'au lieu de sauuer sa vie, il perdist encore la reputation qu'il auoit acquise au tirer de l'arc.

Vn homme qui pense ailleurs, ne faudra point, à vn pousse pres, de refaire tousiours vn mesme nombre et mesure de pas, au lieu où il se promene: mais s'il y est auec attention de les mesurer et compter, il trouuera que ce qu'il faisoit par nature et par hazard, il ne le fera pas si exactement par dessein.

2.17.30 Ma librairie, qui est des belles entre les librairies de village, est assise à vn coin de ma maison: s'il me tombe en fantasie chose que i'y vueille aller chercher ou escrire, de peur qu'elle ne m'eschappe en trauersant seulement ma cour, il faut que ie la donne en garde à quelqu'autre. Si ie m'enhardis en parlant, à me destourner tant soit peu, de mon fil, ie ne faux iamais de le perdre: qui fait que ie me tiens en mes discours, contrainct, sec, et

ENGLISH

What I do easily and naturally, if I order myself to do it by an express and prescribed order, I can no longer do. Even in the body, those members that have some freedom and a more particular jurisdiction of their own sometimes refuse to obey me when I assign and tie them to a fixed time and place of required service. This forced and tyrannical prearrangement puts them off; they shrink back in fright or spite, and go numb.

Once, when I was in a place where it is barbarous discourtesy not to respond to those who invite you to drink, I tried, although I was treated there with every freedom, to play the good fellow, to please the ladies who were of the party, according to the custom of the country. But it was quite comical: for this threat and preparation, the prospect of having to force myself beyond my habit and my nature, so stopped up my throat that I could not swallow a single drop, and I was deprived of drinking even what I needed with my meal. I found myself sated and my thirst quenched by all the drink my imagination had swallowed in advance.

This effect is more apparent in those whose imagination is more vehement and powerful; but it is natural nonetheless, and there is no one who does not feel it to some degree. An excellent archer condemned to death was offered his life if he would give some notable proof of his skill. He refused to try, fearing that the excessive strain of his will would make his hand go astray, and that instead of saving his life he would lose, besides, the reputation he had won in archery.

A man whose mind is elsewhere will never fail, within an inch, to repeat the same number and length of steps in the place where he walks up and down; but if he sets about it with the intention of measuring and counting them, he will find that what he did by nature and by chance he will not do so exactly by design.

My library, which is one of the fine ones among village libraries, is set in a corner of my house. If something comes into my head that I want to go and look up or write down there, I have to entrust it to someone else for safekeeping, for fear it may escape me just in crossing my courtyard. If, while speaking, I make bold to stray ever so little from my thread, I never fail to lose it; which is why I

FRENCH

resserré. Les gens, qui me seruent, il faut que ie les appelle par le nom de leurs charges, ou de leur pays: car il m'est tres-malaisé de retenir des noms.

Ie diray bien qu'il y a trois syllabes, que le son en est rude, qu'il commence ou termine par telle lettre. Et si ie durois à viure long temps, ie ne croy pas que ie n'oubliasse mon nom propre, comme ont faict d'autres. Messala Coruinus fut deux ans n'ayant trace aucune de memoire. Ce qu'on dit aussi de George Trapezonce. Et pour mon interest, ie rumine souuent, quelle vie c'estoit que la leur: et si sans cette piece, il me restera assez pour me soustenir auec quelque aisance. Et y regardant de pres, ie crains que ce defaut, s'il est parfaict, perde toutes les functions de l'ame.

Plenus rimarum sum, hac atque illac perfluo. Il m'est aduenu plus d'vne fois, d'oublier le mot que i'auois trois heures au parauant donné ou receu d'vn autre: et d'oublier où i'auoy caché ma bourse, quoy qu'en die Cicero. Ie m'ayde à perdre, ce que ie serre particulierement. *Memoria certè non modò philosophiam, sed omnis vitæ vsum, omnésque artes, vnà maximè continet.* C'est le receptacle et l'estuy de la science, que la memoire: l'ayant si deffaillante ie n'ay pas fort à me plaindre, si ie ne sçay guere. Ie sçay en general le nom des arts, et ce dequoy ils traictent, mais rien au delà. Ie feuillete les liures, ie ne les estudie pas.

Ce qui m'en demeure, c'est chose que ie ne reconnoy plus estre d'autruy. C'est cela seulement, dequoy mon iugement a faict son profit: les discours et les imaginations, dequoy il s'est imbu. L'autheur, le lieu, les mots, et autres circonstances, ie les oublie incontinent. Et suis si excellent en l'oubliance, que mes escripts mesmes et compositions, ie ne les oublie pas moins que le reste. On m'allegue tous les coups à moy-mesme, sans que ie le sente.

Qui voudroit sçauoir d'où sont les vers et exemples, que i'ay icy entassez, me mettroit en peine de le luy dire: et si ne les ay mendiez qu'és portes cognuës et fameuses: ne me contentant pas qu'ils fussent riches, s'ils ne venoient encore de main riche et honorable: l'authorité y concurre quant et la raison. Ce n'est pas grande merueille si mon liure suit la fortune des autres liures: et si ma memoire

ENGLISH

keep my talk constrained, dry and terse. The people who serve me I have to call by the names of their jobs or of their home regions, for I find it very hard to retain names.[31]

I can tell you that a name has three syllables, that it sounds harsh, that it begins or ends with such-and-such a letter. And if I were to live long, I do not doubt that I would forget my own name, as others have done. Messala Corvinus spent two years without a trace of memory. The same is said of George of Trebizond. And on my own account I often ponder what sort of life theirs was, and whether, without this faculty, I shall have enough left to keep me going with some ease. And looking at it closely, I fear that this defect, if it becomes complete, ruins all the functions of the soul.[32]

I am full of cracks; I leak out on every side. More than once I have forgotten the password I had given or received three hours before, and forgotten where I had hidden my purse, whatever Cicero may say. I help myself lose what I put away with special care. *Memory, surely, is the one faculty that holds not only philosophy but the whole conduct of life and all the arts.* Memory is the receptacle and casket of knowledge; having one so defective, I have no great cause to complain if I know little. I know the names of the arts in general, and what they deal with, but nothing beyond that. I leaf through books; I do not study them.[33]

What stays with me from them is something I no longer recognize as belonging to anyone else. It is only what my judgment has profited from: the reasonings and ideas it has soaked up. The author, the place, the words and the other circumstances I forget at once. And I am so excellent at forgetting that I forget my own writings and compositions no less than everything else. People are always quoting me to myself without my noticing.

Anyone who wanted to know where the verses and examples I have heaped up here come from would put me hard to it to tell him. And yet I have begged them only at well-known and famous doors, not content that they should be rich unless they also came from a rich and honorable hand: authority goes along with reason there. It is no great wonder

31 Montaigne's library was in the tower of his château, across the courtyard from the main house.
32 Marcus Valerius Messala Corvinus (64 BC–AD 8), Roman orator and statesman.
33 Terence, The Eunuch; then Cicero, Academica. In On Old Age Cicero says no old man forgets where he has hidden his treasure.

FRENCH

desempare ce que i'escry, comme ce que ie ly: et ce que ie donne, comme ce que ie reçoy.

2.17.31 Outre le deffaut de la memoire, i'en ay d'autres, qui aydent beaucoup à mon ignorance. I'ay l'esprit tardif, et mousse, le moindre nuage luy arreste sa poincte: en façon que, pour exemple, ie ne luy proposay iamais enigme si aisé, qu'il sçeust desuelopper. Il n'est si vaine subtilité qui ne m'empesche. Aux ieux, où l'esprit a sa part; des échets, des cartes, des dames, et autres, ie n'y comprens que les plus grossiers traicts. L'apprehension, ie l'ay lente et embrouillée: mais ce qu'elle tient vne fois, elle le tient bien, et l'embrasse bien vniuersellement, estroitement et profondement, pour le temps qu'elle le tient. I'ay la veuë longue, saine et entiere, mais qui se lasse aiséement au trauail, et se charge.

A cette occasion ie ne puis auoir long commerce auec les liures, que par le moyen du seruice d'autruy. Le ieune Pline instruira ceux qui ne l'ont essayé, combien ce retardement est important à ceux qui s'adonnent à cette occupation.

2.17.32 Il n'est point ame si chetifue et brutale, en laquelle on ne voye reluire quelque faculté particuliere: il n'y en a point de si enseuelie, qui ne face vne saillie par quelque bout. Et comment il aduienne qu'vne ame aueugle et endormie à toutes autres choses, se trouue vifue, claire, et excellente, à certain particulier effect, il s'en faut enquerir aux maistres. Mais les belles ames, ce sont les ames vniuerselles, ouuertes, et prestes à tout: si non instruites, au moins instruisables. Ce que ie dy pour accuser la mienne.

Car soit par foiblesse ou nonchalance (et de mettre à nonchaloir ce qui est à nos pieds, ce que nous auons entremains, ce qui regarde de plus pres l'vsage de la vie, c'est chose bien eslongnée de mon dogme), il n'en est point vne si inepte et si ignorante que la mienne, de plusieurs telles choses vulgaires, et qui ne se peuuent sans honte ignorer. Il faut que i'en conte quelques exemples.

2.17.33 Ie suis né et nourry aux champs, et parmy le labourage: i'ay des affaires, et du mesnage en main, depuis que ceux qui me deuançoient en la possession des biens que ie iouys, m'ont quitté leur place. Or ie ne sçay conter ny à get, ny à plume: la pluspart de nos monnoyes ie ne les connoy pas: ny ne sçay la difference de l'vn grain à

ENGLISH

if my book shares the fate of other books, and if my memory lets go of what I write as well as what I read, of what I give as well as what I receive.

Besides the defect of memory, I have others that contribute a good deal to my ignorance. My mind is slow and blunt; the slightest cloud stops its point, so that, for example, I never set it a riddle so easy that it could unravel it. There is no subtlety so empty that it does not baffle me. In games where the mind plays a part—chess, cards, checkers and the like—I grasp only the crudest features. My understanding is slow and muddled; but what it once grasps it holds well, and embraces quite fully, closely and deeply, for as long as it holds it. My sight is long, sound and perfect, but it tires easily with work and grows heavy.

For this reason I cannot have long dealings with books except with the help of others. The younger Pliny will teach those who have not experienced it how much this hindrance matters to those who devote themselves to this occupation.[34]

There is no soul so wretched and brutish that some particular faculty is not seen shining in it; there is none so buried that it does not break out at some point. And how it comes about that a soul blind and asleep to everything else is found lively, clear and excellent in some particular activity—we must ask the masters. But the fine souls are the universal souls, open and ready for everything: if not taught, at least teachable. I say this to accuse my own.

For whether through weakness or carelessness (and to disregard what lies at our feet, what we have in our hands, what most closely concerns the business of living, is something very far from my doctrine), there is no soul so inept and ignorant as mine about many such ordinary things, which one cannot be ignorant of without shame. I must give a few examples.

I was born and brought up in the country, among farming; I have had business and the management of a household in my hands ever since those who preceded me in possession of the property I enjoy gave up their place to me. Now, I cannot reckon either with counters or with a pen; most of our

34 Pliny the Younger's letters mention his trouble with his eyes.

FRENCH

l'autre, ny en la terre, ny au grenier, si elle n'est par trop apparente: ny à peine celle d'entre les choux et les laictues de mon iardin.

Ie n'entens pas seulement les noms des premiers outils du mesnage, ny les plus grossiers principes de l'agriculture, et que les enfans sçauent: moins aux arts mechaniques, en la trafique, et en la cognoissance des marchandises, diuersité et nature des fruicts, de vins, de viandes: ny à dresser vn oiseau, ny à medeciner vn cheual, ou vn chien. Et puis qu'il me faut faire la honte toute entiere, il n'y a pas vn mois qu'on me surprint ignorant dequoy le leuain seruoit à faire du pain; et que c'estoit que faire cuuer du vin. On coniectura anciennement à Athenes, vne aptitude à la mathematique, en celuy à qui on voyoit ingenieusement agencer et fagotter vne charge de brossailles.

Vrayement on tireroit de moy vne bien contraire conclusion: car qu'on me donne tout l'apprest d'vne cuisine, me voila à la faim. Par ces traits de ma confession, on en peut imaginer d'autres à mes despens. Mais quel que ie me face cognoistre, pourueu que ie me face cognoistre tel que ie suis, ie fay mon effect. Et si ne m'excuse pas, d'oser mettre par escrit des propos si bas et friuoles que ceux-cy. La bassesse du suiet m'y contrainct. Qu'on accuse si on veut mon proiect, mais mon progrez, non. Tant y a que sans l'aduertissement d'autruy, ie voy assez le peu que tout cecy vaut et poise, et la folie de mon dessein.

C'est prou que mon iugement ne se deffere point, duquel ce sont icy les essais. *Nasutus sis vsque licet, sis denique nasus,*
Quantum noluerit ferre rogatus Atlas:
Et possis ipsum tu deridere Latinum,
Non potes in nugas dicere plura meas,
Ipse ego quàm dixi: quid dentem dente iuuabit
Rodere? carne opus est, si satur esse velis.
Ne perdas operam: qui se mirantur, in illos
Virus habe; nos hæc nouimus esse nihil. Ie ne suis pas obligé à ne dire point de sottises, pourueu que ie ne me trompe pas à les cognoistre. Et de faillir à mon escient, cela m'est si ordinaire, que ie ne faux guere d'autre façon, ie ne faux guere fortuitement.

ENGLISH

coins I do not know; nor do I know the difference between one grain and another, either in the field or in the granary, unless it is too obvious; nor, scarcely, the difference between the cabbages and the lettuces in my garden.

I do not even understand the names of the most basic farm tools, or the crudest principles of agriculture, which children know; still less the mechanical arts, trade, and knowledge of goods, of the variety and nature of fruits, wines and foods; nor how to train a bird or doctor a horse or a dog. And since I must make my shame complete, not a month ago I was caught not knowing what yeast was used for in making bread, and what it meant to let wine ferment in the vat. In Athens long ago they guessed at an aptitude for mathematics in a man they saw cleverly arranging and tying up a load of brushwood.

Truly, one would draw quite the opposite conclusion from me: for give me the whole equipment of a kitchen and there I am, starving. From these features of my confession one can imagine others at my expense. But whatever I make myself known as, provided I make myself known as I am, I achieve my purpose. And yet I make no apology for daring to put into writing such low and frivolous remarks as these. The lowness of my subject forces me to it. Let them blame my project if they like, but not the way I carry it out. Be that as it may, without anyone's telling me, I see well enough how little all this is worth and weighs, and the folly of my design.

FRENCH

ENGLISH

It is enough that my judgment does not come apart, for it is my judgment that these essays put to the test. *Be as sharp-nosed as you like, be all nose,*
Such a nose as Atlas, if asked, would refuse to carry;
And you could even mock Latinus himself:
You cannot say more against my trifles
Than I have said myself. What good will it do to gnaw tooth against tooth?
You need meat if you want to be filled.
Don't waste your effort: against those who admire themselves
Keep your venom; I know these things are nothing. I am not obliged not to say foolish things, provided I am not deceived in recognizing them. And to go wrong knowingly is so ordinary with me that I hardly ever go wrong in any other way; I hardly ever go wrong by chance.[35]

C'est peu de chose de prester à la temerité de mes humeurs les actions ineptes, puis que ie ne me puis pas deffendre d'y prester ordinairement les vitieuses.

It is a small matter to let the rashness of my temperament have its way in foolish actions, since I cannot help letting it have its way, as a rule, in wicked ones.

IRRESOLUTION

He cannot choose between opinions and prefers to follow, holding that old institutions are better than change.

FRENCH

ENGLISH

2.17.34 Ie vis vn iour à Barleduc, qu'on presentoit au Roy François second, pour la recommandation de la memoire de René Roy de Sicile, vn pourtraict qu'il auoit luy-mesmes fait de soy. Pourquoy n'est-il loisible de mesme à vn chacun, de se peindre de la plume, comme il se peignoit d'vn creon? Ie ne veux donc pas oublier encor cette cicatrice, bien mal propre à produire en public. C'est l'irresolution: defaut tres-incommode à la negociation des affaires du monde. Ie ne sçay pas prendre party és entreprinses doubteuses: *Ne si, ne no, net cor mi suona intero.* Ie sçay bien soustenir vne opinion, mais non pas la choisir.

I once saw at Bar-le-Duc a portrait being presented to King Francis II, in remembrance of René, King of Sicily, which René had made of himself. Why is it not equally permissible for everyone to portray himself with the pen, as he portrayed himself with a crayon? So I do not want to leave out this scar either, though it is hardly fit to be shown in public. It is irresolution: a very awkward defect in negotiating the affairs of the world. I do not know how to take sides in doubtful undertakings: *Neither yes nor no rings clear in my heart.* I can hold up an opinion well enough, but not choose it.[36]

Par ce qu'és choses humaines, à quelque bande qu'on panche, il se presente force apparences, qui nous y confirment: et le philosophe Chrysippus disoit, qu'il ne vouloit apprendre de Zenon et Cleanthez ses maistres, que les dogmes simplement: car quant aux preuues et raisons, il en fourniroit assez de luy mesme. De quelque costé que ie me tourne, ie me fournis tousiours assez de cause et de vray-semblance pour m'y maintenir. Ainsi

Because in human affairs, whichever side one leans to, plenty of appearances present themselves to confirm us in it. And the philosopher Chrysippus said that he wanted to learn from his masters Zeno and Cleanthes only their doctrines, pure and simple; as for proofs and reasons, he would supply enough of them himself. Whichever way I turn, I always supply myself with enough

35 Martial, Epigrams. Latinus was a famous comic actor in Rome.
36 René of Anjou (1409–1480), titular king of Sicily and Naples, and a painter; Francis II reigned 1559–1560. The line is from Petrarch.

FRENCH

i'arreste chez moy le doubte, et la liberté de choisir, iusques à ce que l'occasion me presse. Et lors, à confesser la verité, ie iette le plus souuent la plume au vent, comme on dit, et m'abandonne à la mercy de la Fortune. Vne bien legere inclination et circonstance m'emporte.

Dum in dubio est animus, paulo momento huc atque / Illuc impellitur. L'incertitude de mon iugement, est si également balancée en la pluspart des occurrences, que ie compromettrois volontiers à la decision du sort et des dets. Et remarque auec grande consideration de nostre foiblesse humaine, les exemples que l'histoire diuine mesme nous a laissé de cet vsage, de remettre à la Fortune et au hazard, la determination des eslections és choses doubteuses: *Sors cecidit super Matthiam*. La raison humaine est vn glaiue double et dangereux. Et en la main mesme de Socrates son plus intime et plus familier amy: voyez à quants de bouts c'est vn baston. Ainsi, ie ne suis propre qu'à suyure, et me laisse aysément emporter à la foule.

Ie ne me fie pas assez en mes forces, pour entreprendre de commander, ny guider. Ie suis bien ayse de trouuer mes pas trassez par les autres. S'il faut courre le hazard d'vn choix incertain, i'ayme mieux que ce soit soubs tel, qui s'asseure plus de ses opinions, et les espouse plus, que ie ne fay les miennes, ausquelles ie trouue le fondement et le plant glissant.

2.17.35 Et si ne suis pas trop facile pourtant au change, d'autant que i'apperçois aux opinions contraires vne pareille foiblesse. *Ipsa consuetudo assentiendi periculosa esse videtur, et lubrica.* Notamment aux affaires politiques, il y a vn beau champ ouuert au bransle et à la contestation. *Iusta pari premitur veluti cum pondere libra / Prona, nec hac plus parte sedet, nec surgit ab illa.* Les discours de Machiauel, pour exemple, estoient assez solides pour le subiect, si y a-il eu grand'aisance à les combattre; et ceux qui l'ont faict, n'ont pas laissé moins de facilité à combattre les leurs.

Il s'y trouueroit tousiours à vn tel argument, dequoy y fournir responces, dupliques, repliques, tripliques, quadrupliques, et cette infinie contexture de debats, que nostre chicane a alongé tant qu'elle a peu en faueur des procez: *Cædimur, et totidem plagis consumimus hostem:* les raisons n'y ayant guere autre fondement que l'experience, et la diuersité des euenemens humains,

ENGLISH

cause and plausibility to hold to it. So I keep doubt and freedom of choice at home until the occasion presses me. And then, to tell the truth, I most often throw the feather to the wind, as they say, and abandon myself to the mercy of Fortune. A very slight inclination or circumstance carries me away.

While the mind is in doubt, the slightest impulse drives it this way / And that. The uncertainty of my judgment is so evenly balanced in most situations that I would willingly leave the decision to lot and dice. And I note, reflecting deeply on our human weakness, the examples that even sacred history has left us of this practice of leaving to Fortune and chance the decision of choices in doubtful matters: *The lot fell upon Matthias.* Human reason is a two-edged and dangerous sword. Even in the hand of Socrates, its most intimate and familiar friend, see how many ends this stick has. So I am fit only to follow, and I easily let myself be carried along by the crowd.[37]

I do not trust my powers enough to undertake to command or to guide. I am very glad to find my path traced out by others. If I must run the risk of an uncertain choice, I would rather it be under someone who is surer of his opinions and more wedded to them than I am to mine, whose foundation and footing I find slippery.

And yet I am not too quick to change, for all that, since I see the same weakness in the opposing opinions. *The very habit of assenting seems to be dangerous and slippery.* Especially in political affairs there is a wide field open for wavering and dispute. *As when a true balance is pressed down by equal weight, / and neither sinks on this side nor rises on that.* Machiavelli's reasonings, for example, were solid enough for the subject; yet it has been very easy to attack them, and those who did so have left it no less easy to attack their own.[38]

In such an argument there would always be material for answers, rejoinders, replies, surrejoinders, rebutters, and that endless web of disputes which our legal quibbling has stretched out as far as it could in favor of lawsuits: *We are struck, and we wear out the enemy with as many blows.* For the reas-

37 Terence, The Woman of Andros; then Acts 1:26, on the choice of the apostle to replace Judas.
38 Cicero, Academica; the verse is from the Panegyric of Messalla in the collection of Tibullus.

FRENCH

nous presentant infinis exemples à toutes sortes de formes.

Vn sçauant personnage de nostre temps, dit qu'en nos almanacs, où ils disent chaud, qui voudra dire froid, et au lieu de sec, humide: et mettre tousiours le rebours de ce qu'ils pronostiquent, s'il deuoit entrer en gageure de l'euenement de l'vn ou l'autre, qu'il ne se soucieroit pas quel party il prinst, sauf és choses où il n'y peut escheoir incertitude: comme de promettre à Noël des chaleurs extremes, et à la sainct Iean, des rigueurs de l'hyuer. I'en pense de mesmes de ces discours politiques: à quelque rolle qu'on vous mette, vous auez aussi beau ieu que vostre compagnon, pourueu que vous ne veniez à choquer les principes trop grossiers et apparens.

Et pourtant, selon mon humeur, és affaires publiques, il n'est aucun si mauuais train, pourueu qu'il aye de l'aage et de la constance, qui ne vaille mieux que le changement et le remuement. Nos mœurs sont extrememement corrompuës, et panchent d'vne merueilleuse inclination vers l'empirement: de nos loix et vsances, il y en a plusieurs barbares et monstrueuses: toutesfois pour la difficulté de nous mettre en meilleur estat, et le danger de ce croullement, si ie pouuoy planter vne cheville à nostre rouë, et l'arrester en ce poinct, ie le ferois de bon cœur.

Nunquam adeo fœdis adeóque pudendis / Vtimur exemplis, vt non peiora supersint. Le pis que ie trouue en nostre estat, c'est l'instabilité: et que nos loix, non plus que nos vestemens, ne peuuent prendre aucune forme arrestée. Il est bien aysé d'accuser d'imperfection vne police: car toutes choses mortelles en sont pleines: il est bien aysé d'engendrer à vn peuple le mespris de ses anciennes obseruances: iamais homme n'entreprint cela, qui n'en vinst à bout: mais d'y restablir vn meilleur estat en la place de celuy qu'on a ruiné, à cecy plusieurs se sont morfondus, de ceux qui l'auoient entreprins. Ie fay peu de part à ma prudence, de ma conduite: ie me laisse volontiers mener à l'ordre public du monde.

Heureux peuple, qui fait ce qu'on commande, mieux que ceux qui commandent, sans se tourmenter des causes: qui se laisse mollement rouller apres le roullement celeste. L'obeyssance n'est iamais pure ny tranquille en celuy qui raisonne et qui plaide.

ENGLISH

ons there have hardly any foundation but experience, and the diversity of human events offers us infinite examples in every sort of form.[39]

A learned man of our time says that in our almanacs, where they say hot, a man might say cold, and wet instead of dry, and always put the opposite of what they forecast; and if he had to bet on the outcome of one or the other, he would not care which side he took—except in matters where there can be no uncertainty, such as promising extreme heat at Christmas and the rigors of winter on Saint John's Day at midsummer. I think the same of these political arguments: whatever part you are cast in, you have as good a game as your opponent, provided you do not run up against principles that are too gross and obvious.

And yet, to my way of thinking, in public affairs there is no course so bad, provided it has age and constancy, that it is not better than change and upheaval. Our morals are extremely corrupt and lean with a remarkable inclination toward the worse; among our laws and customs there are many that are barbarous and monstrous. Nevertheless, because of the difficulty of putting ourselves in a better state, and the danger of such a collapse, if I could drive a peg into our wheel and stop it at this point, I would gladly do it.

Never do we use examples so foul and so shameful / that worse ones do not remain. The worst thing I find in our state is instability, and that our laws, any more than our clothes, cannot take on any settled form. It is very easy to accuse a government of imperfection, for all mortal things are full of it. It is very easy to breed in a people contempt for its ancient observances; no man ever undertook that without succeeding. But as for establishing a better state in place of the one that has been ruined—at this, many of those who undertook it have worn themselves out in vain. I give my prudence little share in my conduct; I willingly let myself be led by the public order of the world.[40]

Happy the people who do what they are commanded better than those who command, without tormenting themselves about the reasons; who let themselves roll gently along with the rolling of the

39 Horace, Epistles.
40 Juvenal, Satires.

FRENCH	ENGLISH
	heavens. Obedience is never pure or tranquil in one who reasons and argues.

THE ONE THING I VALUE IN MYSELF

Everyone thinks his own judgment sufficient; Montaigne looks inward and trusts opinions born with him.

FRENCH	ENGLISH
2.17.36 Somme pour reuenir à moy, ce seul, par où ie m'estime quelque chose, c'est ce, en quoy iamais homme ne s'estima deffaillant: ma recommendation est vulgaire, commune, et populaire: car qui a iamais cuidé auoir faute de sens? Ce seroit vne proposition qui impliqueroit en soy de la contradiction. C'est vne maladie, qui n'est iamais où elle se voit: elle est bien tenace et forte, mais laquelle pourtant, le premier rayon de la veuë du patient, perce et dissipe: comme le regard du soleil vn brouïllas opaque. S'accuser, ce seroit s'excuser en ce subiect là: et se condamner, ce seroit s'absoudre. Il ne fut iamais crocheteur ny femmelette, qui ne pensast auoir assez de sens pour sa prouision.	In sum, to come back to myself: the one thing for which I think something of myself is the very thing in which no man ever thought himself deficient. My claim to distinction is ordinary, common and popular; for who ever believed he lacked sense? That would be a proposition containing its own contradiction. It is a sickness that is never present where it is seen. It is very tenacious and strong, and yet the first ray of the patient's sight pierces and dispels it, as the sun's gaze does a thick fog. To accuse oneself, in this matter, would be to excuse oneself, and to condemn oneself would be to acquit oneself. There was never a street porter or a silly woman who did not think they had sense enough for their needs.
Nous recognoissons aysément és autres, l'aduantage du courage, de la force corporelle, de l'experience, de la disposition, de la beauté: mais l'aduantage du iugement, nous ne le cedons à personne. Et les raisons qui partent du simple discours naturel en autruy, il nous semble qu'il n'a tenu qu'à regarder de ce costé là, que nous ne les ayons trouuees.	We readily recognize that others have the advantage in courage, bodily strength, experience, agility, beauty; but the advantage in judgment we yield to no one. And as for the reasonings that come from plain natural reason in someone else, it seems to us that we would have found them ourselves if we had only looked in that direction.
2.17.37 La science, le stile, et telles parties, que nous voyons és ouurages estrangers, nous touchons bien aysément si elles surpassent les nostres: mais les simples productions de l'entendement, chacun pense qu'il estoit en luy de les rencontrer toutes pareilles, et en apperçoit malaisement le poids et la difficulté, si ce n'est, et à peine, en vne extreme et incomparable distance. Et qui verroit bien à clair la hauteur d'vn iugement estranger, il y arriueroit et y porteroit le sien. Ainsi, c'est vne sorte d'exercitation, de laquelle on doit esperer fort peu de recommandation et de loüange, et vne maniere de composition, de peu de nom. Et puis, pour qui escriuez vous?	Learning, style and such qualities that we see in other people's works, we readily perceive when they surpass our own. But the simple products of the understanding—everyone thinks it was in him to hit upon exactly the same, and he can hardly perceive their weight and difficulty, except, and barely then, at an extreme and incomparable distance. And whoever could see clearly the height of another's judgment would reach it and bring his own up to it. So this is a kind of exercise from which one must hope for very little commendation and praise, and a kind of composition of little renown. And then, for whom are you writing?
Les sçauants, à qui appartient la iurisdiction liuresque, ne cognoissent autre prix que de la doctrine; et n'aduoüent autre proceder en noz esprits, que celuy de l'erudition, et de l'art. Si vous auez prins l'vn des Scipions pour l'autre, que vous reste il à dire, qui vaille? Qui ignore Aristote, selon eux, s'ignore quand et quand soy-mesme. Les ames	The learned, to whom jurisdiction over books belongs, know no other value than learning, and acknowledge no other way of proceeding in our minds than that of erudition and skill. If you have taken one of the Scipios for the other, what is left for you to say that is worth anything? Whoever is

FRENCH

grossieres et populaires ne voyent pas la grace d'vn discours delié. Or ces deux especes occupent le monde. La tierce, à qui vous tombez en partage, des ames reglées et fortes d'elles mesmes, est si rare, que iustement elle n'a ny nom, ny rang entre nous: c'est à demy temps perdu, d'aspirer, et de s'efforcer à luy plaire.

2.17.38 On dit communément que le plus iuste partage que Nature nous aye fait de graces, c'est celuy du sens: car il n'est aucun qui ne se contente de ce qu'elle luy en a distribué, n'est-ce pas raison? qui verroit au delà, il verroit au delà de sa veuë. Ie pense auoir les opinions bonnes et saines, mais qui n'en croit autant des siennes? L'vne des meilleures preuues que i'en aye, c'est le peu d'estime que ie fay de moy, car si elles n'eussent esté bien asseurées, elles se fussent aisément laissé piper à l'affection que ie me porte, singuliere, comme celuy qui la ramene quasi toute à moy, et qui ne l'espands gueres hors de là.

Tout ce que les autres en distribuent à vne infinie multitude d'amis, et de cognoissans, à leur gloire, à leur grandeur, ie le rapporte tout au repos de mon esprit, et à moy. Ce qui m'en eschappe ailleurs, ce n'est pas proprement de l'ordonnance de mon discours: *Mihi nempe valere et viuere doctus.*

2.17.39 Or mes opinions, ie les trouue infiniement hardies et constantes à condamner mon insuffisance. De vray c'est aussi vn subiect, auquel i'exerce mon iugement autant qu'à nul autre. Le monde regarde tousiours vis à vis: moy, ie replie ma veuë au dedans, ie la plante, ie l'amuse là. Chacun regarde deuant soy, moy ie regarde dedans moy. Ie n'ay affaire qu'à moy, ie me considere sans cesse, ie me contrerolle, ie me gouste. Les autres vont tousiours ailleurs, s'ils y pensent bien: ils vont tousiours auant, *Nemo in sese tentat descendere:* moy, ie me roulle en moy-mesme.

Cette capacité de trier le vray, quelle qu'elle soit en moy, et cett'humeur libre de n'assubiectir aysément ma creance, ie la dois principalement à moy: car les plus

ENGLISH

ignorant of Aristotle, according to them, is at the same time ignorant of himself. Coarse and common souls do not see the grace of a finely spun argument. Now these two kinds fill the world. The third, into whose lot you fall—souls well ordered and strong in themselves—is so rare that it rightly has neither name nor rank among us. It is half time wasted to aspire and strive to please it.[41]

It is commonly said that the fairest share of her gifts that Nature has given us is that of sense; for there is no one who is not content with what she has allotted him of it. Isn't that reasonable? Whoever saw beyond it would be seeing beyond his own sight. I think my opinions are good and sound; but who does not believe as much of his own? One of the best proofs I have of it is the low esteem in which I hold myself. For if they had not been well grounded, they would easily have let themselves be tricked by the affection I bear myself—a singular affection, since I bring it almost entirely back to myself and hardly spread it beyond.

All that others distribute of it to an infinite multitude of friends and acquaintances, to their glory, to their greatness, I refer entirely to the repose of my mind and to myself. What escapes from me elsewhere is not strictly by the command of my reason: *Taught, indeed, to live and thrive for myself.*[42]

Now my opinions I find infinitely bold and constant in condemning my own inadequacy. In truth, this too is a subject on which I exercise my judgment as much as on any other. The world always looks straight ahead; as for me, I turn my gaze inward, I fix it there, I keep it busy there. Everyone looks in front of him; I look inside myself. I have no business but with myself; I consider myself unceasingly, I inspect myself, I taste myself. Others always go elsewhere, if they think about it; they always go forward. *No one tries to descend into himself.* As for me, I roll about inside myself.[43]

This capacity for sifting out the truth, whatever it amounts to in me, and this free temperament that does not easily subject my belief, I owe chiefly to

41 Scipio Africanus the Elder and Scipio Aemilianus the Younger, Roman generals easily confused.
42 Adapted from Lucretius, On the Nature of Things.
43 Persius, Satires.

FRENCH

fermes imaginations que i'aye, et generalles, sont celles qui par maniere de dire, nasquirent auec moy: elles sont naturelles, et toutes miennes. Ie les produisis crues et simples, d'vne production hardie et forte, mais vn peu trouble et imparfaicte: depuis ie les ay establies et fortifiées par l'authorité d'autruy, et par les sains exemples des anciens, ausquels ie me suis rencontré conforme en iugement. Ceux-là m'en ont asseuré de la prinse, et m'en ont donné la iouyssance et possession plus claire.

La recommandation que chacun cherche, de viuacité et promptitude d'esprit, ie la pretends du reglement, d'vne action esclatante et signalée, ou de quelque particuliere suffisance: ie la pretends de l'ordre, correspondance, et tranquillité d'opinions et de mœurs. *Omnino si quidquam est decorum, nihil est profectò magis quàm æquabilitas vniuersæ vitæ, tum singularum actionum: quam conseruare non possis, si, aliorum naturam imitans, omittas tuam.*

ENGLISH

myself. For the firmest and most general notions I have are those which, so to speak, were born with me: they are natural and entirely mine. I produced them raw and simple, in a bold and strong birth, but a little confused and imperfect. Since then I have established and fortified them by the authority of others, and by the sound examples of the ancients, with whom I found myself in agreement in judgment. These confirmed my hold on them and gave me a clearer enjoyment and possession of them.

The commendation everyone seeks for liveliness and quickness of mind, I claim for steadiness; the commendation for a brilliant and signal action, or for some particular ability, I claim for order, consistency and tranquility of opinions and conduct. *Assuredly, if anything is becoming, nothing is more so than consistency in one's whole life and in each of one's actions; and you cannot maintain it if you imitate the nature of others and abandon your own.*[44]

NOT ESTEEMING OTHERS ENOUGH

Montaigne has met no truly great man except La Boétie, and judges the learned harshly.

FRENCH

2.17.40 Voyla donq iusques où ie me sens coulpable de cette premiere partie, que ie disois estre au vice de la presomption. Pour la seconde, qui consiste à n'estimer point assez autruy, ie ne sçay si ie m'en puis si bien excuser: car quoy qu'il me couste, ie delibere de dire ce qui en est. A l'aduenture que le commerce continuel que i'ay auec les humeurs anciennes, et l'idée de ces riches ames du temps passé, me dégouste, et d'autruy, et de moy-mesme: ou bien qu'à la verité nous viuons en vn siecle qui ne produict les choses que bien mediocres. Tant y a que ie ne connoy rien digne de grande admiration.

Aussi ne connoy-ie guere d'hommes, auec telle priuauté, qu'il faut pour en pouuoir iuger: et ceux ausquels ma condition me mesle plus ordinairement, sont pour la pluspart, gens qui ont peu de soing de la culture de l'ame, et ausquels on ne propose pour toute beatitude que l'honneur, et pour toute perfection, que la vaillance.

2.17.41 Ce que ie voy de beau en autruy, ie le louë et l'estime tres-volontiers. Voire i'enrichis souuent sur ce que i'en pense,

ENGLISH

That, then, is how far I feel myself guilty of the first part, which I said there was in the vice of presumption. As for the second, which consists in not esteeming others enough, I do not know whether I can excuse myself so well; for whatever it costs me, I am resolved to tell the truth of it. Perhaps the continual company I keep with the temperaments of the ancients, and the idea of those rich souls of times past, gives me a distaste both for others and for myself; or else, in truth, we live in an age that produces only very mediocre things. At any rate, I know of nothing worthy of great admiration.

Nor do I know many men with the intimacy needed to be able to judge them. And those with whom my station most commonly throws me are for the most part people who care little for the cultivation of the soul, and who are offered honor as the whole of bliss and valor as the whole of perfection.

What I see that is fine in others I very willingly praise and esteem. Indeed I often go beyond what

44 Cicero, On Duties.

FRENCH

et me permets de mentir iusques là. Car ie ne sçay point inuenter vn subiect faux. Ie tesmoigne volontiers de mes amis, par ce que i'y trouue de loüable. Et d'vn pied de valeur, i'en fay volontiers vn pied et demy. Mais de leur prester les qualitez qui n'y sont pas, ie ne puis: ny les defendre ouuertement des imperfections qu'ils ont. Voyre à mes ennemis, ie rends nettement ce que ie dois de tesmoignage d'honneur. Mon affection se change, mon iugement non. Et ne confons point ma querelle auec autres circonstances qui n'en sont pas.

Et suis tant ialoux de la liberté de mon iugement, que mal-ayséement la puis-ie quitter pour passion que ce soit. Ie me fay plus d'iniure en mentant, que ie n'en fay à celuy, de qui ie mens. On remarque cette loüable et genereuse coustume de la nation Persienne, qu'ils parloient de leurs mortels ennemis, et à qui ils faisoyent la guerre à outrance, honorablement et equitablement autant que portoit le merite de leur vertu.

2.17.42 Ie connoy des hommes assez, qui ont diuerses parties belles: qui l'esprit, qui le cœur, qui l'adresse, qui la conscience, qui le langage, qui vne science, qui vn'autre: mais de grand homme en general, et ayant tant de belles pieces ensemble, ou vne, en tel degré d'excellence, qu'on le doiue admirer, ou le comparer à ceux que nous honorons du temps passé, ma fortune ne m'en a faict voir nul.

Et le plus grand que i'aye conneu au vif, ie di des parties naturelles de l'ame, et le mieux né, c'estoit Estienne de la Boitie: c'estoit vrayement vn' ame pleine, et qui montroit vn beau visage à tout sens: vn' ame à la vieille marque: et qui eust produit de grands effects, si sa fortune l'eust voulu: ayant beaucoup adiousté à ce riche naturel, par science et estude.

2.17.43 Mais ie ne sçay comment il aduient, et si aduient sans doubte, qu'il se trouue autant de vanité et de foiblesse d'entendement, en ceux qui font profession d'auoir plus de suffisance, qui se meslent de vacations lettrées, et de charges qui despendent des liures, qu'en nulle autre sorte de gens. Ou bien par ce que lon requiert et attend plus d'eux, et qu'on ne peut excuser en eux les fautes communes: ou bien que l'opinion du sçauoir leur donne plus de hardiesse de se produire, et de se descouurir trop auant, par où ils se perdent, et se trahissent.

ENGLISH

I think of it, and allow myself to lie that far. For I do not know how to invent a false subject. I readily bear witness for my friends as to what I find praiseworthy in them, and out of one foot of worth I gladly make a foot and a half. But lend them qualities that are not there, I cannot; nor openly defend them from the imperfections they have. Even to my enemies I plainly render the testimony of honor that I owe. My affection changes; my judgment does not. And I do not confuse my quarrel with other circumstances that have nothing to do with it.

And I am so jealous of the freedom of my judgment that I can hardly give it up for any passion whatever. I do myself more harm by lying than I do the man I lie about. People remark on that praiseworthy and generous custom of the Persian nation: they spoke of their mortal enemies, against whom they waged war to the bitter end, honorably and fairly, as far as the merit of their virtue warranted.

I know plenty of men who have various fine parts: one has wit, another courage, another skill, another conscience, another eloquence, one a certain branch of learning, another a different one. But as for a great man overall, having so many fine pieces together, or one of them in such a degree of excellence that he ought to be admired or compared with those we honor from times past—my fortune has shown me none.

And the greatest I have known in the flesh—I mean in the natural qualities of the soul—and the best born, was Étienne de La Boétie. His was truly a full soul, which showed a fine face from every side: a soul of the old stamp, which would have achieved great things if his fortune had willed it, for he had added much to that rich nature by learning and study.

But I do not know how it comes about—and come about it certainly does—that there is as much vanity and weakness of understanding in those who profess to have more ability, who take up literary callings and offices that depend on books, as in any other sort of people. Either because more is required and expected of them, and common faults cannot be excused in them; or because the reputation for learning gives them more boldness

FRENCH

Comme vn artisan tesmoigne bien mieux sa bestise, en vne riche matiere, qu'il ait entre mains, s'il l'accommode et mesle sottement, et contre les regles de son ouurage, qu'en vne matiere vile: et s'offence lon plus du defaut, en vne statue d'or, qu'en celle qui est de plastre. Ceux cy en font autant, lors qu'ils mettent en auant des choses qui d'elles mesmes, et en leur lieu, seroyent bonnes: car ils s'en seruent sans discretion, faisans honneur à leur memoire, aux despens de leur entendement: et faisans honneur à Cicero, à Galien, à Vlpian, et à sainct Hierosme, pour se rendre eux ridicules.

2.17.44 Ie retombe volontiers sur ce discours de l'ineptie de nostre institution. Elle a eu pour sa fin, de nous faire, non bons et sages, mais sçauans: elle y est arriuée. Elle ne nous a pas appris de suyure et embrasser la vertu et la prudence: mais elle nous en a imprimé la deriuation et l'etymologie. Nous sçauons decliner vertu, si nous ne sçauons l'aymer. Si nous ne sçauons que c'est que prudence par effect, et par experience, nous le sçauons par iargon et par cœur.

De nos voisins, nous ne nous contentons pas d'en sçauoir la race, les parentelles, et les alliances, nous les voulons auoir pour amis, et dresser auec eux quelque conuersation et intelligence: elle nous a appris les definitions, les diuisions, et partitions de la vertu, comme des surnoms et branches d'vne genealogie, sans auoir autre soing de dresser entre nous et elle, quelque pratique de familiarité et priuée accointance. Elle nous a choisi pour nostre apprentissage, non les liures qui ont les opinions plus saines et plus vrayes, mais ceux qui parlent le meilleur Grec et Latin: et parmy ses beaux mots, nous a fait couler en la fantasie les plus vaines humeurs de l'antiquité.

2.17.45 Vne bonne institution, elle change le iugement et les mœurs: comme il aduint à Polemon: ce ieune homme Grec desbauché, qui estant allé ouïr par rencontre, vne leçon de Xenocrates, ne remerqua pas seulement l'éloquence et la suffisance du lecteur, et n'en rapporta pas seulement en la maison, la science de quelque belle matiere: mais vn fruit plus apparent et plus solide: qui fut, le soudain changement et amendement de sa

ENGLISH

to put themselves forward and expose themselves too far, whereby they ruin and betray themselves.

Just as a craftsman shows his stupidity much better in a rich material he has in hand, if he arranges and combines it foolishly and against the rules of his craft, than in a base one; and people are more offended by a flaw in a golden statue than in one of plaster. These men do the same when they put forward things that in themselves and in their place would be good. For they use them without discretion, doing honor to their memory at the expense of their understanding, and doing honor to Cicero, Galen, Ulpian and Saint Jerome only to make themselves ridiculous.[45]

I readily fall back on this theme of the ineptitude of our education. Its aim has been to make us not good and wise, but learned; and it has succeeded. It has not taught us to follow and embrace virtue and prudence, but it has stamped on us their derivation and etymology. We know how to decline virtue, even if we do not know how to love it. If we do not know what prudence is in fact and by experience, we know it by jargon and by heart.

With our neighbors, we are not content to know their lineage, their kin and their connections by marriage; we want to have them as friends and establish some conversation and understanding with them. Our education has taught us the definitions, divisions and subdivisions of virtue, like the surnames and branches of a family tree, without any further concern to establish between us and her some practice of familiarity and private acquaintance. It has chosen for our learning not the books with the soundest and truest opinions, but those that speak the best Greek and Latin; and amid their fine words it has slipped into our minds the emptiest fancies of antiquity.

A good education changes judgment and conduct, as happened to Polemon, that debauched young Greek who, having gone by chance to hear a lecture by Xenocrates, did not merely notice the eloquence and ability of the lecturer, nor merely bring home the knowledge of some fine subject, but a more evident and more solid fruit: the sudden change and amendment of his former life.

45 Ulpian, the Roman jurist, and Saint Jerome, the Church Father, were, with Galen, the chief authorities in law, theology and medicine.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
	premiere vie. Qui a iamais senti vn tel effect de nostre discipline? *Faciásne quod olim* *Mutatus Polemon? ponas insignia morbi,* *Fasciolas, cubital, focalia, potus vt ille* *Dicitur ex collo furtim carpsisse coronas,* *Postquam est impransi correptus voce magistri?*	Who has ever felt such an effect from our schooling? *Would you do what once* *the reformed Polemon did? Would you lay aside the badges of your sickness,* *your leg-bands, your elbow cushion, your neck-wraps, as he, in his cups,* *is said to have stealthily plucked the garlands from his neck* *after he was rebuked by the voice of the fasting master?*[46]
2.17.46	La moins dedeignable condition de gents, me semble estre, celle qui par simplesse tient le dernier rang: et nous offrir vn commerce plus reglé. Les mœurs et les propos des paysans, ie les trouue communement plus ordonnez selon la prescription de la vraye philosophie, que ne sont ceux de noz philosophes. *Plus sapit vulgus, quia tantum, quantum opus est, sapit.*	The least contemptible class of people seems to me to be the one that, through simplicity, holds the lowest rank, and that offers us more orderly dealings. The conduct and talk of peasants I commonly find more in keeping with the prescriptions of true philosophy than those of our philosophers. *The common people are wiser, because they are only as wise as they need to be.*[47]

THE NOTABLE MEN OF HIS TIME

Montaigne names the soldiers, statesmen and poets of his age he admires, and Marie de Gournay.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
2.17.47	Les plus notables hommes que i'aye iugé, par les apparences externes, car pour les iuger à ma mode, il les faudroit esclairer de plus pres, c'ont esté, pour le faict de la guerre, et suffisance militaire, le Duc de Guyse, qui mourut à Orleans, et le feu Mareschal Strozzi. Pour gens suffisans, et de vertu non commune, Oliuier, et l'Hospital Chanceliers de France. Il me semble aussi de la poësie qu'elle a eu sa vogue en nostre siecle. Nous auons abondance de bons artisans de ce mestier-là, Aurat, Beze, Buchanan, l'Hospital, Mont-doré, Turnebus.	The most notable men I have judged by outward appearances—for to judge them in my own way I would have to examine them more closely—have been, in matters of war and military ability, the Duke of Guise, who died at Orléans, and the late Marshal Strozzi. As men of ability and uncommon virtue, Olivier and L'Hospital, Chancellors of France. It seems to me also that poetry has had its heyday in our century. We have an abundance of good craftsmen in that trade: Dorat, Beza, Buchanan, L'Hospital, Montdoré, Turnebus.[48]
	Quant aux François, ie pense qu'ils l'ont montée au plus haut degré où elle sera iamais: et aux parties, en quoy Ronsart et du Bellay excellent, ie ne les treuue gueres esloignez de la perfection ancienne. Adrianus Turnebus sçauoit plus, et sçauoit mieux ce qu'il sçauoit, qu'homme qui fust de son siecle, ny loing au delà. Les vies du Duc d'Albe dernier mort, et de nostre Connestable de Mommorancy, ont esté des vies nobles, et qui ont eu plusieurs rares ressemblances de fortune.	As for those who write in French, I think they have raised it to the highest degree it will ever reach; and in the qualities in which Ronsard and du Bellay excel, I find them hardly far from the perfection of the ancients. Adrianus Turnebus knew more, and knew better what he knew, than any man of his century or long before. The lives of the Duke of Alba, recently dead, and of our Constable de Montmorency were noble lives, and had several rare resemblances of fortune.[49]

46 Polemon (4th century BC) later succeeded Xenocrates as head of Plato's Academy. The verse is from Horace, Satires.
47 Lactantius, Divine Institutes.
48 Piero Strozzi, Marshal of France, was killed at Thionville in 1558. Michel de L'Hospital succeeded Olivier as chancellor; the poets named wrote in Latin.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
	Mais la beauté, et la gloire de la mort de cettuy-cy, à la veuë de Paris, et de son Roy; pour leur seruice contre ses plus proches; à la teste d'vne armée victorieuse par sa conduitte; et d'vn coup de main, en si extreme vieillesse, me semble meriter qu'on la loge entre les remerquables euenemens de mon temps. Comme aussi, la constante bonté, douceur de mœurs, et facilité consciencieuse de Monsieur de la Nouë, en vne telle iniustice de parts armées, vraye eschole de trahison, d'inhumanité, et de brigandage, où tousiours il s'est nourry, grand homme de guerre, et tres-experimenté.	But the beauty and glory of the latter's death—in sight of Paris and of his King, in their service against his nearest kin, at the head of an army victorious under his leadership, and in hand-to-hand fighting, at so extreme an age—seem to me to deserve a place among the remarkable events of my time. So too do the constant goodness, gentleness of manners and conscientious affability of Monsieur de La Noue, amid such injustice of armed factions—a true school of treachery, inhumanity and brigandage—in which he was raised all his life, a great and very experienced man of war.[50]
2.17.48	I'ay pris plaisir à publier en plusieurs lieux, l'esperance que i'ay de Marie de Gournay le Iars ma fille d'alliance: et certes aymée de moy beaucoup plus que paternellement, et enueloppée en ma retraitte et solitude, comme l'vne des meilleures parties de mon propre estre. Ie ne regarde plus qu'elle au monde.	I have taken pleasure in making public in several places the hope I have for Marie de Gournay le Jars, my adopted daughter—and certainly loved by me far more than as a father loves—enfolded in my retirement and solitude as one of the best parts of my own being. She is all I care for in the world now.[51]
	Si l'adolescence peut donner presage, cette ame sera quelque iour capable des plus belles choses, et entre autres de la perfection de cette tressaincte amitié, où nous ne lisons point que son sexe ait peu monter encores: la sincerité et la solidité de ses mœurs, y sont desia bastantes, son affection vers moy plus que surabondante: et telle en somme qu'il n'y a rien à souhaiter, sinon que l'apprehension qu'elle a de ma fin, par les cinquante et cinq ans ausquels elle m'a rencontré, la trauaillast moins cruellement.	If youth can give any presage, this soul will one day be capable of the finest things, and among others of the perfection of that most holy friendship to which we do not read that her sex has yet been able to rise. The sincerity and solidity of her character are already sufficient for it; her affection for me more than superabundant—such, in short, that there is nothing left to wish for, except that her fear of my end, given the fifty-five years at which she met me, would torment her less cruelly.
	Le iugement qu'elle fit des premiers Essays, et femme, et en ce siecle, et si ieune, et seule en son quartier, et la vehemence fameuse dont elle m'ayma et me desira long temps sur la seule estime qu'elle en print de moy, auant m'auoir veu, c'est vn accident de tres-digne consideration.	The judgment she formed of the first Essays—she a woman, and in this century, and so young, and alone in her part of the country—and the famous vehemence with which she loved me and long yearned to meet me, solely on the esteem she conceived for me before she had ever seen me, is an occurrence most worthy of consideration.
2.17.49	Les autres vertus ont eu peu, ou point de mise en cet aage: mais la vaillance, elle est deuenue populaire par noz guerres ciuiles: et en cette partie, il se trouue parmy nous, des ames fermes, iusques à la perfection, et en grand nombre, si que le triage en est impossible à faire.	The other virtues have had little or no currency in this age; but valor has become common through our civil wars. In this respect there are among us souls firm to the point of perfection, and in such great numbers that it is impossible to sort out the best.
2.17.50		

49 The Duke of Alba, Spanish general, died in 1582.
50 Anne de Montmorency was mortally wounded in 1567, aged about seventy-four, at the battle of Saint-Denis against the Protestants led by his nephews. François de La Noue was a Protestant commander.
51 Marie de Gournay (1565–1645), Montaigne's devoted admirer, who prepared this 1595 edition of the Essays.

FRENCH	ENGLISH
Voila tout ce que i'ay cognu, iusques à cette heure, d'extraordinaire grandeur et non commune.	That is all I have known, up to this hour, of extraordinary and uncommon greatness.

II.18 Of Giving the Lie

Du desmentir

Montaigne justifies a book about an ordinary man, condemns lying as his age's vice, and asks why "you lie" provokes such outrage.

FRENCH

ENGLISH

2.18.1 VOIRE mais, on me dira, que ce dessein de se seruir de soy, pour subject à escrire, seroit excusable à des hommes rares et fameux, qui par leur reputation auroyent donné quelque desir de leur cognoissance. Il est certain, ie l'adoüe, et sçay bien que pour voir vn homme de la commune façon, à peine qu'vn artisan leue les yeux de sa besongne: là où pour voir vn personnage grand et signalé, arriuer en vne ville, les ouuroirs et les boutiques s'abandonnent. Il messiet à tout autre de se faire cognoistre, qu'à celuy qui a dequoy se faire imiter; et duquel la vie et les opinions peuuent seruir de patron.

Yes, but someone will tell me that this plan of using oneself as a subject to write about would be excusable in rare and famous men, who by their reputation had given people some desire to know them. That is certain, I admit; and I know very well that to see a man of the common sort, an artisan will hardly raise his eyes from his work, whereas to see a great and distinguished personage arrive in a town, workshops and stores are left empty. It ill becomes anyone to make himself known except one who has something worth imitating, and whose life and opinions can serve as a model.

Cæsar et Xenophon ont eu dequoy fonder et fermir leur narration, en la grandeur de leurs faicts, comme en vne baze iuste et solide. Ainsi sont à souhaiter les papiers iournaux du grand Alexandre, les Commentaires qu'Auguste, Caton, Sylla, Brutus, et autres auoyent laissé de leurs gestes. De telles gens, on ayme et estudie les figures, en cuyure mesmes et en pierre.

Caesar and Xenophon had something on which to found and fix their narrative in the greatness of their deeds, as on a just and solid base. So too one could wish for the journals of Alexander the Great, and the Commentaries that Augustus, Cato, Sulla, Brutus and others had left of their exploits. The likenesses of such men we love and study, even in copper and in stone.

2.18.2 Cette remontrance est tres-vraye; mais elle ne me touche que bien peu. *Non recito cuiquam, nisi amicis, idque rogatus.*
Non vbiuis, corámve quibuslibet. In medio qui
Scripta foro recitent sunt multi, quique lauantes. Ie ne dresse pas icy vne statue à planter au carrefour d'vne ville, ou dans vne eglise, ou place publique: *Non equidem hoc studeo bullatis vt mihi nugis*
Pagina turgescat:
Secreti loquimur. C'est pour le coin d'vne librairie, et pour en amuser vn voisin, vn parent, vn amy qui aura plaisir à me racointer et repratiquer en cett' image.

This remonstrance is very true; but it touches me only very little. *I recite to no one but my friends, and then only when asked;*
not everywhere, or before just anyone. There are many who
recite their writings in the middle of the forum, and in the baths. I am not setting up a statue here to be planted at a city crossroads, or in a church or public square. *Indeed, this is not my aim, that my page should swell*
with bubbling trifles:
we are talking in private. It is for a corner of a library, and to amuse a neighbor, a relative, a friend, who will take pleasure in renewing acquaintance and familiarity with me in this image.[1]

1 Horace, Satires; then Persius, Satires.

FRENCH

Les autres ont pris cœur de parler d'eux, pour y auoir trouué le subject digne et riche; moy au rebours, pour l'auoir trouué si sterile et si maigre, qu'il n'y peut eschoir soupçon d'ostentation. Ie iuge volontiers des actions d'autruy: des miennes, ie donne peu à iuger, à cause de leur nihilité. Ie ne trouue pas tant de bien en moy, que ie ne le puisse dire sans rougir. Quel contentement me seroit-ce d'ouyr ainsi quelqu'vn, qui me recitast les mœurs, le visage, la contenance, les plus communes parolles, et les fortunes de mes ancestres, combien i'y serois attentif. Vrayement cela partiroit d'vne mauuaise nature, d'auoir à mespris les portraits mesmes de noz amis et predecesseurs, la forme de leurs vestements, et de leurs armes.

I'en conserue l'escriture, le seing et vne espée peculiere: et n'ay point chassé de mon cabinet, des longues gaules, que mon pere portoit ordinairement en la main. *Paterna vestis et annulus, tanto charior est posteris, quanto ergo parentes maior affectus.* Si toutefois ma posterité est d'autre appetit, i'auray bien dequoy me reuencher: car ils ne sçauroyent faire moins de comte de moy, que i'en feray d'eux en ce temps là. Tout le commerce que i'ay en cecy auec le publicq, c'est que i'emprunte les vtils de son escriture, plus soudaine et plus aisée. En recompense, i'empescheray peut estre, que quelque coin de beurre ne se fonde au marché. *Ne toga cordyllis, ne penula desit oliuis, / Et laxas scombris sæpe dabo tunicas.*

ENGLISH

Others have taken heart to speak of themselves because they found the subject worthy and rich; I, on the contrary, because I found it so barren and so meager that no suspicion of ostentation can fall on it. I readily judge the actions of others; of my own I give little to judge, because of their nothingness. I do not find so much good in myself that I cannot tell it without blushing. What satisfaction it would be to me to hear someone tell me, in this way, of the habits, the face, the bearing, the most commonplace words and the fortunes of my ancestors! How attentive I would be! Truly it would come from a bad nature to despise even the portraits of our friends and forebears, the cut of their clothes and of their armor.

I keep their handwriting, their signature, and a sword that was peculiar to them; and I have not banished from my study the long canes my father usually carried in his hand. *A father's coat and ring are dearer to his descendants the greater their affection for their parent.* If, however, my posterity has other tastes, I shall have the means to get my revenge: for they could not think less of me than I shall think of them at that time. All the dealings I have with the public in this are that I borrow the tools of its writing, which are quicker and easier. In return, I shall perhaps prevent some pat of butter from melting in the market. *So that young tunny may not lack a toga, nor olives a cloak, / and I shall often supply loose tunics for mackerel.*[2]

THE BOOK THAT MADE ME

Even if no one reads it, writing the book has shaped its author and helped him know himself.

FRENCH

2.18.3 Et quand personne ne me lira, ay-ie perdu mon temps, de m'estre entretenu tant d'heures oisiues, à pensements si vtiles et aggreables? Moulant sur moy cette figure, il m'a fallu si souuent me testonner et composer, pour m'extraire, que le patron s'en est fermy, et aucunement formé soy-mesme. Me peignant pour autruy, ie me suis peint en moy, de couleurs plus nettes, que n'estoyent les miennes premieres. Ie n'ay pas plus faict mon liure, que mon liure m'a faict. Liure consubstantiel à son autheur: d'vne occupation propre: membre de ma vie: non d'vne occupation et fin, tierce et estrangere, comme tous autres

ENGLISH

And if no one reads me, have I wasted my time in entertaining myself for so many idle hours with such useful and agreeable thoughts? In molding this figure on myself, I have had to groom and compose myself so often to bring myself out that the model itself has grown firmer and in some sort taken shape. Painting myself for others, I have painted myself within, in clearer colors than my original ones were. I have no more made my book than my book has made me—a book consubstantial with its author, with no business but its own, a

2 Augustine, City of God; then Martial, Epigrams, on unsold books used as wrapping paper in the market. The "tools of its writing" are printing.

FRENCH

liures. Ay-ie perdu mon temps, de m'estre rendu compte de moy, si continuellement, si curieusement?

Car ceux qui se repassent par fantasie seulement, et par langue, quelque heure, ne s'examinent pas si primement, ny ne se penetrent, comme celuy, qui en fait son estude, son ouurage, et son mestier: qui s'engage à vn registre de durée, de toute sa foy, de toute sa force. Les plus delicieux plaisirs, si se digerent ils au dedans: fuyent à laisser trace de soy: et fuyent la veuë, non seulement du peuple, mais d'vn autre. Combien de fois m'a cette besongne diuerty de cogitations ennuieuses? Et doiuent estre comptées pour ennuyeuses toutes les friuoles.

Nature nous a estrenez d'vne large faculté à nous entretenir à part: et nous y appelle souuent, pour nous apprendre, que nous nous deuons en partie à la societé, mais en la meilleure partie, à nous. Aux fins de renger ma fantasie, à resuer mesme, par quelque ordre et proiect, et la garder de se perdre et extrauaguer au vent, il n'est que de donner corps, et mettre en registre, tant de menues pensées, qui se presentent à elle. I'escoutte à mes resueries, par ce que i'ay à les enroller. Quantes-fois, estant marry de quelque action, que la ciuilité et la raison me prohiboient de reprendre à descouuert, m'en suis-ie icy desgorgé, non sans dessein de publique instruction!

Et si ces verges poëtiques: *Zon sus l'œil, zon sur le groin, / Zon sur le dos du Sagoin,* s'impriment encore mieux en papier, qu'en la chair viue. Quoy si ie preste vn peu plus attentiuement l'oreille aux liures, depuis que ie guette, si i'en pourray friponner quelque chose dequoy esmailler ou estayer le mien? Ie n'ay aucunement estudié pour faire vn liure: mais i'ay aucunement estudié, pour ce que ie l'auoy faict: si c'est aucunement estudier, qu'effleurer et pincer, par la teste, ou par les pieds, tantost vn autheur, tantost vn autre: nullement pour former mes opinions: ouï, pour les assister, pieça formées, seconder et seruir.

ENGLISH

member of my life; not with some third-party, alien business and purpose, like all other books. Have I wasted my time in taking stock of myself so continually, so carefully?

For those who go over themselves only in thought and in speech, for an hour or so, do not examine themselves so thoroughly, nor penetrate themselves, as one who makes it his study, his work and his trade, who binds himself to a lasting record with all his faith and all his strength. The most delicious pleasures, even so, are digested inwardly; they avoid leaving any trace of themselves, and avoid the sight not only of the public but of any other person. How many times has this task diverted me from troublesome thoughts! And all frivolous thoughts should be counted as troublesome.

Nature has endowed us with a broad faculty for keeping our own company apart, and often calls us to it, to teach us that we owe ourselves in part to society, but for the better part to ourselves. In order to train my fancy to dream, even, with some order and purpose, and to keep it from losing itself and wandering off in the wind, there is nothing like giving body to and putting on record all the little thoughts that present themselves to it. I listen to my reveries because I have to enroll them. How many times, annoyed by some action that civility and reason forbade me to reprove openly, have I unburdened myself of it here—not without an eye to public instruction!

And indeed these poetic lashes, *Whack on the eye, whack on the snout, / whack on the back of the Monkey,* stamp themselves even better on paper than on living flesh. What if I lend my ear a little more attentively to books, now that I am watching to see whether I can filch something from them to enamel or prop up my own? I have not studied in the least in order to make a book; but I have studied in some measure because I had made it—if it is studying in any measure to skim and pinch, by the head or by the feet, now one author, now another; in no way to form my opinions; yes, to assist them, long since formed, to second and serve them.[3]

3 From Clément Marot's satirical poem against the poet François de Sagon, punning on his name with "Sagoin" (monkey).

LYING AND GIVING THE LIE

Truth is banished from the age; being called a liar is the worst insult because lying is cowardly.

FRENCH

2.18.4 Mais à qui croirons nous parlant de soy, en vne saison si gastée? veu qu'il en est peu, ou point, à qui nous puissions croire parlants d'autruy, où il y a moins d'interest à mentir. Le premier traict de la corruption des mœurs, c'est le bannissement de la verité; car comme disoit Pindare, l'estre veritable, est le commencement d'vne grande vertu, et le premier article que Platon demande au gouuerneur de sa republique. Nostre verité de maintenant, ce n'est pas ce qui est, mais ce qui se persuade à autruy: comme nous appellons monnoye, non celle qui est loyalle seulement, mais la fauce aussi, qui a mise. Nostre nation est de long temps reprochée de ce vice.

Car Saluianus Massiliensis, qui estoit du temps de l'Empereur Valentinian, dit qu'aux François le mentir et se pariurer n'est pas vice, mais vne façon de parler. Qui voudroit encherir sur ce tesmoignage, il pourroit dire que ce leur est à present vertu. On s'y forme, on s'y façonne, comme à vn exercice d'honneur: car la dissimulation est des plus notables qualitez de ce siecle.

2.18.5 Ainsi i'ay souuent consideré d'où pouuoit naistre cette coustume, que nous obseruons si religieusement, de nous sentir plus aigrement offencez du reproche de ce vice, qui nous est si ordinaire, que de nul autre: et que ce soit l'extreme iniure qu'on nous puisse faire de parolle, que de nous reprocher la mensonge. Sur cela, ie treuue qu'il est naturel, de se deffendre le plus, des deffaux, dequoy nous sommes le plus entachez. Il semble qu'en nous ressentans de l'accusation, et nous en esmouuans, nous nous deschargeons aucunement de la coulpe: si nous l'auons par effect, aumoins nous la condamnons par apparence. Seroit-ce pas aussi, que ce reproche semble enuelopper la couardise et lascheté de cœur?

En est-il de plus expresse, que se desdire de sa parolle? quoy se desdire de sa propre science? C'est vn vilain vice, que le mentir; et qu'vn ancien peint bien honteusement, quand il dit, que c'est donner tesmoignage de mespriser Dieu, et quand et quand de craindre les hommes. Il n'est pas possible d'en representer plus richement l'horreur, la

ENGLISH

But whom shall we believe when he speaks of himself, in so corrupt an age, seeing that there are few or none whom we can believe when they speak of others, where there is less to gain by lying? The first sign of the corruption of morals is the banishment of truth; for, as Pindar said, being truthful is the beginning of a great virtue, and it is the first article that Plato requires of the governor of his republic. Our truth nowadays is not what is, but what others can be persuaded of—just as we call money not only the genuine coin but also the counterfeit that passes current. Our nation has long been reproached with this vice.

For Salvian of Marseille, who lived in the time of the Emperor Valentinian, says that for the French, lying and perjuring themselves is not a vice but a manner of speaking. Anyone who wanted to go one better than this testimony could say that for them it is now a virtue. People train themselves in it, shape themselves to it, as to an honorable exercise; for dissimulation is among the most notable qualities of this age.[4]

So I have often wondered where this custom could spring from, which we observe so religiously, of feeling more bitterly offended at being reproached with this vice, so ordinary among us, than with any other; so that to reproach us with lying is the worst insult that can be done to us in words. On this I find that it is natural to defend ourselves most against the faults with which we are most tainted. It seems that by resenting the accusation and getting worked up about it, we unburden ourselves somewhat of the guilt: if we have it in fact, at least we condemn it in appearance. Might it not also be that this reproach seems to imply cowardice and faintness of heart?

Is there any more express cowardice than to go back on one's word? What, go back on what one knows? Lying is an ugly vice, and one that an ancient paints in most shameful colors when he says that it is giving proof of despising God and at the same time fearing men. It is not possible to repres-

4 Salvian, a 5th-century priest of Marseilles, said this of the Franks in his On the Government of God.

FRENCH

vilité, et le desreglement. Car que peut on imaginer plus vilain, que d'estre couart à l'endroit des hommes, et braue à l'endroit de Dieu? Nostre intelligence se conduisant par la seule voye de la parolle, celuy qui la fauce, trahit la societé publique.

C'est le seul vtil, par le moyen duquel se communiquent noz volontez et noz pensées: c'est le truchement de nostre ame: s'il nous faut, nous ne nous tenons plus, nous ne nous entrecognoissons plus. S'il nous trompe, il rompt tout nostre commerce, et dissoult toutes les liaisons de nostre police. Certaines nations des nouuelles Indes (on n'a que faire d'en remerquer les noms, ils ne sont plus; car iusques à l'entier abolissement des noms, et ancienne cognoissance des lieux, s'est estendue la desolation de cette conqueste, d'vn merueilleux exemple, et inouy) offroyent à leurs Dieux, du sang humain, mais non autre, que tiré de leur langue, et oreilles, pour expiation du peché de la mensonge, tant ouye que prononcée.

Ce bon compagnon de Grece disoit, que les enfans s'amusent par les osselets, les hommes par les parolles.

2.18.6 Quant aux diuers vsages de noz desmentirs, et les loix de nostre honneur en cela, et les changemens qu'elles ont reçeu, ie remets à vne autre-fois d'en dire ce que i'en sçay; et apprendray cependant, si ie puis, en quel temps print commencement cette coustume, de si exactement poiser et mesurer les parolles, et d'y attacher nostre honneur: car il est aisé à iuger qu'elle n'estoit pas anciennement entre les Romains et les Grecs. Et m'a semblé souuent nouueau et estrange, de les voir se dementir et s'iniurier, sans entrer pourtant en querelle. Les loix de leur deuoir, prenoient quelque autre voye que les nostres. On appelle Cæsar, tantost voleur, tantost yurongne à sa barbe.

Nous voyons la liberté des inuectiues, qu'ils font les vns contre les autres; ie dy les plus grands chefs de guerre, de l'vne et l'autre nation, où les parolles se reuenchent seulement par les parolles, et ne se tirent à autre consequence.

ENGLISH

ent more fully its horror, its baseness and its disorder. For what can one imagine more vile than to be a coward toward men and bold toward God? Since our mutual understanding is conducted solely by way of speech, he who falsifies it betrays public society.[5]

It is the only tool by which our wills and thoughts are communicated; it is the interpreter of our soul. If it fails us, we no longer hold together, we no longer know one another. If it deceives us, it breaks off all our dealings and dissolves all the bonds of our public order. Certain nations of the new Indies—there is no point in recording their names, they no longer exist; for the desolation of that conquest, a marvelous and unheard-of example, has gone as far as the complete abolition of names and of the former knowledge of places—offered their gods human blood, but only such as was drawn from their tongues and ears, in expiation of the sin of lying, whether heard or uttered.

That good fellow from Greece used to say that children are beguiled with knucklebones, men with words.[6]

As for the various uses of our giving the lie, the laws of our honor in that matter, and the changes they have undergone, I put off to another time saying what I know of them. Meanwhile I will find out, if I can, at what time this custom began of weighing and measuring words so exactly and attaching our honor to them; for it is easy to judge that it did not exist in ancient times among the Romans and the Greeks. And it has often seemed to me new and strange to see them give each other the lie and insult each other without, for all that, coming to a quarrel. The laws of their duty took some other path than ours. Caesar is called now a thief, now a drunkard, to his face.[7]

We see the freedom of the invectives they hurl at one another—I mean the greatest war leaders of both nations—where words are answered only by words and lead to no further consequence.

5 Plutarch, in his Life of Lysander.
6 The Spartan commander Lysander, as reported by Plutarch.
7 To "give the lie" was to accuse someone of lying, an insult that in Montaigne's day called for a duel.

II.19 Of Freedom of Conscience

De la liberté de conscience
Julian the Apostate shows how zeal drives good men to injustice, and why religious liberty may weaken faction.

FRENCH

2.19.1 IL est ordinaire, de voir les bonnes intentions, si elles sont conduites sans moderation, pousser les hommes à des effects tres-vitieux. En ce desbat, par lequel la France est à present agitée de guerres ciuiles, le meilleur et le plus sain party, est sans doubte celuy, qui maintient et la religion et la police ancienne du pays.

Entre les gens de bien toutesfois, qui le suyuent (car ie ne parle point de ceux, qui s'en seruent de pretexte, pour, ou exercer leurs vengeances particulieres, ou fournir à leur auarice, ou suiure la faueur des Princes: mais de ceux qui le font par vray zele enuers leur religion, et saincte affection, à maintenir la paix et l'estat de leur patrie) de ceux-cy, dis-ie, il s'en voit plusieurs, que la passion pousse hors les bornes de la raison, et leur faict par fois prendre des conseils iniustes, violents, et encore temeraires.

2.19.2 Il est certain, qu'en ces premiers temps, que nostre religion commença de gaigner authorité auec les loix, le zele en arma plusieurs contre toute sorte de liures payens; dequoy les gens de lettre souffrent vne merueilleuse perte. I'estime que ce desordre ait plus porté de nuysance aux lettres, que tous les feux des barbares. Cornelius Tacitus en est vn bon tesmoing: car quoy que l'Empereur Tacitus son parent, en eust peuplé par ordonnances expresses toutes les librairies du monde: toutes-fois vn seul exemplaire entier n'a peu eschapper la curieuse recherche de ceux qui desiroyent l'abolir, pour cinq ou six vaines clauses, contraires à nostre creance.

ENGLISH

It is common to see good intentions, if they are pursued without moderation, drive men to very vicious acts. In this dispute by which France is now torn with civil wars, the best and soundest party is no doubt the one that upholds both the religion and the ancient government of the country.

Among the good men who follow it, however—for I am not speaking of those who use it as a pretext either to carry out their private vengeances, or to feed their avarice, or to court the favor of princes, but of those who do so out of true zeal for their religion and a holy desire to maintain the peace and the state of their country—among these, I say, we see many whom passion drives beyond the bounds of reason, and sometimes leads to adopt unjust, violent and even rash counsels.

It is certain that in those early times when our religion began to gain authority with the laws, zeal armed many against every sort of pagan book, by which men of letters suffer an extraordinary loss. I reckon this disorder did more harm to letters than all the fires of the barbarians. Cornelius Tacitus is a good witness of this: for although the Emperor Tacitus, his kinsman, had by express ordinances stocked all the libraries in the world with him, nevertheless not a single complete copy could escape the diligent search of those who wanted to abolish him for five or six idle clauses contrary to our belief.[1]

THE EMPEROR JULIAN

Montaigne defends Julian the Apostate's chastity, justice and courage against the slanders of Christian writers.

FRENCH

2.19.3 Ils ont aussi eu cecy, de prester aisément des louanges fauces, à tous les Empereurs, qui faisoyent pour nous, et

ENGLISH

They also had this habit: readily lending false praise to all the emperors who favored us, and

1 The Emperor Marcus Claudius Tacitus (reigned AD 275–276) claimed descent from the historian.

FRENCH

condamner vniuersellement toutes les actions de ceux, qui nous estoyent aduersaires, comme il est aisé à voir en l'Empereur Iulian, surnommé l'Apostat. C'estoit à la verité vn tres-grand homme et rare; comme celuy, qui auoit son ame viuement tainte des discours de la philosophie, ausquels il faisoit profession de regler toutes ses actions: et de vray il n'est aucune sorte de vertu, dequoy il n'ait laissé de tres-notables exemples.

En chasteté, de laquelle le cours de sa vie donne bien clair tesmoignage, on lit de luy vn pareil traict, à celuy d'Alexandre et de Scipion, que de plusieurs tresbelles captiues, il n'en voulut pas seulement voir vne, estant en la fleur de son aage: car il fut tué par les Parthes aagé de trente vn an seulement. Quant à la iustice, il prenoit luy-mesme la peine d'ouyr les parties: et encore que par curiosité il s'informast à ceux qui se presentoient à luy, de quelle religion ils estoient: toutes-fois l'inimitié qu'il portoit à la nostre, ne donnoit aucun contrepoix à la balance. Il fit luy mesme plusieurs bonnes loix, et retrancha vne grande partie des subsides et impositions, que leuoyent ses predecesseurs.

2.19.4 Nous auons deux bons historiens tesmoings oculaires de ses actions: l'vn desquels, Marcellinus, reprend aigrement en diuers lieux de son histoire, cette sienne ordonnance, par laquelle il deffendit l'escole, et interdit l'enseigner à tous les rhetoriciens et grammairiens Chrestiens, et dit, qu'il souhaiteroit cette sienne action estre enseuelie soubs le silence. Il est vray-semblable, s'il eust faict quelque chose de plus aigre contre nous, qu'il ne l'eust pas oublié, estant bien affectionné à nostre party. Il nous estoit aspre à la verité, mais non pourtant cruel ennemy.

Car noz gens mesmes recitent de luy cette histoire, que se promenant vn iour autour de la ville de Chalcedoine, Maris Euesque du lieu, osa bien l'appeller meschant, traistre à Christ, et qu'il n'en fit autre chose, sauf luy respondre: Va miserable, pleure la perte de tes yeux: à quoy l'Euesque encore repliqua: Ie rends graces à Iesus Christ, de m'auoir osté la veuë, pour ne voir ton visage impudent: affectant en cela, disent-ils, vne patience philosophique. Tant y a que ce faict là, ne se peut pas bien rapporter aux cruautez qu'on le dit auoir exercées contre nous. Il estoit, dit Eutropius mon autre tesmoing, ennemy de la Chrestienté, mais sans toucher au sang.

ENGLISH

condemning wholesale all the actions of those who were our adversaries, as is easy to see in the case of the Emperor Julian, surnamed the Apostate. He was in truth a very great and rare man, as one whose soul was deeply dyed with the reasonings of philosophy, by which he professed to rule all his actions; and indeed there is no kind of virtue of which he has not left very notable examples.

In chastity, of which the course of his life gives very clear testimony, we read of him a trait like that of Alexander and Scipio: that of many very beautiful captives he would not so much as look at one, though he was in the flower of his age—for he was killed by the Parthians at only thirty-one. As for justice, he took the trouble of hearing the parties himself; and although out of curiosity he asked those who came before him what religion they were, nonetheless the hostility he bore ours put no weight in the scales. He himself made several good laws, and cut a great part of the subsidies and taxes his predecessors had levied.

We have two good historians who were eyewitnesses of his actions. One of them, Marcellinus, sharply censures in several places of his history that edict of his by which he closed the schools and forbade all Christian rhetoricians and grammarians to teach, and says he wishes this action of Julian's could be buried in silence. It is likely that if Julian had done anything harsher against us, Marcellinus would not have forgotten it, being well disposed to our side. He was harsh toward us, in truth, but not a cruel enemy.[2]

For our own people tell this story of him: that as he was walking one day around the city of Chalcedon, Maris, the bishop of the place, dared to call him wicked, a traitor to Christ, and that he did nothing about it except answer: "Go, wretch, weep for the loss of your eyes." To which the bishop replied in turn: "I give thanks to Jesus Christ for having taken away my sight, so that I need not see your impudent face." In this, they say, Julian was affecting a philosophical patience. At any rate, this act cannot well be squared with the cruelties he is said to have practiced against us. He was, says Eu-

2 Ammianus Marcellinus, 4th-century historian who served in Julian's army.

FRENCH

ENGLISH

tropius, my other witness, an enemy of Christianity, but without shedding blood.[3]

2.19.5 Et pour reuenir à sa iustice, il n'est rien qu'on y puisse accuser, que les rigueurs, dequoy il vsa au commencement de son empire, contre ceux qui auoyent suiuy le party de Constantius son predecesseur. Quant à sa sobrieté, il viuoit tousiours vn viure soldatesque: et se nourrissoit en pleine paix, comme celuy qui se preparoit et accoustumoit à l'austerité de la guerre. La vigilance estoit telle en luy, qu'il departoit la nuict à trois ou à quatre parties, dont la moindre estoit celle qu'il donnoit au sommeil: le reste, il l'employoit à visiter luy mesme en personne, l'estat de son armée et ses gardes, ou à estudier: car entre autres siennes rares qualitez, il estoit tres-excellent en toute sorte de literature.

And to return to his justice, there is nothing in it to find fault with except the severity he showed at the beginning of his reign toward those who had followed the party of Constantius, his predecessor. As for his sobriety, he always lived a soldier's life, and in full peacetime fed himself like one who was preparing and accustoming himself to the austerity of war. His vigilance was such that he divided the night into three or four parts, the smallest of which was the one he gave to sleep. The rest he spent either inspecting in person the state of his army and his guards, or studying; for among his other rare qualities, he was most excellent in every kind of literature.

On dit d'Alexandre le grand, qu'estant couché, de peur que le sommeil ne le desbauchast de ses pensemens, et de ses estudes, il faisoit mettre vn bassin ioignant son lict, et tenoit l'vne de ses mains au dehors, auec vne boulette de cuiure: affin que le dormir le surprenant, et relaschant les prises de ses doigts, cette boullette par le bruit de sa cheutte dans le bassin, le reueillast. Cettuy-cy auoit l'ame si tendue à ce qu'il vouloit, et si peu empeschée de fumées, par sa singuliere abstinence, qu'il se passoit bien de cet artifice.

It is said of Alexander the Great that when he lay down, for fear that sleep might lure him away from his thoughts and studies, he had a basin placed beside his bed and held one hand out over it with a little copper ball, so that if sleep overtook him and loosened the grip of his fingers, the noise of the ball falling into the basin would wake him. Julian had his soul so intent on what he wanted, and so little clouded with fumes, thanks to his singular abstinence, that he could easily do without this device.

Quant à la suffisance militaire, il fut admirable en toutes les parties d'vn grand Capitaine: aussi fut-il quasi toute sa vie en continuel exercice de guerre: et la pluspart, auec nous, en France contre les Allemans et Francons. Nous n'auons guere memoire d'homme, qui ait veu plus de hazards, ny qui ait plus souuent faict preuue de sa personne.

As for military ability, he was admirable in every part of a great captain. Indeed he spent almost his whole life in continual warfare, and most of it with us, in France, against the Alemanni and the Franks. We hardly remember any man who faced more dangers or more often put his own person to the test.

2.19.6 Sa mort a quelque chose de pareil à celle d'Epaminondas: car il fut frappé d'vn traict, et essaya de l'arracher, et l'eust fait, sans ce que le traict estant tranchant, il se couppa et affoiblit la main. Il demandoit incessamment qu'on le repportast en ce mesme estat, en la meslée, pour y encourager ses soldats; lesquels contesterent cette battaille sans luy, trescourageusement, iusques à ce que la nuict separa les armées. Il deuoit à la philosophie, vn singulier mespris, en quoy il auoit sa vie, et les choses humaines. Il auoit ferme creance de l'eternité des ames.

His death has something in common with that of Epaminondas. For he was struck by a dart and tried to pull it out, and would have done so had not the dart, being sharp-edged, cut and weakened his hand. He kept asking to be carried back, just as he was, into the fray, to encourage his soldiers there; and they contested that battle very bravely without him until night separated the armies. He owed to philosophy a singular contempt in which he held his life and human things. He firmly believed in the eternity of souls.[4]

3 Eutropius, Roman historian who took part in Julian's Persian campaign.
4 Epaminondas was killed at the battle of Mantinea in 362 BC.

FRENCH

ENGLISH

2.19.7 En matiere de religion, il estoit vicieux par tout; on l'a surnommé l'Apostat, pour auoir abandonné la nostre: toutesfois cette opinion me semble plus vray-semblable, qu'il ne l'auoit iamais euë à cœur, mais que pour l'obeïssance des loix il s'estoit feint iusques à ce qu'il tinst l'empire en sa main. Il fut si superstitieux en la sienne, que ceux mesmes qui en estoyent de son temps, s'en mocquoient: et disoit-on, s'il eust gaigné la victoire contre les Parthes, qu'il eust fait tarir la race des bœufs au monde, pour satisfaire à ses sacrifices. Il estoit aussi embabouyné de la science diuinatrice, et donnoit authorité à toute façon de prognostics.

In matters of religion he was wrong all round. He was surnamed the Apostate for having abandoned ours; yet the more likely opinion, to my mind, is that he had never held it at heart, but had feigned it in obedience to the laws until he held the empire in his hand. He was so superstitious in his own that even those who shared it in his time mocked him; and it was said that if he had won the victory against the Parthians he would have made the race of oxen die out in the world to supply his sacrifices. He was also besotted with the art of divination and lent authority to every kind of prognostication.

Il dit entre autres choses, en mourant, qu'il sçauoit bon gré aux Dieux et les remercioit, dequoy ils ne l'auoyent pas voulu tuer par surprise, l'ayant de long temps aduerty du lieu et heure de sa fin, ny d'vne mort molle ou lasche, mieux conuenable aux personnes oysiues et delicates, ny languissante, longue et douloureuse: et qu'ils l'auoyent trouué digne de mourir de cette noble façon, sur le cours de ses victoires, et en la fleur de sa gloire. Il auoit eu vne pareille vision à celle de Marcus Brutus, qui premierement le menassa en Gaule, et depuis se representa à luy en Perse, sur le point de sa mort.

Among other things, he said as he was dying that he was grateful to the gods and thanked them for not having chosen to kill him by surprise, since they had long warned him of the place and hour of his end; nor by a soft or cowardly death, better suited to idle and delicate people; nor by a lingering, long and painful one; and that they had found him worthy of dying in this noble way, in the course of his victories and in the flower of his glory. He had had a vision like that of Marcus Brutus, which first threatened him in Gaul and later appeared to him again in Persia, on the point of his death.

Ce langage qu'on luy fait tenir, quand il se sentit frappé: Tu as veincu, Nazareen: ou, comme d'autres, Contente toy, Nazareen; à peine eust il esté oublié, s'il eust esté creu par mes tesmoings: qui estants presens en l'armée ont remarqué iusques aux moindres mouuements et parolles de sa fin: non plus que certains autres miracles, qu'on y attache.

The words they put in his mouth when he felt himself struck—"You have conquered, Nazarene," or, as others have it, "Be content, Nazarene"—would hardly have been forgotten if my witnesses had believed them, for they were present in the army and noted even the slightest movements and words of his end; nor would certain other miracles that are attached to it.

FREEDOM OF CONSCIENCE

Julian granted religious freedom to divide the Christians; French kings now grant it to bring peace.

FRENCH

ENGLISH

2.19.8 Et pour venir au propos de mon theme: il couuoit, dit Marcellinus, de long temps en son cœur, le paganisme; mais par ce que toute son armée estoit de Chrestiens, il ne l'osoit descouurir. En fin, quand il se vit assez fort pour oser publier sa volonté, il fit ouurir les temples des Dieux, et s'essaya par tous moyens de mettre sus l'idolatrie. Pour paruenir à son effect, ayant rencontré en Constantinople, le peuple descousu, auec les prelats de l'Eglise Chrestienne diuisez, les ayant faict venir à luy au

And to come to the point of my subject: he had long nursed paganism in his heart, says Marcellinus, but because his whole army was made up of Christians, he did not dare reveal it. At last, when he saw himself strong enough to make his will public, he had the temples of the gods opened and tried by every means to set up idolatry. To achieve his aim, he found the people of Constantinople at odds and the prelates of the Christian Church di-

FRENCH

palais, les admonesta instamment d'assoupir ces dissentions ciuiles, et que chacun sans empeschement et sans crainte seruist à la religion.

Ce qu'il sollicitoit auec grand soing, pour l'esperance que cette licence augmenteroit les parts et les brigues de la diuision, et empescheroit le peuple de se reünir, et de se fortifier par consequent, contre luy, par leur concorde, et vnanime intelligence: ayant essayé par la cruauté d'aucuns Chrestiens, qu'il n'y a point de beste au monde tant à craindre à l'homme, que l'homme.

2.19.9 Voyla ses mots à peu pres: en quoy cela est digne de consideration, que l'Empereur Iulian se sert pour attiser le trouble de la dissention ciuile, de cette mesme recepte de liberté de conscience, que noz Roys viennent d'employer pour l'estaindre. On peut dire d'vn costé, que de lascher la bride aux pars d'entretenir leur opinion, c'est espandre et semer la diuision, c'est prester quasi la main à l'augmenter, n'y ayant aucune barriere ny coërction des loix, qui bride et empesche sa course. Mais d'autre costé, on diroit aussi, que de lascher la bride aux pars d'entretenir leur opinion, c'est les amollir et relascher par la facilité, et par l'aisance, et que c'est esmousser l'eguillon qui s'affine par la rareté, la nouuelleté, et la difficulté.

Et si croy mieux, pour l'honneur de la deuotion de noz Roys; c'est, que n'ayans peu ce qu'ils vouloient, ils ont fait semblant de vouloir ce qu'ils pouuoient.

ENGLISH

vided. So he summoned them to the palace and earnestly urged them to calm these civil dissensions, and to let each man follow his religion without hindrance and without fear.

He pressed this with great care, hoping that such license would increase the factions and intrigues of the division. It would keep the people from uniting, and so from strengthening themselves against him through their concord and unanimous understanding. For he had learned by experience, from the cruelty of some Christians, that there is no beast in the world so much to be feared by man as man.

Those are roughly his words. What deserves consideration here is that the Emperor Julian uses, to stir up the trouble of civil dissension, the very same remedy of freedom of conscience that our kings have just employed to extinguish it. One can say, on the one hand, that to give the factions free rein to hold their opinions is to spread and sow division; it is almost to lend a hand in increasing it, since there is no barrier or constraint of the laws to curb and check its course. But on the other hand one could also say that to give the factions free rein to hold their opinions is to soften and slacken them through ease and facility. It is to blunt the spur that is sharpened by rarity, novelty and difficulty.[5]

And yet, for the honor of our kings' piety, I prefer to believe this: that being unable to do what they wanted, they pretended to want what they could do.

5 The French kings' edicts of pacification during the Wars of Religion granted the Protestants limited freedom of worship.

II.20 We Taste Nothing Pure

Nous ne goustons rien de pur
No pleasure or virtue reaches us unmixed, Montaigne argues; even our best goodness and sharpest wisdom carry some taint.

FRENCH

2.20.1 LA foiblesse de nostre condition, fait que les choses en leur simplicité et pureté naturelle ne puissent pas tomber en nostre vsage. Les elemens que nous iouyssons, sont alterez: et les metaux de mesme, et l'or, il le faut empirer par quelque autre matiere, pour l'accommoder à nostre seruice. Ny la vertu ainsi simple, qu'Ariston et Pyrrho, et encore les Stoiciens faisoient fin de la vie, ny a peu seruir sans composition: ny la volupté Cyrenaique et Aristippique. Des plaisirs, et biens que nous auons, il n'en est aucun exempt de quelque meslange de mal et d'incommodité: *Medio de fonte leporum / Surgit amari aliquid, quod in ipsis floribus angat.* Nostre extreme volupté a quelque air de gemissement, et de plainte.

Diriez vous pas qu'elle se meurt d'angoisse? Voire quand nous en forgeons l'image en son excellence, nous la fardons d'epithetes et qualitez maladifues, et douloureuses: langueur, mollesse, foiblesse, deffaillance, *morbidezza*, grand tesmoignage de leur consanguinité, et consubstantialité. La profonde ioye a plus de seuerité, que de gayeté. L'extreme et plein contentement, plus de rassis que d'enioué. *Ipsa felicitas, se nisi temperat, premit.* L'aise nous masche. C'est ce que dit vn verset Grec ancien, de tel sens: Les Dieux nous vendent tous les biens qu'ils nous donnent: c'est à dire, ils ne nous en donnent aucun pur et parfaict, et que nous n'achetions au prix de quelque mal.

2.20.2 Le trauail et le plaisir, tres-dissemblables de nature, s'associent pourtant de ie ne sçay quelle ioincture naturelle. Socrates dit, que quelque Dieu essaya de mettre en masse, et confondre la douleur et la volupté: mais, que n'en pouuant sortir, il s'aduisa de les accouppler au moins par la queuë. Metrodorus disoit qu'en la tristesse,

ENGLISH

The weakness of our condition means that things in their natural simplicity and purity cannot come into our use. The elements we enjoy are altered; so are the metals; and gold itself must be debased with some other substance to fit it for our service. Neither virtue in the simple form that Ariston and Pyrrho, and the Stoics too, made the end of life has been able to serve us without admixture, nor the pleasure of the Cyrenaics and Aristippus. Of all the pleasures and goods we have, there is none free from some mixture of evil and discomfort: *From the very fountain of delights / Something bitter rises, to torment us among the flowers themselves.* Our extreme pleasure has something of the air of groaning and lament.[1]

Wouldn't you say it is dying of anguish? Indeed, when we forge its image at its finest, we paint it with sickly and painful epithets and qualities: languor, softness, weakness, faintness, *morbidezza*—strong evidence of their kinship and common substance. Deep joy has more seriousness than gaiety. Extreme and complete contentment has more calm than playfulness. *Happiness itself, unless it tempers itself, crushes us.* Ease chews us up. That is what an ancient Greek verse says, in this sense: The gods sell us all the goods they give us. That is to say, they give us none pure and perfect, none that we do not buy at the price of some evil.[2]

Toil and pleasure, very unlike in nature, are nonetheless joined by some natural link I cannot explain. Socrates says that some god tried to knead pain and pleasure into one mass and fuse them, but, unable to manage it, decided at least to couple them by the tail. Metrodorus said that in sadness

1 Lucretius, On the Nature of Things. Ariston of Chios was a Stoic; the Cyrenaic school of Aristippus made pleasure the highest good.
2 Morbidezza is Italian for delicacy or softness, literally "sickliness." The Latin is Seneca, Letters; the Greek verse is attributed to the comic poet Epicharmus.

FRENCH

il y a quelque alliage de plaisir. Ie ne sçay s'il vouloit dire autre chose; mais moy, i'imagine bien, qu'il y a du dessein, du consentement, et de la complaisance, à se nourrir en la melancholie. Ie dis outre l'ambition, qui s'y peut encore mesler: il y a quelque ombre de friandise et delicatesse, qui nous rit et qui nous flatte, au giron mesme de la melancholie.

Y a-il pas des complexions qui en font leur aliment? *Est quædam flere voluptas.* Et dit vn Attalus en Seneque, que la memoire de noz amis perdus nous aggrée comme l'amer au vin trop vieil: *Minister veteris, puer, falerni / Ingere mi calices amariores:* et comme des pommes doucement aigres. Nature nous descouure cette confusion. Les peintres tiennent, que les mouuemens et plis du visage, qui seruent au pleurer, seruent aussi au rire. De vray, auant que l'vn ou l'autre soyent acheuez d'exprimer, regardez à la conduitte de la peinture, vous estes en doubte, vers lequel c'est qu'on va. Et l'extremité du rire se mesle aux larmes. *Nullum sine auctoramento malum est.*

2.20.3 Quand i'imagine l'homme assiegé de commoditez desirables: mettons le cas, que touts ses membres fussent saisis pour tousiours, d'vn plaisir pareil à celuy de la generation en son poinct plus excessif: ie le sens fondre soubs la charge de son aise: et le voy du tout incapable de porter vne si pure, si constante volupté, et si vniuerselle. De vray il fuit, quand il y est, et se haste naturellement d'en eschapper, comme d'vn pas, où il ne se peut fermir, où il craind d'enfondrer.

2.20.4 Quand ie me confesse à moy religieusement, ie trouue que la meilleure bonté que i'aye, a quelque teinture vicieuse. Et crains que Platon en sa plus nette vertu (moy qui en suis autant sincere et loyal estimateur, et des vertus de semblable marque, qu'autre puisse estre) s'il y eust escouté de pres (et il y escoutoit de pres) il y eust senty quelque ton gauche, de mixtion humaine: mais ton obscur, et sensible seulement à soy. L'homme en tout et par tout, n'est que rappiessement et bigarrure. Les loix mesmes de la iustice, ne peuuent subsister sans quelque meslange d'iniustice. Et dit Platon, que ceux-là entreprennent de couper la teste de Hydra, qui pretendent oster des loix toutes incommoditez et inconueniens.

ENGLISH

there is some alloy of pleasure. I do not know whether he meant something else; but for my part I can well imagine that there is intent, consent and self-indulgence in feeding on melancholy. I mean that, besides ambition, which may also mingle in it, there is some shadow of daintiness and delicacy that smiles on us and flatters us in the very lap of melancholy.[3]

Are there not temperaments that make it their food? *There is a certain pleasure in weeping.* And a certain Attalus in Seneca says that the memory of our lost friends pleases us as bitterness does in wine that is too old: *Boy, you who pour the old Falernian, / Fill my cups with the more bitter wine*—and like sweetly sour apples. Nature reveals this mixture to us. Painters hold that the movements and folds of the face that serve for weeping serve also for laughing. Indeed, before either one is fully expressed, look at how the painting proceeds: you are in doubt which way it is heading. And the extreme of laughter mingles with tears. *No evil is without its compensation.*[4]

When I imagine a man besieged by desirable comforts—let us suppose that all his limbs were seized forever by a pleasure like that of generation at its most extreme point—I feel him melting under the burden of his ease, and I see him wholly incapable of bearing so pure, so constant and so universal a pleasure. Indeed, he flees it when he is in it, and naturally hastens to escape from it, as from ground where he cannot stand firm, where he fears he will sink.

When I confess myself to myself scrupulously, I find that the best goodness I have has some tinge of vice. And I fear that Plato, in his purest virtue (I who am as sincere and loyal an admirer of it, and of virtues of that stamp, as anyone can be), if he had listened closely (and he did listen closely), would have heard in it some false note of human admixture—but an obscure note, perceptible only to himself. Man, in everything and everywhere, is nothing but patchwork and motley. The very laws of justice cannot subsist without some mixture of injustice. And Plato says that those who claim to

3 Socrates speaks thus in Plato's Phaedo.
4 The quotations are from Ovid, Tristia; Catullus; and Seneca, Letters.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
		remove all drawbacks and disadvantages from the laws are trying to cut off the Hydra's head.[5]
	Omne magnum exemplum habet aliquid ex iniquo, quod contra singulos vtilitate publica rependitur, dit Tacitus.	*Every great example has in it something unjust, which is compensated, at the expense of individuals, by the public good,* says Tacitus.[6]

MINDS TOO SHARP FOR AFFAIRS

Overly subtle minds manage business badly; ordinary, blunter minds succeed better at practical life.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
2.20.5	Il est pareillement vray, que pour l'vsage de la vie, et seruice du commerce public, il y peut auoir de l'excez en la pureté et perspicacité de noz esprits. Cette clarté penetrante, a trop de subtilité et de curiosité. Il les faut appesantir et esmousser, pour les rendre plus obeissans à l'exemple et à la pratique; et les espessir et obscurcir, pour les proportionner à cette vie tenebreuse et terrestre. Pourtant se trouuent les esprits communs et moins tendus, plus propres et plus heureux à conduire affaires. Et les opinions de la philosophie esleuées et exquises, se trouuent ineptes à l'exercice. Cette pointue viuacité d'ame, et cette volubilité soupple et inquiete, trouble nos negotiations.	It is likewise true that, for the practice of life and the service of public dealings, there can be excess in the purity and sharpness of our minds. That penetrating clarity has too much subtlety and curiosity. Our minds must be weighed down and blunted to make them more obedient to example and practice, and thickened and darkened to fit them to this murky, earthly life. That is why common, less strained minds turn out to be more fit and more successful at conducting affairs, and the lofty, exquisite opinions of philosophy turn out to be unsuited to practice. This sharp liveliness of soul, this supple, restless volubility, disturbs our negotiations.
	Il faut manier les entreprises humaines, plus grossierement et superficiellement; et en laisser bonne et grande part, pour les droits de la Fortune. Il n'est pas besoin d'esclairer les affaires si profondement et si subtilement. On s'y perd à la consideration de tant de lustres contraires et formes diuerses, *volutantibus res inter se pugnantes, obtorpuerant animi*.	Human undertakings must be handled more roughly and superficially, and a good large share of them left to the rights of Fortune. There is no need to shine a light into affairs so deeply and so subtly. One gets lost considering so many contrary lights and different forms: *as they turned over these conflicting matters, their minds were numbed.*[7]
2.20.6	C'est ce que les anciens disent de Simonides: par ce que son imagination luy presentoit sur la demande que luy auoit faict le Roy Hieron, pour à laquelle satisfaire il auoit eu plusieurs iours de pensement, diuerses considerations, aiguës et subtiles: doubtant laquelle estoit la plus vray-semblable, il desespera du tout de la verité.	That is what the ancients say of Simonides. On the question King Hiero had put to him—to answer which he had taken several days of thought—his imagination presented him with various sharp and subtle considerations; and doubting which was the most probable, he despaired of the truth altogether.[8]
2.20.7	Qui en recherche et embrasse toutes les circonstances, et consequences, il empesche son eslection. Vn engin moyen, conduit esgallement, et suffit aux executions, de grand, et de petit poix. Regardez que les meilleurs	Whoever seeks out and embraces all the circumstances and consequences of a matter hampers his choice. A middling mind proceeds evenly and is adequate to carrying out affairs of great and small

5 Plato, Republic IV. Each head of the mythical Hydra grew back double when cut off.
6 Tacitus, Annals XIV, on the execution of all the slaves of a household after one of them murdered their master.
7 Livy, History of Rome.
8 The Greek poet Simonides of Ceos, asked by Hiero, tyrant of Syracuse, what God is, kept asking for more time (Cicero, On the Nature of the Gods).

FRENCH

mesnagers, sont ceux qui nous sçauent moins dire comme ils le sont; et que ces suffisans conteurs, n'y font le plus souuent rien qui vaille. Ie sçay vn grand diseur, et tres excellent peintre de toute sorte de mesnage, qui a laissé bien piteusement, couler par ses mains, cent mille liures de rente.

I'en sçay vn autre, qui dit, qu'il consulte mieux qu'homme de son conseil, et n'est point au monde vne plus belle montre d'ame, et de suffisance, toutesfois aux effects, ses seruiteurs trouuent, qu'il est tout autre; ie dy sans mettre le malheur en conte.

ENGLISH

weight. Notice that the best managers are those who can least tell us how they do it, and that those able talkers most often achieve nothing worthwhile. I know a great talker, a most excellent describer of every kind of household management, who has very pitifully let a hundred thousand livres of income slip through his hands.

I know another who says he gives better counsel than any man in his council, and there is no finer display of mind and ability in the world; yet in practice his servants find him quite another man—and I say this without counting his bad luck.

II.21 Against Idleness

Contre la faineantise

Rulers should labor until death, Montaigne argues, citing Vespasian and a Moorish king who directed a battle with his last breath.

FRENCH

ENGLISH

2.21.1 L'EMPEREVR Vespasien estant malade de la maladie, dont il mourut, ne laissoit pas de vouloir entendre l'estat de l'Empire: et dans son lict mesme, despeschoit sans cesse plusieurs affaires de consequence: et son medecin l'en tançant, comme de chose nuisible à sa santé: Il faut, disoit-il, qu'vn Empereur meure debout. Voilà vn beau mot, à mon gré, et digne d'vn grand Prince.

The Emperor Vespasian, sick with the illness that killed him, still insisted on hearing the state of the Empire; even in his bed he kept dispatching many matters of consequence. When his physician scolded him for it as harmful to his health, he said: "An emperor must die standing." That, to my mind, is a fine saying, and worthy of a great prince.[1]

Adrian l'Empereur s'en seruit depuis à ce mesme propos: et le deuroit on souuent ramenteuoir aux Roys, pour leur faire sentir, que cette grande charge, qu'on leur donne du commandement de tant d'hommes, n'est pas vne charge oisiue; et qu'il n'est rien qui puisse si iustement desgouster vn subject, de se mettre en peine et en hasard pour le seruice de son Prince, que de le voir appoltronny cependant luy-mesme, à des occupations lasches et vaines: et d'auoir soing de sa conseruation, le voyant si nonchalant de la nostre.

The Emperor Hadrian later used it for the same purpose. It ought often to be recalled to kings, to make them feel that this great charge they are given, the command of so many men, is not an idle charge. Nothing can so justly discourage a subject from taking pains and running risks in his prince's service as seeing the prince himself meanwhile sunk in sloth, in lax and futile occupations—nor from caring for his safety, when he sees him so careless of ours.

2.21.2 Quand quelqu'vn voudra maintenir, qu'il vaut mieux que le Prince conduise ses guerres par autre que par soy: la Fortune luy fournira assez d'exemples de ceux, à qui leurs lieutenans ont mis à chef des grandes entreprises: et de ceux encore desquels la presence y eust esté plus nuisible, qu'vtile. Mais nul Prince vertueux et courageux pourra souffrir, qu'on l'entretienne de si honteuses instructions. Soubs couleur de conseruer sa teste, comme la statue d'vn sainct, à la bonne fortune de son estat, ils le degradent de son office, qui est tout en action militaire, et l'en declarent incapable.

If someone wants to maintain that it is better for a prince to conduct his wars through others than in person, Fortune will supply him with plenty of examples of princes whose lieutenants brought great enterprises to completion, and also of princes whose presence would have done more harm than good. But no virtuous and courageous prince could bear to be fed such shameful instruction. Under color of preserving his head, like a saint's statue, for the good fortune of his state, they demote him from his office, which consists entirely in military action, and declare him incapable of it.

I'en sçay vn, qui aymeroit bien mieux estre battu, que de dormir, pendant qu'on se battroit pour luy: et qui ne vid iamais sans ialousie, ses gents mesmes, faire quelque chose de grand en son absence. Et Selym premier disoit auec raison, ce me semble, que les victoires, qui se gaignent sans le maistre, ne sont pas completes. De tant

I know one who would much rather be beaten than sleep while others fought for him, and who never saw even his own men do something great in his absence without jealousy. And Selim I said, rightly it seems to me, that victories won without the master are not complete. All the more readily

1 Vespasian, Roman emperor, died in AD 79; the anecdote comes from Suetonius.

FRENCH

plus volontiers eust-il dit, que ce maistre deuroit rougir de honte, d'y pretendre part pour son nom, n'y ayant embesongné que sa voix et sa pensée. Ny cela mesme, veu qu'en telle besongne, les aduis et commandemens, qui apportent l'honneur, sont ceux-là seulement, qui se donnent sur le champ, et au propre de l'affaire. Nul pilote n'exerce son office de pied ferme.

Les Princes de la race Hottomane, la premiere race du monde en fortune guerriere, ont chauldement embrassé cette opinion. Et Baiazet second auec son filz, qui s'en despartirent, s'amusants aux sciences et autres occupations casanieres, donnerent aussi de bien grands soufflets à leur Empire: et celuy qui regne à present, Ammurath troisiesme, à leur exemple, commence assez bien de s'en trouuer de mesme. Fust-ce pas le Roy d'Angleterre, Edouard troisiesme, qui dit de nostre Roy Charles cinquiesme, ce mot? Il n'y eut onques Roy, qui moins s'armast, et si n'y eut onques Roy, qui tant me donnast à faire. Il auoit raison de le trouuer estrange, comme vn effect du sort, plus que de la raison.

Et cherchent autre adherent, que moy, ceux qui veulent nombrer entre les belliqueux et magnanimes conquerants, les Roys de Castille et de Portugal, de ce qu'à douze cents lieuës de leur oisiue demeure, par l'escorte de leurs facteurs, ils se sont rendus maistres des Indes d'vne et d'autre part: desquelles c'est à sçauoir, s'ils auroyent seulement le courage d'aller iouyr en presence.

2.21.3 L'Empereur Iulian disoit encore plus, qu'vn philosophe et vn galant homme, ne deuoient pas seulement respirer: c'est à dire, ne donner aux necessitez corporelles, que ce qu'on ne leur peut refuser; tenant tousiours l'ame et le corps embesongnez à choses belles, grandes et vertueuses. Il auoit honte si en public on le voyoit cracher ou suer (ce qu'on dit aussi de la ieunesse Lacedemonienne, et Xenophon de la Persienne) par ce qu'il estimoit que l'exercice, le trauail continuel, et la sobrieté, deuoient auoir cuit et asseché toutes ces superfluitez. Ce que dit Seneque ne ioindra pas mal en cet endroict, que les anciens Romains maintenoient leur ieunesse droite: ils n'apprenoient, dit-il, rien à leurs enfans, qu'ils deussent apprendre assis.

ENGLISH

would he have said that the master ought to blush with shame at claiming a share in them for his name, when he has put to work only his voice and his thoughts. Not even those, since in such work the advice and commands that bring honor are only those given on the field and in the thick of the action. No pilot does his job from dry land.[2]

The princes of the Ottoman line, the foremost line in the world for fortune in war, have warmly embraced this opinion. And Bayezid II and his son, who departed from it, amusing themselves with learning and other stay-at-home occupations, dealt their Empire some very hard blows; and the present ruler, Murad III, following their example, is beginning to fare much the same. Was it not the King of England, Edward III, who said this of our King Charles V: "There was never a king who took up arms less, and yet there was never a king who gave me so much trouble"? He was right to find it strange, as an effect of chance rather than of reason.[3]

Those who want to count the kings of Castile and Portugal among the warlike and magnanimous conquerors, because twelve hundred leagues from their idle residence, under the escort of their agents, they made themselves masters of the Indies East and West, must look for some supporter other than me. As for those Indies, it remains to be seen whether they would even have the courage to go and enjoy them in person.

The Emperor Julian said even more: that a philosopher and a man of honor ought not even to breathe—that is, ought to give bodily needs only what cannot be refused them, keeping soul and body always busy with fine, great and virtuous things. He was ashamed to be seen spitting or sweating in public (which is also said of the Spartan youth, and by Xenophon of the Persian youth), because he thought that exercise, continual toil and sobriety ought to have cooked and dried up all those superfluities. What Seneca says will fit in not badly here: that the ancient Romans kept their young people upright. They taught their children nothing, he says, that had to be learned sitting down.

2 Selim I, Ottoman sultan (r. 1512–1520), conqueror of Syria and Egypt.
3 Bayezid II reigned 1481–1512; Murad III, 1574–1595. Charles V of France (r. 1364–1380) won back much of what the English had taken while leaving the fighting to his captains.

FRENCH

ENGLISH

2.21.4 C'est vne genereuse enuie, de vouloir mourir mesme vtilement et virilement: mais l'effect n'en gist pas tant en nostre bonne resolution, qu'en nostre bonne fortune. Mille ont proposé de vaincre, ou de mourir en combattant, qui ont failli à l'vn et à l'autre: les blesseures, les prisons, leur trauersant ce dessein, et leur prestant vne vie forcée. Il y a des maladies, qui atterrent iusques à noz desirs, et nostre cognoissance. Fortune ne deuoit pas seconder la vanité des legions Romaines, qui s'obligerent par serment, de mourir ou de vaincre.

It is a noble wish to want to die even usefully and manfully; but the outcome lies not so much in our good resolution as in our good fortune. A thousand have resolved to conquer or die fighting who failed at both: wounds and captivity thwarted their design and lent them a forced life. There are diseases that lay low even our desires and our awareness. Fortune was under no obligation to back the vanity of the Roman legions who bound themselves by oath to die or conquer.

Victor, Marce Fabi, reuertar ex acie: si fallo, Iouem patrem Gradiuúmque Martem aliósque iratos inuoco Deos. Les Portugais disent, qu'en certain endroit de leur conqueste des Indes ils rencontrerent des soldats, qui s'estoyent condamnez auec horribles execrations, de n'entrer en aucune composition, que de se faire tuer, ou demeurer victorieux: et pour marque de ce vœu, portoyent la teste et la barbe rase. Nous auons beau nous hazarder et obstiner. Il semble que les coups fuyent ceux, qui s'y presentent trop alaigrement: et n'arriuent volontiers à qui s'y presente trop volontiers, et corrompt leur fin.

I shall return from the battle victorious, Marcus Fabius; if I break my word, I call down upon myself the wrath of Father Jupiter, Mars Gradivus and the other gods. The Portuguese say that at a certain point in their conquest of the Indies they met soldiers who had condemned themselves, with horrible curses, to accept no terms but to be killed or to win; and as a sign of this vow they wore their heads and beards shaved. It is no use our taking risks and being stubborn. Blows seem to flee those who offer themselves too eagerly, and not to come readily to the man who offers himself too readily and so spoils their aim.[4]

Tel ne pouuant obtenir de perdre sa vie, par les forces aduersaires, apres auoir tout essayé, a esté contraint, pour fournir à sa resolution, d'en r'apporter l'honneur, ou de n'en rapporter pas la vie: se donner soy mesme la mort, en la chaleur propre du combat. Il en est d'autres exemples. Mais en voicy vn. Philistus, chef de l'armée de mer du ieune Dionysius contre les Syracusains, leur presenta la battaille, qui fut asprement contestée, les forces estants pareilles. En icelle il eut du meilleur au commencement, par sa prouësse.

Mais les Syracusains se rengeans autour de sa galere, pour l'inuestir, ayant faict grands faicts d'armes de sa personne, pour se desuelopper, n'y esperant plus de ressource, s'osta de sa main la vie, qu'il auoit si liberalement abandonnée, et frustratoirement, aux mains ennemies.

Many a man, unable to get himself killed by the enemy after trying everything, has been forced—to fulfill his resolution to bring back honor or not to bring back his life—to put himself to death in the very heat of combat. There are other examples, but here is one. Philistus, commander of the younger Dionysius's fleet against the Syracusans, offered them battle, which was fiercely contested, the forces being equal. At first he had the upper hand through his prowess.[5]

But as the Syracusans closed in around his galley to surround it, after performing great feats of arms in person to break free, and no longer hoping for any way out, he took with his own hand the life he had so freely, and so vainly, abandoned to enemy hands.

THE DEATH OF MOLEY MOLUCH

The dying King of Fez commands his army to victory and dies with a finger on his lips.

FRENCH

ENGLISH

2.21.5 Moley Moluch, Roy de Fais, qui vient de gaigner contre Sebastian Roy de Portugal, cette iournée, fameuse par la

Moley Moluch, King of Fez, who has just won against Sebastian, King of Portugal, that battle

4 Livy, History of Rome: the oath sworn by the soldiers to the consul Marcus Fabius in 480 BC.

FRENCH

mort de trois Roys, et par la transmission de cette grande couronne, à celle de Castille: se trouua grieuement malade dés lors que les Portugalois entrerent à main armée en son estat; et alla tousiours depuis en empirant vers la mort, et la preuoyant. Iamais homme ne se seruit de soy plus vigoureusement, et brauement. Il se trouua foible, pour soustenir la pompe ceremonieuse de l'entrée de son camp, qui est selon leur mode, pleine de magnificence, et chargée de tout plein d'action: et resigna cet honneur à son frere.

Mais ce fut aussi le seul office de Capitaine qu'il resigna: touts les autres necessaires et vtiles, il les feit tres-glorieusement et exactement. Tenant son corps couché: mais son entendement, et son courage, debout et ferme, iusques au dernier souspir: et aucunement au-delà. Il pouuoit miner ses ennemis, indiscretement aduancez en ses terres: et luy poisa merueilleusement, qu'à faute d'vn peu de vie, et pour n'auoir qui substituer à la conduitte de cette guerre, et affaires d'vn estat troublé, il eust à chercher la victoire sanglante et hazardeuse, en ayant vne autre pure et nette entre ses mains.

Toutesfois il mesnagea miraculeusement la durée de sa maladie, à faire consumer son ennemy, et l'attirer loing de son armée de mer, et des places maritimes qu'il auoit en la coste d'Affrique: iusques au dernier iour de sa vie, lequel par dessein, il employa et reserua à cette grande iournée. Il dressa sa bataille en rond, assiegeant de toutes pars l'ost des Portugais; lequel rond venant à se courber et serrer, les empescha non seulement au conflict, qui fut tres aspre par la valeur de ce ieune Roy assaillant, veu qu'ils auoient à montrer visage à tous sens: mais aussi les empescha à la fuitte apres leur routte.

Et trouuants toutes les issues saisies, et closes; furent contraints de se reietter à eux mesmes: *coaceruantûrque non solùm cæde, sed etiam fuga*, et s'amonceller les vns sur les autres, fournissants aux vaincueurs vne tres-meurtriere victoire, et tres-entiere. Mourant, il se feit porter et tracasser où le besoing l'appelloit: et coulant le long des files, enhortoit ses Capitaines et soldats, les vns apres les autres. Mais vn coing de sa battaille se laissant enfoncer, on ne le peut tenir, qu'il ne montast à cheual l'espée au poing. Il s'efforçoit pour s'aller mesler, ses

ENGLISH

famous for the death of three kings and for the passing of that great crown to the crown of Castile, was gravely ill from the moment the Portuguese invaded his state; and from then on he kept growing worse, heading toward death and foreseeing it. Never did a man make more vigorous and gallant use of himself. He found himself too weak to sustain the ceremonial pomp of entering his camp, which in their fashion is full of magnificence and laden with a great deal of ritual; and he handed that honor over to his brother.[6]

But that was also the only duty of a commander that he handed over: all the others, necessary and useful, he carried out most gloriously and exactly. He kept his body lying down, but his understanding and his courage upright and firm until his last breath—and in a way beyond it. He could have worn down his enemies, who had advanced rashly into his lands; and it weighed on him terribly that, for want of a little more life and having no one to take his place in conducting this war and the affairs of a troubled state, he had to seek a bloody and hazardous victory when he held another, pure and clean, in his hands.

Nevertheless he managed the length of his illness miraculously, to wear his enemy down and draw him far from his fleet and from the strongholds he held on the coast of Africa, until the last day of his life, which he deliberately reserved and used for this great battle. He drew up his army in a circle, besieging the Portuguese host on all sides. As this circle bent and tightened, it hampered them not only in the fighting—which was very fierce thanks to the valor of that young attacking king, since they had to face in every direction—but also in their flight after their rout.

Finding all the exits seized and closed, they were forced to fall back on themselves—*and they were heaped up not only by the slaughter but also by their flight*—and to pile up on one another, giving the victors a most murderous and most complete victory. Dying, he had himself carried and hauled wherever need called him, and moving along the ranks he exhorted his captains and soldiers one after another. But when one corner of his battle

5 Philistus, Greek historian and admiral of Dionysius II of Syracuse, died in this sea battle in 356 BC (Plutarch, Life of Dion).
6 Abd al-Malik, Sultan of Morocco, defeated King Sebastian at Alcácer Quibir in 1578, the "Battle of the Three Kings"; Philip II of Spain took the Portuguese crown in 1580.

FRENCH

gents l'arrestants, qui par la bride, qui par sa robbe, et par ses estriers. Cet effort acheua d'accabler ce peu de vie, qui luy restoit. On le recoucha.

Luy se resuscitant comme en sursaut de cette pasmoison, toute autre faculté luy deffaillant; pour aduertir qu'on teust sa mort (qui estoit le plus necessaire commandement, qu'il eust lors à faire, affin de n'engendrer quelque desespoir aux siens, par cette nouuelle) expira, tenant le doigt contre sa bouche close: signe ordinaire de faire silence. Qui vescut oncques si long temps, et si auant en la mort? qui mourut oncques si debout? L'extreme degré de traitter courageusement la mort, et le plus naturel, c'est la veoir, non seulement sans estonnement, mais sans soucy: continuant libre le train de la vie, iusques dedans elle.

Comme Caton, qui s'amusoit à estudier et à dormir, en ayant vne violente et sanglante, presente en son cœur, et la tenant en sa main.

ENGLISH

line gave way, there was no holding him back from mounting his horse sword in hand. He struggled to go and join the fray, while his men held him back, some by the bridle, some by his robe and his stirrups. This effort finished off what little life he had left. They laid him down again.

He came round from this swoon as if with a start, and with every other faculty failing him, to give warning that his death should be kept quiet (the most necessary command he had to give at that moment, so as not to breed despair among his men with the news), he died holding his finger against his closed lips, the usual sign for silence. Who ever lived so long and so far into death? Who ever died so upright? The highest degree of meeting death courageously, and the most natural, is to look on it not only without dismay but without concern, freely continuing the course of life right into it.

Like Cato, who occupied himself with studying and sleeping while he had a violent and bloody death present in his heart and held it in his hand.[7]

7 Before stabbing himself at Utica, Cato read Plato's Phaedo and slept soundly.

II.22 Of Riding Post

Des Postes

From his own riding to Cyrus's relay stations and Caecina's swallows, Montaigne collects stories of how news was carried at speed.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
2.22.1	IE n'ay pas esté des plus foibles en cet exercice, qui est propre à gens de ma taille, ferme et courte: mais i'en quitte le mestier: il nous essaye trop, pour y durer long temps.	I have not been one of the weakest at this exercise, which suits people of my build, stocky and short; but I am giving up the trade: it tests us too hard to keep it up for long.[1]
2.22.2	Ie lisois à cette heure, que le Roy Cyrus, pour receuoir plus facilement nouuelles de tous les costez de son Empire, qui estoit d'vne fort grande estenduë, fit regarder combien vn cheual pouuoit faire de chemin en vn iour, tout d'vne traicte, et à cette distance il establit des hommes, qui auoient charge de tenir des cheuaux prests, pour en fournir à ceux qui viendroient vers luy. Et disent aucuns, que cette vistesse d'aller, reuient à la mesure du vol des gruës.	I was just reading that King Cyrus, to receive news more easily from every quarter of his Empire, which was very extensive, had it measured how far a horse could go in a day at one stretch; and at that distance he stationed men whose task was to keep horses ready to supply those riding to him. And some say that this speed of travel matches the speed of the flight of cranes.[2]
2.22.3	Cæsar dit que Lucius Vibulus Rufus, ayant haste de porter vn aduertissement à Pompeius, s'achemina vers luy iour et nuict, changeant de cheuaux, pour faire diligence. Et luy mesme, à ce que dit Suetone, faisoit cent mille par iour, sur vn coche de louage. Mais c'estoit vn furieux courrier: car où les riuieres luy tranchoient son chemin, il les franchissoit à nage: et ne se destourna iamais pour querir vn pont, ou vn gué. Tiberius Nero allant voir son frere Drusus, malade en Allemaigne, fit deux cens mille, en vingt quatre heures, ayant trois coches. En la guerre des Romains contre le Roy Antiochus, T.	Caesar says that Lucius Vibullius Rufus, in haste to carry a warning to Pompey, rode toward him day and night, changing horses to make speed. And Caesar himself, according to Suetonius, covered a hundred miles a day in a hired carriage. But he was a furious courier: where rivers cut across his road, he swam across them, and never turned aside to look for a bridge or a ford. Tiberius Nero, going to see his brother Drusus, who was sick in Germany, covered two hundred miles in twenty-four hours, using three carriages. In the Romans' war against King Antiochus, T.[3]
	Sempronius Gracchus, dit Tite-Liue, *per dispositos equos propè incredibili celeritate ab Amphissa tertio die Pellam peruenit*: et appert à veoir le lieu, que c'estoient postes assises, non freschement ordonnées pour cette course.	Sempronius Gracchus, says Livy, *using relays of horses, reached Pella from Amphissa on the third day, at an almost incredible speed*; and from the passage it appears that these were established posts, not ones newly arranged for this ride.
2.22.4	L'inuention de Cecinna à renuoyer des nouuelles à ceux de sa maison, auoit bien plus de promptitude: il emporta quand et soy des arondelles, et les relaschoit vers leurs nids, quand il vouloit r'enuoyer de ses nouuelles, en les	Caecina's device for sending news back to his household was much quicker still. He took swallows along with him and released them toward

1 The essay is titled "Of Riding Post," that is, traveling fast with relays of post-horses.
2 Xenophon, Cyropaedia.
3 Tiberius Nero is the future emperor Tiberius; his brother Drusus died in Germany in 9 BC (Pliny, Natural History).

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
	teignant de marque de couleur propre à signifier ce qu'il vouloit, selon qu'il auoit concerté auec les siens.	their nests when he wanted to send back news, dyeing them with a colored mark that signified what he wished, as he had agreed with his people.[4]
2.22.5	Au theatre à Rome, les maistres de famille, auoient des pigeons dans leur sein, ausquels ils attachoyent des lettres, qu'ils vouloient mander quelque chose à leurs gens au logis: et estoient dressez à en rapporter response. D. Brutus en vsa assiegé à Mutine, et autres ailleurs.	At the theater in Rome, heads of households kept pigeons in the folds of their robes, to which they tied letters when they wanted to send some message to their people at home; and the birds were trained to bring back an answer. D. Brutus used them when he was besieged at Mutina, and others did elsewhere.[5]
2.22.6	Au Peru, ils couroyent sur les hommes, qui les chargeoient sur les espaules à tout des portoires, par telle agilité, que tout en courant, les premiers porteurs reiettoyent aux seconds leur charge, sans arrester vn pas.	In Peru they traveled post on men, who carried them on their shoulders in litters with such agility that, while still running, the first bearers passed their load on to the second without stopping a step.
2.22.7	I'entends que les Valachi, courriers du grand Seigneur, font des extremes diligences: d'autant qu'ils ont loy de desmonter le premier passant qu'ils trouuent en leur chemin, en luy donnant leur cheual recreu. Pour se garder de lasser, ils se serrent à trauers le corps bien estroittement, d'vne bande large comme font assez d'autres. Ie n'ay trouué nul seiour à cet vsage.	I hear that the Valachi, the Sultan's couriers, travel at extreme speed, since they are entitled by law to unhorse the first passerby they meet on their road, giving him their own exhausted horse. To keep from tiring, they bind themselves very tightly around the body with a broad band, as many others do. I have found no relief in this practice.[6]

4 Caecina of Volaterrae, a Roman knight, owner of racing chariots, who sent home the results this way (Pliny, Natural History).
5 Decimus Brutus, one of Caesar's assassins, was besieged by Mark Antony at Mutina (modern Modena) in 43 BC.
6 The Valachi (Wallachians) served as couriers for the Ottoman sultan.

II.23 Of Bad Means Used for a Good End

Des mauuais moyens employez à bonne fin
Montaigne compares states with diseased bodies and considers whether foreign wars and gladiator shows are justified ways to purge civic ills.

FRENCH

2.23.1 IL se trouue vne merueilleuse relation et correspondance, en cette vniuerselle police des ouurages de Nature: qui montre bien qu'elle n'est ny fortuite ny conduite par diuers maistres. Les maladies et conditions de nos corps, se voyent aussi aux estats et polices: les royaumes, les republiques naissent, fleurissent et fanissent de vieillesse, comme nous.

Nous sommes subiects à vne repletion d'humeurs inutile et nuysible, soit de bonnes humeurs, (car cela mesme les medecins le craignent: et par ce qu'il n'y a rien de stable chez nous, ils disent que la perfection de santé trop allegre et vigoureuse, il nous la faut essimer et rabatre par art, de peur que nostre nature ne se pouuant rassoir en nulle certaine place, et n'ayant plus où monter pour s'ameliorer, ne se recule en arriere en desordre et trop à coup: ils ordonnent pour cela aux atletes les purgations et les saignées, pour leur soustraire cette superabondance de santé) soit repletion de mauuaises humeurs, qui est l'ordinaire cause des maladies.

2.23.2 De semblable repletion se voyent les estats souuent malades: et a lon accoustumé d'vser de diuerses sortes de purgation. Tantost on donne congé à vne grande multitude de familles, pour en descharger le païs, lesquelles vont chercher ailleurs où s'accommoder aux despens d'autruy. De cette façon nos anciens Francons partis du fons d'Alemaigne, vindrent se saisir de la Gaule, et en deschasser les premiers habitans: ainsi se forgea cette infinie marée d'hommes, qui s'escoula en Italie soubs Brennus et autres: ainsi les Gots et Vuandales: comme aussi les peuples qui possedent à present la Grece, abandonnerent leur naturel païs pour s'aller loger ailleurs plus au large: et à peine est il deux ou trois coins au monde, qui n'ayent senty l'effect d'vn tel remuement.

Les Romains bastissoient par ce moyen leurs colonies: car sentans leur ville se grossir outre mesure, ils la

ENGLISH

There is a wonderful relationship and correspondence in this universal government of Nature's works, which shows clearly that it is neither a matter of chance nor directed by several masters. The diseases and conditions of our bodies are seen also in states and governments: kingdoms and republics are born, flourish and wither with age, as we do.

We are subject to a useless and harmful surfeit of humors. It may be of good humors: for even this the physicians fear, and because nothing in us is stable, they say that a perfection of health too buoyant and vigorous must be trimmed and reduced by art, lest our nature, unable to settle in any fixed place and having nowhere higher to climb to improve, should fall back in disorder and too suddenly; that is why they prescribe purges and bleedings for athletes, to draw off that superabundance of health. Or it may be a surfeit of bad humors, which is the ordinary cause of diseases.

States are often seen to be sick with a similar surfeit, and various kinds of purgation are customarily used. Sometimes a great multitude of families are sent off to relieve the country of them, and they go seeking a place to settle elsewhere at others' expense. In this way our ancient Franks, setting out from the depths of Germany, came to seize Gaul and drive out its first inhabitants; so was formed that boundless tide of men that poured into Italy under Brennus and others; so the Goths and Vandals; and so, too, the peoples who now possess Greece left their native country to settle elsewhere with more room. There are hardly two or three corners in the world that have not felt the effect of such a migration.[1]

The Romans founded their colonies by this means: feeling their city swell beyond measure, they re-

FRENCH

deschargeoient du peuple moins necessaire, et l'enuoyoient habiter et cultiuer les terres par eux conquises. Par fois aussi ils ont à escient nourry des guerres auec aucuns leurs ennemis, non seulement pour tenir leurs hommes en haleine, de peur que l'oysiueté mere de corruption, ne leur apportast quelque pire inconuenient: *Et patimur longæ pacis mala; sæuior armis, / Luxuria incumbit.* Mais aussi pour seruir de saignée à leur Republique, et esuanter vn peu la chaleur trop vehemente de leur ieunesse: escourter et esclaircir le branchage de ce tige abondant en trop de gaillardise: à cet effect se sont ils autrefois seruis de la guerre contre les Carthaginois.

2.23.3 Au traité de Bretigny, Edoüard troisiesme Roy d'Angleterre, ne voulut comprendre en cette paix generalle, qu'il fit auec nostre Roy, le different du Duché de Bretaigne, affin qu'il eust où se descharger, de ses hommes de guerre, et que cette foulle d'Anglois, dequoy il s'estoit seruy aux affaires de deça, ne se reiettast en Angleterre. Ce fut l'vne des raisons, pourquoy nostre Roy Philippe consentit d'enuoyer Iean son fils à la guerre d'outre-mer: à fin d'emmener quand et luy vn grand nombre de ieunesse bouïllante, qui estoit en sa gendarmerie.

Il y en a plusieurs en ce temps, qui discourent de pareille façon, souhaitans que cette esmotion chaleureuse, qui est parmy nous, se peust deriuer à quelque guerre voisine, de peur que ces humeurs peccantes, qui dominent pour cette heure nostre corps, si on ne les escoulle ailleurs, maintiennent nostre fiebure tousiours en force, et apportent en fin nostre entiere ruine. Et de vray, vne guerre estrangere est vn mal bien plus doux que la ciuile: mais ie ne croy pas que Dieu fauorisast vne si iniuste entreprise, d'offencer et quereler autruy pour nostre commodité. *Nil mihi tam valdè placeat, Rhamnusia virgo, / Quòd temerè inuitis suscipiatur heris.*

ENGLISH

lieved it of the less necessary people and sent them to live on and farm the lands they had conquered. Sometimes, too, they deliberately kept wars going with some of their enemies, not only to keep their men in trim, for fear that idleness, the mother of corruption, might bring them some worse trouble—*We suffer the evils of a long peace; luxury, more cruel than arms, / Weighs upon us*—but also to serve as a bloodletting for their Republic, to vent a little of the too vehement heat of their youth, to lop and thin the branches of a trunk that grew too lustily. That is what they once used the war against the Carthaginians for.[2]

At the Treaty of Brétigny, Edward III, King of England, refused to include the dispute over the Duchy of Brittany in the general peace he made with our king, so that he would have somewhere to unload his men of war, and so that the throng of Englishmen he had used in his affairs over here would not spill back into England. This was one of the reasons why our King Philip agreed to send his son John to the war overseas: so that he would take with him a great number of hot-blooded young men who were among his men-at-arms.[3]

There are many in our time who reason in the same way, wishing that the feverish agitation among us could be diverted into some neighboring war, for fear that the noxious humors now dominating our body, unless drained off elsewhere, will keep our fever always at full strength and in the end bring about our complete ruin. And indeed, a foreign war is a much milder evil than civil war; but I do not believe that God would favor so unjust an enterprise as to injure others and pick quarrels with them for our own convenience. *Rhamnusian maiden, may nothing please me so much / That I would rashly seize it against its owners' will.*[4]

GLADIATORS

Rome trained its people in courage by gladiatorial combats, a bad means used for a good end.

FRENCH

2.23.4 Toutesfois la foiblesse de nostre condition, nous pousse souuent à cette necessité, de nous seruir de mauuais

ENGLISH

Yet the weakness of our condition often drives us to the necessity of using bad means for a good

1 Brennus led the Gauls who sacked Rome around 390 BC; the peoples now holding Greece are the Turks.
2 Juvenal, Satires.
3 The Treaty of Brétigny (1360) halted the Hundred Years' War for a time. Philip VI of France planned a crusade in the 1330s.

FRENCH

moyens pour vne bonne fin. Lycurgus, le plus vertueux et parfaict legislateur qui fut onques, inuenta cette tres-iniuste façon, pour instruire son peuple à la temperance, de faire enyurer par force les Elotes, qui estoyent leurs serfs: à fin qu'en les voyant ainsi perdus et enseuelis dans le vin, les Spartiates prinsent en horreur le desbordement de ce vice.

Ceux là auoyent encore plus de tort, qui permettoyent anciennement que les criminels, à quelque sorte de mort qu'ils fussent condamnez, fussent deschirez tous vifs par les medecins, pour y voir au naturel nos parties interieures, et en establir plus de certitude en leur art: car s'il se faut desbaucher, on est plus excusable, le faisant pour la santé de l'ame, que pour celle du corps: comme les Romains dressoient le peuple à la vaillance et au mespris des dangers, et de la mort, par ces furieux spectacles de gladiateurs et escrimeurs à outrance, qui se combattoient, détailloient, et entretuoyent en leur presence: *Quid vesani aliud sibi vult ars impia ludi, / Quid mortes iuuenum, quid sanguine pasta voluptas?* Et dura cet vsage iusques à Theodosius l'Empereur.

Arripe dilatam tua, dux, in tempora famam,
Quódque patris superest, successor laudis habeto.
Nullus in vrbe cadat, cuius sit pœna voluptas.
Iam solis contenta feris, infamis arena
Nulla cruentatis homicidia ludat in armis. C'estoit à la verité vn merueilleux exemple, et de tres-grand fruict, pour l'institution du peuple, de voir tous les iours en sa presence, cent, deux cents, voire mille coupples d'hommes armez les vns contre les autres, se hacher en pieces, auec vne si extreme fermeté de courage, qu'on ne leur vist lascher vne parolle de foiblesse ou commiseration, iamais tourner le dos, ny faire seulement vn mouuemont lasche, pour gauchir au coup de leur aduersaire: ains tendre le col à son espee, et se presenter au coup.

Il est aduenu à plusieurs d'entre eux, estans blessez à mort de force playes, d'enuoyer demander au peuple, s'il estoit content de leur deuoir, auant que se coucher pour rendre l'esprit sur la place. Il ne falloit pas seulement qu'ils combattissent et mourussent constamment, mais

ENGLISH

end. Lycurgus, the most virtuous and perfect lawgiver who ever lived, devised this very unjust method of teaching his people temperance: he had the Helots, who were their serfs, made drunk by force, so that the Spartans, seeing them thus lost and buried in wine, would come to abhor the excess of this vice.

Those were even more in the wrong who in ancient times allowed criminals, whatever kind of death they had been condemned to, to be cut open alive by physicians, so as to see our internal parts in their natural state and establish greater certainty in their art. For if we must go astray, it is more excusable to do so for the health of the soul than for that of the body. Thus the Romans trained the people in valor and in contempt of dangers and death through those furious spectacles of gladiators and fencers fighting to the death, who fought, carved up and killed one another before their eyes: *What else does the impious art of these mad games mean, / What these deaths of young men, what this pleasure fed on blood?* And this practice lasted until the Emperor Theodosius.[5]

Seize, prince, the glory reserved for your reign,
And be heir to what remains of your father's praise.
Let no one fall in the city whose punishment is a pleasure.
Let the infamous arena, content now with wild beasts alone,
No longer stage murders with bloodstained weapons. It was, in truth, a wonderful example, and most fruitful for the education of the people, to see every day before their eyes a hundred, two hundred, even a thousand pairs of armed men set against one another hack each other to pieces with such extreme firmness of courage that they were never seen to let slip a word of weakness or pity, never to turn their backs, nor even to make a cowardly movement to dodge their opponent's blow, but rather to stretch out their necks to his sword and offer themselves to the stroke.

Many of them, mortally wounded many times over, sent to ask the people whether they were satisfied with their performance before lying down to give up the ghost on the spot. It was not enough that they fight and die steadfastly; they had to do it

4 Catullus. The "Rhamnusian maiden" is Nemesis, goddess of retribution, worshipped at Rhamnus in Attica.
5 Prudentius, Against Symmachus; the poet addresses the Emperor Honorius.

FRENCH

encore allegrement: en maniere qu'on les hurloit et maudissoit, si on les voyoit estriuer à receuoir la mort. Les filles mesmes les incitoient: *Consurgit ad ictus;*
Et, quoties victor ferrum iugulo inserit, illa
Delicias ait esse suas, pectúsque iacentis
Virgo modesta iubet conuerso pollice rumpi. Les premiers Romains employoient à cet exemple les criminels.

Mais depuis on y employa des serfs innocens, et des libres mesmes, qui se vendoyent pour cet effect: iusques à des Senateurs et Cheualiers Romains: et encores des femmes:
Nunc caput in mortem vendunt, et funus arenæ,
Atque hostem sibi quisque parat, cùm bella quiescunt.
Hos inter fremitus nouósque lusus,
Stat sexus rudis insciúsque ferri,
Et pugnas capit improbus viriles. Ce que ie trouuerois fort estrange et incroyable, si nous n'estions accoustumez de voir tous les iours en nos guerres, plusieurs miliasses d'hommes estrangers, engageants pour de l'argent leur sang et leur vie, à des querelles, où ils n'ont aucun interest.

ENGLISH

cheerfully too, so that they were howled at and cursed if they were seen to resist receiving death. Even the young women urged them on: *She rises at each blow;*
And every time the victor plunges his sword into a throat,
She calls it her delight, and, turning her thumb,
The modest virgin bids the fallen man's breast be pierced. The early Romans used criminals for this example.

But later they used innocent slaves, and even free men who sold themselves for the purpose—even Roman senators and knights—and women as well:
Now men sell their lives to death and to burial in the arena,
And each, when wars are at rest, makes himself an enemy.
Amid this uproar and these new games
Stands the sex untrained and ignorant of the sword,
And shamelessly takes up men's combats. I would find this very strange and incredible, if we were not used to seeing every day in our wars many thousands of foreigners pledging their blood and their lives for money in quarrels in which they have no stake.[6]

6 Manilius, Astronomica; and Statius, Silvae.

II.24 Of the Greatness of Rome

De la grandeur Romaine

A short essay using Cicero's letters and other anecdotes to show how far Rome's power exceeded the paltry grandeurs of Montaigne's time.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
2.24.1	IE ne veux dire qu'vn mot de cet argument infiny, pour montrer la simplesse de ceux, qui apparient à celle là, les chetiues grandeurs de ce temps.	I want to say only a word on this infinite subject, to show the simple-mindedness of those who compare the paltry grandeurs of our time with that one.
2.24.2	Au septiesme liure des epistres familieres de Cicero (et que les grammairiens en ostent ce surnom, de familieres, s'ils veulent, car à la verité il n'y est pas fort à propos: et ceux qui au lieu de familieres y ont substitué *ad familiares*, peuuent tirer quelque argument pour eux, de ce que dit Suetone en la vie de Cæsar, qu'il y auoit vn volume de lettres de luy *ad familiares*) il y en a vne, qui s'adresse à Cæsar estant lors en la Gaule, en laquelle Cicero redit ces mots, qui estoyent sur la fin d'vn' autre lettre, que Cæsar luy auoit escrit: Quant à Marcus Furius, que tu m'as recommandé, ie le feray Roy de Gaule, et si tu veux, que i'aduance quelque autre de tes amis, enuoye le moy.	In the seventh book of Cicero's familiar letters (and let the grammarians remove that epithet "familiar" if they like, for in truth it is not very apt; and those who have substituted *ad familiares* for "familiar" can draw some argument for their side from what Suetonius says in his life of Caesar, that there was a volume of his letters *ad familiares*), there is one addressed to Caesar, who was then in Gaul. In it Cicero repeats these words, which came at the end of another letter Caesar had written him: "As for Marcus Furius, whom you recommended to me, I will make him king of Gaul; and if you want me to promote some other friend of yours, send him to me."[1]
	Il n'estoit pas nouueau à vn simple citoyen Romain, comme estoit lors Cæsar, de disposer des Royaumes, car il osta bien au Roy Deiotarus le sien, pour le donner à vn Gentil-homme de la ville de Pergame nommé Mithridates. Et ceux qui escriuent sa vie enregistrent plusieurs Royaumes par luy vendus: et Suetone dit qu'il tira pour vn coup, du Roy Ptolomæus, trois millions six cens mill' escus, qui fut bien pres de luy vendre le sien. *Tot Galatæ, tot Pontus eat, tot Lydia nummis.*	It was nothing new for a simple Roman citizen, as Caesar then was, to dispose of kingdoms: he took his kingdom away from King Deiotarus to give it to a gentleman of the city of Pergamum named Mithridates. Those who write his life record several kingdoms sold by him; and Suetonius says that he extracted from King Ptolemy, at one stroke, three million six hundred thousand crowns, which came very close to selling him his own. *So many coins for Galatia, so many for Pontus, so many for Lydia.*[2]
2.24.3	Marcus Antonius disoit que la grandeur du peuple Romain ne se montrait pas tant, par ce qu'il prenoit, que par ce qu'il donnoit. Si en auoit il quelque siecle auant Antonius, osté vn entre autres, d'authorité si merueilleuse, qu'en toute son histoire, ie ne sçache marque, qui porte plus haut le nom de son credit.	Mark Antony said that the greatness of the Roman people showed itself not so much by what it took as by what it gave. Yet some century before Antony it had taken away one kingdom among others with such wondrous authority that in all its history I know of no mark that raises the name of its

1 Ad familiares means "to his friends," the title now usual for this collection of Cicero's letters.
2 Claudian, Against Eutropius.

FRENCH

Antiochus possedoit toute l'Ægypte, et estoit apres à conquerir Cypre, et autres demeurants de cet empire. Sur le progrez de ses victoires, C. Popilius arriua à luy de la part du Senat: et d'abordée, refusa de luy toucher à la main, qu'il n'eust premierement leu les lettres qu'il luy apportoit.

Le Roy les ayant leuës, et dict, qu'il en delibereroit: Popilius circonscrit la place où il estoit auec sa baguette, en luy disant: Ren moy responce, que ie puisse rapporter au Senat, auant que tu partes de ce cercle. Antiochus estonné de la rudesse d'vn si pressant commandement, apres y auoir vn peu songé: Ie feray, dit-il, ce que le Senat me commande. Lors le salüa Popilius, comme amy du peuple Romain. Auoir renoncé à vne si grande Monarchie, et cours d'vne si fortunée prosperité, par l'impression de trois traits d'escriture! Il eut vrayement raison, comme il fit, d'enuoyer depuis dire au Senat par ses ambassadeurs, qu'il auoit receu leur ordonnance, de mesme respect, que si elle fust venuë des Dieux immortels.

2.24.4 Tous les Royaumes qu'Auguste gaigna par droict de guerre, il les rendit à ceux qui les auoyent perdus, ou en fit present à des estrangers. Et sur ce propos Tacitus parlant du Roy d'Angleterre Cogidunus, nous fait sentir par vn merueilleux traict cette infinie puissance. Les Romains, dit-il, auoyent accoustumé de toute ancienneté, de laisser les Roys, qu'ils auoyent surmontez, en la possession de leurs Royaumes, soubs leur authorité: à ce qu'ils eussent des Roys mesmes, vtils de la seruitude: *Vt haberent instrumenta seruitutis et reges*.

Il est vray-semblable, que Solyman, à qui nous auons veu faire liberalité du Royaume d'Hongrie, et autres estats, regardoit plus à cette consideration, qu'à celle qu'il auoit accoustumé d'alleguer; Qu'il estoit saoul et chargé, de tant de Monarchies et de domination, que sa vertu, ou celle de ses ancestres, luy auoyent acquis.

ENGLISH

power higher. Antiochus held all of Egypt and was about to conquer Cyprus and other remnants of that empire. In the course of his victories C. Popilius came to him on behalf of the Senate, and on first meeting him refused to take his hand until he had first read the letters he was bringing.[3]

When the king had read them and said that he would deliberate on them, Popilius drew a circle with his rod around the spot where he stood, saying: "Give me an answer I can take back to the Senate before you step out of this circle." Antiochus, stunned by the harshness of so urgent a command, thought for a moment and said: "I will do what the Senate commands me." Then Popilius greeted him as a friend of the Roman people. To have given up so great a monarchy, and the course of such fortunate prosperity, at the impression of three strokes of writing! He was truly right, as he did, to send word afterward to the Senate through his ambassadors that he had received their order with the same respect as if it had come from the immortal gods.

All the kingdoms that Augustus won by right of war he either gave back to those who had lost them or made presents of to foreigners. On this subject Tacitus, speaking of the English king Cogidunus, makes us feel this infinite power with a marvelous stroke. The Romans, he says, had been accustomed from the most ancient times to leave the kings they had conquered in possession of their kingdoms, under their authority, so as to have even kings as tools of servitude: *So that they might have even kings as instruments of servitude.*[4]

It is likely that Suleiman, whom we have seen make a gift of the kingdom of Hungary and other states, was looking more to this consideration than to the one he used to allege: that he was sated and overloaded with all the monarchies and dominion that his valor, or that of his ancestors, had won him.[5]

3 Antiochus IV, king of Syria, was forced out of Egypt by the envoy Gaius Popilius Laenas in 168 BC.
4 Tacitus, Agricola; Cogidunus was a king of the Britons allied to Rome in the 1st century AD.
5 Suleiman left Hungary to vassal rulers after his victory at Mohács in 1526.

II.25 Of Not Pretending to Be Sick

De ne contrefaire le malade

Stories of people who faked gout or blindness and then truly got it lead Montaigne to warn against counterfeiting illness.

FRENCH

2.25.1 IL y a vn epigramme en Martial qui est des bons, car il y en a chez luy de toutes sortes: où il recite plaisamment l'histoire de Cælius, qui pour fuir à faire la cour à quelques grans à Rome, se trouuer à leur leuer, les assister et les suyure, fit la mine d'auoir la goute: et pour rendre son excuse plus vray-semblable, se faisoit oindre les iambes, les auoit enueloppees, et contre-faisoit entierement le port et la contenance d'vn homme gouteux. En fin la Fortune luy fit ce plaisir de l'en rendre tout à faict. *Tantum cura potest et ars doloris! / Desiit fingere Cœlius podagram.*

2.25.2 I'ay veu en quelque lieu d'Appian, ce me semble, vne pareille histoire, d'vn qui voulant eschapper aux proscriptions des triumvirs de Rome, pour se desrober de la cognoissance de ceux qui le poursuyuoient, se tenant caché et trauesti, y adiousta encore cette inuention, de contre-faire le borgne: quand il vint à recouurer vn peu plus de liberté, et qu'il voulut deffaire l'emplatre qu'il auoit long temps porté sur son œil, il trouua que sa veuë estoit effectuellement perdue soubs ce masque. Il est possible que l'action de la veuë s'estoit hebetée, pour auoir esté si long temps sans exercice, et que la force visiue s'estoit toute reietée en l'autre œil.

Car nous sentons euidemment que l'œil que nous tenons couuert, r'enuoye à son compaignon quelque partie de son effect: en maniere que celuy qui reste, s'en grossit et s'en enfle. Comme aussi l'oisiueté, auec la chaleur des liaisons et des medicamens, auoit bien peu attirer quelque humeur podagrique au gouteux de Martial.

2.25.3 Lisant chez Froissard, le vœu d'vne troupe de ieunes Gentils-hommes Anglois, de porter l'œil gauche bandé, iusques à ce qu'ils eussent passé en France, et exploité quelque faict d'armes sur nous: ie me suis souuent

ENGLISH

There is an epigram in Martial—one of the good ones, for he has all kinds—in which he amusingly tells the story of Caelius. To avoid paying court to certain great men in Rome, attending their levees, waiting on them and following them about, Caelius pretended to have gout; and to make his excuse more convincing, he had his legs anointed and kept them wrapped up, and imitated the bearing and demeanor of a gouty man in every detail. In the end Fortune did him the favor of making him one in earnest. *So much can care and the art of pain achieve! / Caelius has stopped pretending to have gout.*

I have read somewhere in Appian, I think, a similar story of a man who wanted to escape the proscriptions of the triumvirs at Rome. To keep from being recognized by those pursuing him, he stayed hidden and disguised, and added a further trick: he pretended to be blind in one eye. When he came to recover a little more freedom and wanted to remove the plaster he had long worn over his eye, he found that his sight had actually been lost under this mask. It is possible that the action of sight had been dulled by going so long without exercise, and that the power of seeing had all been transferred into the other eye.[1]

For we clearly feel that the eye we keep covered sends some part of its function to its companion, so that the remaining one grows stronger and swells from it. Just as, too, idleness, together with the heat of the bandages and ointments, may well have drawn some gouty humor to Martial's gouty man.

Reading in Froissart of the vow of a troop of young English gentlemen to wear their left eye bandaged until they had crossed into France and performed

1 The triumvirs Antony, Octavian and Lepidus outlawed their enemies in 43 BC.

FRENCH

chatouïllé de ce pensement, qu'il leur eust pris, comme à ces autres, et qu'ils se fussent trouuez tous éborgnez au reuoir des maistresses, pour lesquelles ils auoyent faict l'entreprise.

2.25.4 Les meres ont raison de tancer leurs enfans, quand ils contrefont les borgnes, les boiteux et les bicles, et tels autres defauts de la personne: car outre ce que le corps ainsi tendre en peut receuoir vn mauuais ply, ie ne sçay comment il semble que la Fortune se ioüe à nous prendre au mot: et i'ay ouy reciter plusieurs exemples de gens deuenus malades ayant dessigné de feindre l'estre. De tout temps i'ay apprins de charger ma main et à cheual et à pied, d'vne baguette ou d'vn baston: iusques à y chercher de l'elegance, et m'en seiourner, d'vne contenance affettée. Plusieurs m'ont menacé, que Fortune tourneroit vn iour cette mignardise en necessité.

Ie me fonde sur ce que ie seroy le premier goutteux de ma race.

2.25.5 Mais alongeons ce chapitre et le bigarrons d'vne autre piece, à propos de la cecité. Pline dit d'vn, qui songeant estre aueugle en dormant, se le trouua l'endemain, sans aucune maladie precedente. La force de l'imagination peut bien ayder à cela, comme i'ay dit ailleurs, et semble que Pline soit de cet aduis: mais il est plus vray-semblable, que les mouuemens que le corps sentoit au dedans, desquels les medecins trouueront, s'ils veulent, la cause, qui luy ostoient la veuë, furent occasion du songe.

2.25.6 Adioustons encore vn' histoire voisine de ce propos, que Seneque recite en l'vne de ses lettres: Tu sçais, dit-il, escriuant à Lucilius, que Harpasté la folle de ma femme, est demeurée chez moy pour charge hereditaire: car de mon goust ie suis ennemy de ces montres, et si i'ay enuie de rire d'vn fol, il ne me le faut chercher guere loing, ie ris de moy-mesme. Cette folle, a subitement perdu la veuë. Ie te recite chose estrange, mais veritable: elle ne sent point qu'elle soit aueugle, et presse incessamment son gouuerneur de l'emmener, par ce qu'elle dit que ma maison est obscure.

Ce que nous rions en elle, ie te prie croire, qu'il aduient à chacun de nous: nul ne cognoist estre auare, nul

ENGLISH

some feat of arms against us, I have often been tickled by the thought that it might have happened to them as to those others, and that they might all have found themselves one-eyed when they saw again the ladies for whose sake they had undertaken the enterprise.

Mothers are right to scold their children when they mimic the one-eyed, the lame, the cross-eyed and other such physical defects. Besides the fact that a body so tender may take a bad bent from it, I don't know how, but Fortune seems to enjoy taking us at our word; and I have heard many examples of people who fell ill after planning to pretend to be. I have always been in the habit of carrying a switch or a stick in my hand, on horseback and on foot—even going so far as to seek elegance in it and to lean on it with an affected air. Many have warned me that Fortune would one day turn this affectation into necessity.

I rely on the fact that I would be the first of my line to have gout.

But let us lengthen this chapter and patch it with another piece, on the subject of blindness. Pliny tells of a man who dreamed in his sleep that he was blind and found that he was so the next day, without any previous illness. The power of imagination may well help in that, as I have said elsewhere, and Pliny seems to be of this opinion. But it is more likely that the movements the body felt within, which were taking away his sight—the physicians will find their cause if they care to—were what occasioned the dream.[2]

Let us add one more story related to this subject, which Seneca tells in one of his letters. "You know," he says, writing to Lucilius, "that Harpaste, my wife's fool, has stayed on in my house as a burden I inherited. For my own taste is against such spectacles; and if I want to laugh at a fool, I need not look far: I laugh at myself. This fool has suddenly lost her sight. I am telling you something strange but true: she does not feel that she is blind, and keeps pressing her attendant to take her out, because she says my house is dark.[3]

What we laugh at in her, believe me, happens to every one of us. No one knows that he is avari-

2 Montaigne refers to his essay "Of the Power of the Imagination" (I.21).

FRENCH

conuoiteux. Encore les aueugles demandent vn guide, nous nous fouruoions de nous mesmes. Ie ne suis pas ambitieux, disons nous, mais à Rome on ne peut viure autrement: ie ne suis pas sumptueux, mais la ville requiert vne grande despence: ce n'est pas ma faute, si ie suis cholere, si ie n'ay encore establi aucun train asseuré de vie, c'est la faute de la ieunesse. Ne cherchons pas hors de nous nostre mal, il est chez nous: il est planté en nos entrailles. Et cela mesme, que nous ne sentons pas estre malades, nous rend la guerison plus malaisée.

Si nous ne commençons de bonne heure à nous penser, quand aurons nous pourueu à tant de playes et à tant de maux? Si auons nous vne tres-douce medecine, que la philosophie: car des autres, on n'en sent le plaisir, qu'apres la guerison, cette cy plaist et guerit ensemble. Voyla ce que dit Seneque, qui m'a emporté hors de mon propos: mais il y a du profit au change.

ENGLISH

cious, no one that he is covetous. The blind at least ask for a guide; we go astray of our own accord. 'I am not ambitious,' we say, 'but in Rome one cannot live otherwise. I am not extravagant, but the city demands great expense. It is not my fault if I am irascible; if I have not yet settled on any fixed way of life, it is the fault of youth.' Let us not look outside ourselves for our ailment: it is within us, planted in our vitals. And the very fact that we do not feel we are sick makes the cure harder.

If we do not begin early to tend ourselves, when will we have dealt with so many wounds and so many ills? Yet we have a very sweet medicine in philosophy: with the others, we feel the pleasure only after the cure; this one pleases and cures at the same time." That is what Seneca says, and he has carried me away from my subject; but there is profit in the exchange.

3 Seneca, Letters to Lucilius 50; Harpaste was a female household jester.

II.26 Of Thumbs

Des pouces

A brief gathering of ancient lore about thumbs: their names, their role in oaths and spectacles, and their deliberate mutilation.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
2.26.1	TACITVS recite que parmy certains Roys barbares, pour faire vne obligation asseurée, leur maniere estoit, de joindre estroictement leurs mains droites l'vne à l'autre, et s'entrelasser les pouces: et quand à force de les presser le sang en estoit monté au bout, ils les blessoient de quelque legere pointe, et puis se les entresuçoient.	Tacitus relates that among certain barbarian kings, to make a binding pledge, their custom was to clasp their right hands tightly together and interlace their thumbs; and when by dint of squeezing the blood had risen to the tips, they pricked them with some light point and then sucked each other's.[1]
2.26.2	Les medecins disent, que les pouces sont les maistres doigts de la main, et que leur etymologie Latine vient de *pollere*. Les Grecs l'appellent αντιχειρ, comme qui diroit vne autre main. Et il semble que par fois les Latins les prennent aussi en ce sens, de main entiere: *Sed nec vocibus excitata blandis, / Molli pollice nec rogata, surgit.*	Physicians say that the thumbs are the master fingers of the hand, and that their Latin name comes from *pollere*. The Greeks call it αντιχειρ, as if to say "another hand." And it seems that the Latins sometimes also take them in this sense, for the whole hand: *But neither roused by coaxing words / nor urged by a gentle thumb, does it rise.*[2]
2.26.3	C'estoit à Rome vne signification de faueur, de comprimer et baisser les pouces: *Fautor vtroque tuum laudabit pollice ludum:* et de desfaueur de les hausser et contourner au dehors: *Conuerso pollice vulgi, / Quemlibet occidunt populariter.*	In Rome it was a sign of favor to press down and lower the thumbs: *Your backer will praise your game with both thumbs*; and of disfavor to raise them and turn them outward: *When the crowd turns its thumb, / they kill whomever the people please.*[3]
2.26.4	Les Romains dispensoient de la guerre, ceux qui estoient blessez au pouce, comme s'ils n'auoient plus la prise des armes assez ferme. Auguste confisqua les biens à vn Cheualier Romain, qui auoit par malice couppé les pouces à deux siens ieunes enfans, pour les excuser d'aller aux armées: et auant luy, le Senat du temps de la guerre Italique, auoit condamné Caius Vatienus à prison perpetuelle, et luy auoit confisqué tous ses biens, pour s'estre à escient couppé le pouce de la main gauche, pour s'exempter de ce voyage.	The Romans exempted from war those who were wounded in the thumb, as if they no longer had a firm enough grip on their weapons. Augustus confiscated the property of a Roman knight who had maliciously cut off the thumbs of two of his young children to excuse them from serving in the armies. And before him, the Senate, at the time of the Italic War, had condemned Caius Vatienus to life imprisonment and confiscated all his property for having deliberately cut off the thumb of his left hand to exempt himself from that campaign.
2.26.5	Quelqu'vn, dont il ne me souuient point, ayant gaigné vne bataille nauale, fit coupper les pouces à ses ennemis vaincus pour leur oster le moyen de combattre et de tirer	Someone, I do not remember who, having won a naval battle, had the thumbs of his defeated enemies cut off, to take away their means of fighting

1 Tacitus, Annals XII, on the kings of Armenia and Iberia (in the Caucasus).
2 Latin *pollex*, "thumb," was derived from *pollere*, "to be strong." The verse is from Martial, Epigrams.
3 Horace, Epistles; then Juvenal, Satires.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
	la rame. Les Atheniens les firent coupper aux Æginetes, pour leur oster la preference en l'art de marine.	and of pulling an oar. The Athenians had them cut off the Aeginetans, to take away their superiority in seamanship.
2.26.6	En Lacedemone le maistre chastioit les enfans en leur mordant le pouce.	In Sparta the schoolmaster punished children by biting their thumbs.

II.27 Cowardice, the Mother of Cruelty

Coüardise mere de la cruauté
Montaigne traces cruelty to cowardice and fear, from tyrants who weep easily to duelists who rely on fencing skill instead of courage.

FRENCH

2.27.1 I'AY souuent ouy dire, que la coüardise est mere de la cruauté: et si ay par experience apperçeu, que cette aigreur, et aspreté de courage malitieux et inhumain, s'accompaigne coustumierement de mollesse feminine. I'en ay veu des plus cruels, subiets à pleurer aiséement, et pour des causes friuoles. Alexandre tyran de Pheres, ne pouuoit souffrir d'ouyr au theatre le ieu des tragedies, de peur que ses cytoyens ne le vissent gemir aux malheurs d'Hecuba, et d'Andromache, luy qui sans pitié, faisoit cruellement meurtrir tant de gens tous les iours. Seroit-ce foiblesse d'ame qui les rendist ainsi ployables à toutes extremitez? La vaillance, de qui c'est l'effect de s'exercer seulement contre la resistence, *Nec nisi bellantis gaudet ceruice iuuenci,* s'arreste à voir l'ennemy à sa mercy.

Mais la pusillanimité, pour dire qu'elle est aussi de la feste, n'ayant peu se mesler à ce premier rolle, prend pour sa part le second, du massacre et du sang. Les meurtres des victoires, s'exercent ordinairement par le peuple, et par les officiers du bagage. Et ce qui fait voir tant de cruautez inouies aux guerres populaires, c'est que cette canaille de vulgaire s'aguerrit, et se gendarme, à s'ensanglanter iusques aux coudes, et deschiqueter vn corps à ses pieds, n'ayant resentiment d'autre vaillance. *Et lupus et turpes instant morientibus vrsi, / Et quæcunque minor nobilitate fera est.* Comme les chiens coüards, qui deschirent en la maison, et mordent les peaux des bestes sauuages, qu'ils n'ont osé attaquer aux champs.

Qu'est-ce qui faict en ce temps, nos querelles toutes mortelles? et que là où nos peres auoyent quelque degré de vengeance, nous commençons à cette heure par le

ENGLISH

I have often heard it said that cowardice is the mother of cruelty. And I have indeed noticed by experience that this bitterness and harshness of a malicious and inhuman heart is usually accompanied by a spineless softness. I have seen some of the cruelest men prone to weep easily, and for trivial reasons. Alexander, tyrant of Pherae, could not bear to watch tragedies performed in the theater, for fear his citizens would see him groan at the misfortunes of Hecuba and Andromache—he who pitilessly had so many people cruelly murdered every day. Could it be weakness of soul that makes them so pliable to every extreme? Valor, whose nature is to exercise itself only against resistance—*Nor does it delight except in the neck of a bullock that fights back*—stops when it sees the enemy at its mercy.[1]

But cowardice, so as to say that it too was at the party, having been unable to take part in that first role, takes for its share the second, that of massacre and blood. The killings that follow victories are usually carried out by the common people and the officers of the baggage train. And what causes so many unheard-of cruelties to be seen in popular wars is that this rabble of common people plays the warrior and the man-at-arms by bloodying itself up to the elbows and hacking to pieces a body at its feet, having no feeling for any other kind of valor. *Both the wolf and the foul bears set upon the dying, / and every beast of lesser nobility.* Like cowardly dogs, which in the house tear and bite the skins of wild beasts they did not dare attack in the fields.[2]

What is it that makes all our quarrels mortal nowadays? And that, where our fathers had some gradation in revenge, we now begin with the last

1 Alexander ruled Pherae in Thessaly in the 4th century BC. The verse is from Claudian, describing a lion.
2 Ovid, Tristia.

FRENCH

dernier: et ne se parle d'arriuée que de tuer? Qu'est-ce, si ce n'est coüardise?

2.27.2 Chacun sent bien, qu'il y a plus de brauerie et desdain, à battre son ennemy, qu'à l'acheuer, et de le faire bouquer, que de le faire mourir. D'auantage que l'appetit de vengeance s'en assouuit et contente mieux: car elle ne vise qu'à donner ressentiment de soy. Voyla pourquoy, nous n'attaquons pas vne beste, ou vne pierre, quand elle nous blesse, d'autant qu'elles sont incapables de sentir nostre reuenche. Et de tuer vn homme, c'est le mettre à l'abry de nostre offence.

Et tout ainsi comme Bias crioit à vn meschant homme, le sçay que tost ou tard tu en seras puny, mais ie crains que ie ne le voye pas: et plaignoit les Orchomeniens, de ce que la penitence que Lyciscus eut de la trahison contre eux commise, venoit en saison, qu'il n'y auoit personne de reste, de ceux qui en auoient esté interessez, et ausquels deuoit toucher le plaisir de cette penitence. Tout ainsin est à plaindre la vengeance, quand celuy enuers lequel elle s'employe, pert le moyen de la souffrir. Car comme le vengeur y veut voir, pour en tirer du plaisir, il faut que celuy sur lequel il se venge, y voye aussi, pour en receuoir du desplaisir, et de la repentance.

Il s'en repentira, disons nous. Et pour luy auoir donné d'une pistolade en la teste, estimons nous qu'il s'en repente? Au rebours, si nous nous en prenons garde, nous trouuerons qu'il nous fait la mouë en tombant. Il ne nous en sçait pas seulement mauuais gré, c'est bien loing de s'en repentir. Et luy prestons le plus fauorable de touts les offices de la vie, qui est de le faire mourir promptement et insensiblement. Nous sommes à conniller, à trotter, et à fuir les officiers de la iustice, qui nous suyuent: et luy est en repos. Le tuer, est bon pour euiter l'offence à venir, non pour venger celle qui est faicte.

C'est vne action plus de crainte, que de brauerie: de precaution, que de courage: de defense, que d'entreprinse. Il est apparent que nous quittons par là, et la vraye fin de la vengeance, et le soing de nostre reputation. Nous craignons, s'il demeure en vie, qu'il nous recharge d'vne pareille. Ce n'est pas contre luy, c'est pour toy, que tu t'en deffais.

2.27.3 Au Royaume de Narsingue cet expedient nous demeureroit inutile. Là, non seulement les gents de guerre, mais aussi les artisans, demeslent leurs querelles

ENGLISH

degree, and from the very outset there is talk of nothing but killing? What is it, if not cowardice?

Everyone can feel that there is more boldness and disdain in beating one's enemy than in finishing him off, and in making him knuckle under than in making him die. Moreover, the appetite for revenge is better satisfied and contented that way, for revenge aims only at making itself felt. That is why we do not attack an animal or a stone when it hurts us: they are incapable of feeling our revenge. And to kill a man is to put him beyond the reach of our injury.

Bias cried out to a wicked man, "I know that sooner or later you will be punished for it, but I fear I shall not see it." And he pitied the Orchomenians because the repentance Lyciscus felt for the treachery he had committed against them came at a time when no one was left of those who had been harmed by it, and to whom the pleasure of that repentance should have fallen. In just the same way revenge is to be pitied when the man against whom it is directed loses the means of feeling it. For just as the avenger wants to see it, so as to get pleasure from it, so the man on whom he takes revenge must see it too, so as to receive pain and repentance from it.

"He'll be sorry for it," we say. And because we have put a pistol shot in his head, do we think he is sorry? On the contrary, if we pay attention, we will find that he is making a face at us as he falls. He does not even bear us a grudge for it, let alone repent of it. And we do him the kindest of all life's services, which is to make him die quickly and without feeling. We are left hiding in burrows, scurrying about and fleeing the officers of justice who are after us, while he is at rest. Killing him is good for avoiding a future injury, not for avenging one already done.

It is an act more of fear than of bravado, of precaution than of courage, of defense than of attack. It is plain that by it we abandon both the true end of revenge and the care of our reputation. We fear that if he stays alive he will come back at us with the same. It is not against him, it is for your own sake, that you get rid of him.

In the kingdom of Narsinga this expedient would be of no use to us. There not only soldiers but artisans too settle their quarrels with the sword. The

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
	à coups d'espée. Le Roy ne refuse point le camp à qui se veut battre: et assiste, quand ce sont personnes de qualité: estrenant le victorieux d'vne chaisne d'or: mais pour laquelle conquerir, le premier, à qui il en prend enuie, peut venir aux armes auec celuy qui la porte. Et pour s'estre desfaict d'vn combat, il en a plusieurs sur les bras.	king never refuses a field to anyone who wants to fight, and he attends when they are persons of rank, presenting the victor with a gold chain. But to win that chain, the first man who feels like it may come to arms with the one who wears it. And by getting clear of one fight, he has several on his hands.
2.27.4	Si nous pensions par vertu estre tousiours maistres de nostre ennemy, et le gourmander à nostre poste, nous serions bien marris qu'il nous eschappast, comme il faict en mourant. Nous voulons vaincre plus seurement qu'honorablement. Et cherchons plus la fin, que la gloire, en nostre querelle.	If we thought that by our valor we would always be masters of our enemy and could lord it over him at our pleasure, we would be very sorry to have him escape us, as he does by dying. We want to win more safely than honorably. And in our quarrel we seek the end rather than the glory.
2.27.5	Asinius Pollio, pour vn honneste homme moins excusable, representa vne erreur pareille: qui ayant escript des inuectiues contre Plancus, attendoit qu'il fust mort, pour les publier. C'estoit faire la figue à vn aueugle et dire des pouïlles à vn sourd, et offenser vn homme sans sentiment plustost que d'encourir le hazard de son ressentiment. Aussi disoit on pour luy, que ce n'estoit qu'aux lutins de luitter les morts. Celuy qui attend à veoir trespasser l'autheur, duquel il veut combattre les escrits, que dit-il, sinon qu'il est foible et noisif? On disoit à Aristote, que quelqu'vn auoit mesdit de luy: Qu'il face plus, dit-il, qu'il me fouëtte, pourueu que ie n'y soy pas.	Asinius Pollio, less excusable in that he was an honorable man, displayed a similar error: having written invectives against Plancus, he waited until Plancus was dead to publish them. That was making rude gestures at a blind man and hurling insults at a deaf one, and offending a man without feeling rather than running the risk of his resentment. So it was said on Plancus's behalf that only goblins wrestle with the dead. The man who waits to see an author die before attacking his writings—what is he saying, except that he is weak and quarrelsome? Aristotle was told that someone had spoken ill of him. "Let him do more," he said; "let him whip me, so long as I am not there."[3]

SECONDS IN DUELS

Bringing seconds into duels is a kind of cowardice; Montaigne's brother was jailed in Rome for it.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
2.27.6	Nos peres se contentoyent de reuencher vne iniure par vn démenti, vn démenti par vn coup, et ainsi par ordre. Ils estoient assez valeureux pour ne craindre pas leur aduersaire, viuant, et outragé. Nous tremblons de frayeur, tant que nous le voyons en pieds. Et qu'il soit ainsi, nostre belle pratique d'auiourdhuy, porte elle pas de poursuyure à mort, aussi bien celuy que nous auons offencé, que celuy qui nous a offencez? C'est aussi vne espece de lascheté, qui a introduit en nos combats singuliers, cet vsage, de nous accompagner de seconds, et tiers, et quarts. C'estoit anciennement des duels, ce sont à cette heure rencontres, et batailles. La solitude faisoit peur aux premiers qui l'inuenterent: *Quum in se cuique minimum fiduciæ esset*.	Our fathers were content to repay an insult by giving the lie, the lie by a blow, and so on in order. They were valiant enough not to fear their adversary when he was alive and outraged. We tremble with fright as long as we see him on his feet. And to prove that this is so, does not our fine present-day practice require us to pursue to the death the man we have offended just as much as the man who has offended us? It is also a sort of cowardice that has brought into our single combats this custom of taking along seconds, and thirds, and fourths. In the old days these were duels; now they are skirmishes and battles.

3 Lucius Munatius Plancus was a Roman statesman of the late Republic.

FRENCH

Car naturellement quelque compagnie que ce soit, apporte confort, et soulagement au danger. On se seruoit anciennement de personnes tierces, pour garder qu'il ne s'y fist desordre et desloyauté, et pour tesmoigner de la fortune du combat. Mais depuis qu'on a pris ce train, qu'ils s'engagent eux mesmes, quiconque y est conuié, ne peut honnestement s'y tenir comme spectateur, de peur qu'on ne luy attribue, que ce soit faute ou d'affection, ou de cœur.

Outre l'iniustice d'vne telle action, et vilenie, d'engager à la protection de vostre honneur, autre valeur et force que la vostre, ie trouue du desaduantage à vn homme de bien, et qui pleinement se fie de soy, d'aller mesler sa fortune, à celle d'vn second: chacun court assez de hazard pour soy, sans le courir encore pour vn autre: et a assez à faire à s'asseurer en sa propre vertu, pour la deffence de sa vie, sans commettre chose si chere en mains tierces. Car s'il n'a esté expressement marchandé au contraire, des quatre, c'est vne partie liée. Si vostre second est à terre, vous en auez deux sus les bras, auec raison.

Et de dire que c'est supercherie, elle l'est voirement: comme de charger bien armé, vn homme qui n'a qu'vn tronçon d'espée; ou tout sain, vn homme qui est desia fort blessé. Mais si ce sont auantages, que vous ayez gaigné en combatant, vous vous en pouuez seruir sans reproche. La disparité et inegalité ne se poise et considere, que de l'estat en quoy se commence la meslée: du reste prenez vous en à la Fortune. Et quand vous en aurez tout seul, trois sur vous, vos deux compaignons s'estant laissez tuer, on ne vous fait non plus de tort, que ie ferois à la guerre, de donner vn coup d'espee à l'ennemy, que ie verrois attaché à l'vn des nostres, de pareil auantage.

La nature de la societé porte, où il y a trouppe contre trouppe (comme où nostre Duc d'Orleans, deffia le Roy d'Angleterre Henry, cent contre cent, trois cents contre autant, comme les Argiens contre les Lacedemoniens: trois à trois, comme les Horatiens contre les Curiatiens) que la multitude de chasque part, n'est considerée que pour vn homme seul. Par tout où il y a compagnie, le hazard y est confus et meslé.

ENGLISH

Solitude frightened the first men who invented this: *Since each had very little confidence in himself.*

For naturally any company whatever brings comfort and relief in danger. In the old days third persons were used to make sure that no disorder or foul play took place, and to bear witness to the outcome of the combat. But since the practice has taken hold that they join in themselves, whoever is invited cannot honorably stand by as a spectator, for fear it be put down to a lack either of affection or of courage.

Besides the injustice and baseness of such an action—committing to the protection of your honor a valor and strength other than your own—I find it a disadvantage for a good man, who fully trusts himself, to go and mix his fortune with that of a second. Each man runs enough risk for himself without running it for another as well. And he has enough to do to rely on his own valor in defense of his life, without putting so precious a thing into a third party's hands. For unless it has been expressly agreed otherwise, the four of them make one combined match. If your second is down, you have two on your hands, and rightly so.

And as for saying that this is foul play—so it is indeed, like charging fully armed at a man who has only a stump of a sword, or, unhurt, at a man who is already badly wounded. But if these are advantages you have won in fighting, you may use them without reproach. Disparity and inequality are weighed and considered only according to the state in which the fight begins; for the rest, blame Fortune. And when you alone have three upon you, your two companions having let themselves be killed, you are done no more wrong than I would do in war by running my sword into an enemy I saw grappling with one of our men, with a like advantage.

Where there is troop against troop—as when our Duke of Orléans challenged King Henry of England, a hundred against a hundred; three hundred against as many, like the Argives against the Spartans; three against three, like the Horatii against the Curiatii—the nature of such a fellowship requires that the number on each side be regarded only as one single man. Wherever there is company, the risk is pooled and mingled.[4]

FRENCH	ENGLISH
2.27.7 I'ay interest domestique à ce discours. Car mon frere sieur de Matecoulom, fut conuié à Rome, à seconder vn Gentil-homme qu'il ne cognoissoit guere, lequel estoit deffendeur, et appellé par vn autre. En ce combat, il se trouua de fortune auoir en teste, vn qui luy estoit plus voisin et plus cogneu (ie voudrois qu'on me fist raison de ces loix d'honneur, qui vont si souuent choquant et troublant celles de la raison). Apres s'estre desfaict de son homme, voyant les deux maistres de la querelle, en pieds encores, et entiers, il alla descharger son compaignon. Que pouuoit il moins? deuoit-il se tenir coy, et regarder deffaire, si le sort l'eust ainsi voulu, celuy pour la deffence duquel, il estoit là venu?	I have a family interest in this discussion. For my brother, the Sieur de Mattecoulon, was invited in Rome to act as second to a gentleman he hardly knew, who was the defendant, having been challenged by another. In this combat he happened by chance to find himself facing a man who was closer to him and better known to him. (I wish someone would explain to me these laws of honor, which so often go clashing with and disturbing those of reason.) Having disposed of his man, and seeing the two principals in the quarrel still on their feet and unhurt, he went to relieve his companion. What less could he do? Should he have kept still and watched the defeat, if fate had so willed it, of the man he had come there to defend? [5]
Ce qu'il auoit faict iusques alors, ne seruoit rien à la besongne: la querelle estoit indecise. La courtoisie que vous pouuez, et certes deuez faire à vostre ennemy, quand vous l'auez reduict en mauuais termes, et à quelque grand desaduantage, ie ne vois pas comment vous la puissiez faire, quand il va de l'interest d'autruy, où vous n'estes que suiuant, où la dispute n'est pas vostre. Il ne pouuoit estre ny iuste, ny courtois, au hazard de celuy auquel il s'estoit presté. Aussi fut-il deliuré des prisons d'Italie, par vne bien soudaine et solemne recommandation de nostre Roy. Indiscrette nation.	What he had done until then had done nothing for the business: the quarrel was undecided. The courtesy you can, and certainly should, show your enemy when you have brought him to a bad pass and put him at some great disadvantage—I do not see how you can show it when another man's interest is at stake, where you are only a follower, where the dispute is not yours. He could be neither just nor courteous at the risk of the man to whom he had lent himself. And so he was freed from the prisons of Italy by a very prompt and solemn intercession from our king. Reckless nation!

LEARNING TO FENCE

The French go to Italy to learn fencing, a skill unworthy of true valor and useless in war.

FRENCH	ENGLISH
Nous ne nous contentons pas de faire sçauoir nos vices, et folies, au monde, par reputation: nous allons aux nations estrangeres, pour les leur faire voir en presence. Mettez trois François aux deserts de Lybie, ils ne seront pas vn mois ensemble, sans se harceler et esgratigner. Vous diriez que cette peregrination, est vne partie dressée, pour donner aux estrangers le plaisir de nos tragedies: et le plus souuent à tels, qui s'esiouyssent de nos maux, et qui s'en moquent. Nous allons apprendre en Italie à escrimer: et l'exerçons aux despends de nos vies, auant que de le sçauoir. Si faudroit-il suyuant l'ordre de la discipline, mettre la theorique auant la pratique. Nous	We are not content to make our vices and follies known to the world by report; we go to foreign nations to show them off in person. Put three Frenchmen in the deserts of Libya, and they will not be together a month without harassing and scratching one another. You would think these travels of ours were a show put on to give foreigners the pleasure of our tragedies—and most often to those who rejoice in our misfortunes and laugh at them. We go to Italy to learn fencing, and we practice it at the cost of our lives before we know how. Yet the proper order of instruction would re-

4 Louis, Duke of Orléans, challenged Henry IV of England in 1402. In legend the three Roman Horatii brothers fought the three Curiatii of Alba to decide a war.

5 Bertrand de Montaigne, Sieur de Mattecoulon, was Montaigne's youngest brother; the duel took place in 1583.

FRENCH

trahissons nostre apprentissage: *Primitiæ iuuenum miseræ, bellique futuri / Dura rudimenta!*

2.27.8 Ie sçay bien que c'est vn art vtile à sa fin (au duel des deux Princes, cousins germains, en Hespaigne, le plus vieil, dit Tite Liue, par l'addresse des armes et par ruse, surmonta facilement les forces estourdies du plus ieune) et comme i'ay cognu par experience, duquel la cognoissance a grossi le cœur à aucuns, outre leur mesure naturelle. Mais ce n'est pas proprement vertu, puis qu'elle tire son appuy de l'addresse, et qu'elle prend autre fondement que de soy-mesme. L'honneur des combats consiste en la ialousie du courage, non de la science.

Et pourtant ay-ie veu quelqu'vn de mes amis, renommé pour grand maistre en cet exercice, choisir en ses querelles, des armes, qui luy ostassent le moyen de cet aduantage: et lesquelles dépendoient entierement de la Fortune, et de l'asseurance: à fin qu'on n'attribuast sa victoire, plustost à son escrime, qu'à sa valeur. Et en mon enfance, la noblesse fuyoit la reputation de bon escrimeur comme iniurieuse: et se desroboit pour l'apprendre, comme mestier de subtilité, desrogeant à la vraye et naïfue vertu.

Non schiuar, non parar, non ritirarsi,
Voglion costor, nè qui destrezza ha parte;
Non danno i colpi finti hor pieni, hor scarsi,
Toglie l'ira e il furor l'vso de l'arte,
Odi le spade horribilmente vrtarsi
A mezzo il ferro, il piè d'orma non parte,
Sempre è il piè fermo, é la man sempre in moto;
Nè scende taglio in van, ne punta a voto.

2.27.9 Les butes, les tournois, les barrieres, l'image des combats guerriers, estoyent l'exercice de nos peres. Cet autre exercice, est d'autant moins noble, qu'il ne regarde qu'vne fin priuée: qui nous apprend à nous entreruyner, contre les loix et la iustice: et qui en toute façon, produict tousiours des effects dommageables. Il est bien plus digne et mieux seant, de s'exercer en choses qui asseurent, non qui offencent nostre police: qui regardent la publique seurté et la gloire commune. Publius Rutilius Consus fut le premier, qui instruisit le soldat, à manier ses armes par adresse et science, qui conioignit l'art à la vertu: non pour l'vsage de querelle priuée, ce fut pour la guerre et querelles du peuple Romain. Escrime populaire et ciuile.

ENGLISH

quire us to put theory before practice. We betray our apprenticeship: *Wretched first fruits of youth, harsh schooling / for the war to come!*[6]

I know well that it is a skill useful for its purpose (in the duel between the two princes, first cousins, in Spain, the elder, says Livy, easily overcame the reckless strength of the younger by skill in arms and by cunning), and, as I have learned by experience, one whose mastery has swelled the courage of some men beyond its natural measure. But it is not properly valor, since it draws its support from skill and rests on some foundation other than itself. The honor of combat lies in rivalry of courage, not of knowledge.

And so I have seen one of my friends, renowned as a great master of this exercise, choose for his quarrels weapons that deprived him of the means of this advantage, weapons that depended entirely on Fortune and on steadiness, so that his victory would not be put down to his fencing rather than to his valor. And in my childhood the nobility shunned the reputation of being a good fencer as an insult, and learned it in secret, as a trade of cunning, unworthy of true and natural valor.

These men will not dodge, nor parry, nor give ground,
nor has dexterity any part here;
they deal no feinting blows, now full, now light;
rage and fury take away the use of skill.
Hear the swords clash horribly
blade on blade; no foot stirs from its print,
the foot is ever firm, the hand ever moving;
no cut falls in vain, no thrust into empty air.[7]

Shooting at the butts, tournaments, jousting at the barriers—the image of warlike combat—were the exercises of our fathers. This other exercise is all the less noble in that it looks only to a private end. It teaches us to destroy one another, against the laws and justice, and in every way it always produces harmful effects. It is far more worthy and fitting to exercise ourselves in things that strengthen our government rather than harm it, things that look to public safety and the common glory. Publius Rutilius Consus was the first to teach the soldier to handle his weapons with skill and knowledge, who joined art to valor—not for

6 Virgil, Aeneid.
7 Tasso, Jerusalem Delivered.

FRENCH

ENGLISH

use in private quarrels, but for war and the quarrels of the Roman people. Public and civic fencing.[8]

Et outre l'exemple de Cæsar, qui ordonna aux siens de tirer principalement au visage des gensdarmes de Pompeius en la bataille de Pharsale: mille autres chefs de guerre se sont ainsin aduisez, d'inuenter nouuelle forme d'armes, nouuelle forme de frapper et de se couurir, selon le besoing de l'affaire present.

And besides the example of Caesar, who ordered his men to strike chiefly at the faces of Pompey's horsemen at the battle of Pharsalus, a thousand other commanders have likewise thought of inventing new kinds of weapons, new ways of striking and of covering themselves, according to the needs of the business at hand.

2.27.10 Mais tout ainsi que Philopœmen condamna la lucte, en quoy il excelloit, d'autant que les preparatifs qu'on employoit à cet exercice, estoient diuers à ceux, qui appartiennent à la discipline militaire, à laquelle seule il estimoit les gens d'honneur, se deuoir amuser: il me semble aussi, que cette adresse à quoy on façonne ses membres, ces destours et mouuements, à quoy on dresse la ieunesse, en cette nouuelle eschole, sont non seulement inutiles, mais contraires plustost, et dommageables à l'vsage du combat militaire. Aussi y employent communement noz gents, des armes particulieres, et peculierement destinées à cet vsage. Et i'ay veu, qu'on ne trouuoit guere bon, qu'vn Gentilhomme, conuié à l'espée et au poignard, s'offrist en equipage de gendarme.

Philopoemen condemned wrestling, at which he excelled, because the training used for that exercise was different from what belongs to military discipline, to which alone he thought men of honor should devote themselves. In just the same way it seems to me that this dexterity to which we shape our limbs, these dodges and movements in which young men are trained in this new school, are not only useless but rather contrary and harmful to the practice of military combat. And so our people commonly use special weapons for it, intended specifically for that purpose. And I have seen it thought hardly proper for a gentleman challenged to sword and dagger to present himself in the equipment of a man-at-arms.

Ny qu'vn autre offrist d'y aller auec sa cape, au lieu du poignard. Il est digne de consideration, que Lachez, en Platon, parlant d'vn apprentissage de manier les armes, conforme au nostre, dit n'auoir iamais de cette eschole veu sortir nul grand homme de guerre, et nommément des maistres d'icelle. Quant à ceux là, nostre experience en dit bien autant. Du reste, aumoins pouuons nous tenir que ce sont suffisances de nulle relation et correspondance. Et en l'institution des enfants de sa police, Platon interdit les arts de mener les poings, introduittes par Amycus et Epeius: et de lucter, par Antæus et Cecyo: par ce qu'elles ont autre but, que de rendre la ieunesse apte au seruice bellique, et n'y conferent point.

Or for another to offer to go with his cloak instead of a dagger. It is worth noting that Laches, in Plato, speaking of a training in handling weapons like ours, says he has never seen any great soldier come out of that school, and especially not from among its masters. As for those masters, our experience says as much. For the rest, at least we can hold that these are abilities with no relation or correspondence to each other. And in the education of the children of his commonwealth, Plato forbids the arts of fighting with the fists, introduced by Amycus and Epeius, and of wrestling, introduced by Antaeus and Cercyon, because they have an aim other than making the young fit for military service, and contribute nothing to it.[9]

Mais ie m'en vois vn peu bien à gauche de mon theme.

But I am drifting rather a long way off course from my theme.

8 Publius Rutilius Rufus was consul in 105 BC; "Consus" is Montaigne's slip for "consul."
9 Plato, Laches and Laws.

WHY TYRANTS KILL

Fear makes tyrants cruel; Philip of Macedon's killings drive Theoxena to drown herself and her children.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
2.27.11	L'Empereur Maurice, estant aduerty par songes, et plusieurs prognostiques, qu'vn Phocas, soldat pour lors incognu, le deuoit tuer: demandoit à son gendre Philippus, qui estoit ce Phocas, sa nature, ses conditions et ses mœurs: et comme entre autres choses Philippus luy dict, qu'il estoit lasche et craintif, l'Empereur conclud incontinent par là, qu'il estoit doncq meurtrier et cruel. Qui rend les tyrans si sanguinaires? c'est le soing de leur seurté, et que leur lasche cœur, ne leur fournit d'autres moyens de s'asseurer, qu'en exterminant ceux qui les peuuent offencer, iusques aux femmes, de peur d'vne esgratigneure.	The Emperor Maurice, warned by dreams and several omens that one Phocas, a soldier then unknown, was to kill him, asked his son-in-law Philippicus who this Phocas was, and about his nature, character and habits. And when, among other things, Philippicus told him that he was cowardly and fearful, the emperor at once concluded from this that he must therefore be murderous and cruel. What makes tyrants so bloodthirsty? It is concern for their own safety, and the fact that their cowardly hearts give them no other means of securing themselves than by exterminating those who can harm them—even women, for fear of a scratch.[10]
	Cuncta ferit, dum cuncta timet. Les premieres cruautez s'exercent pour elles mesmes, de là s'engendre la crainte d'vne iuste reuanche, qui produict apres vne enfileure de nouuelles cruautez, pour les estouffer les vnes par les autres. Philippus Roy de Macedoine, celuy qui eust tant de fusées à demesler auec le peuple Romain, agité de l'horreur de meurtres commis par son ordonnance: ne se pouuant resoudre contre tant de familles, en diuers temps offensées: print party de se saisir de touts les enfants de ceux qu'il auoit faict tuer, pour de iour en iour les perdre l'vn apres l'autre, et ainsin establir son repos.	*He strikes at everything, because he fears everything.* The first cruelties are committed for their own sake. From them is born the fear of a just revenge, which then produces a string of new cruelties, to smother the one with the other. Philip, King of Macedon—the one who had so many tangles to unravel with the Roman people—troubled by the horror of the murders committed by his order, and seeing no way to secure himself against so many families injured at various times, decided to seize all the children of those he had had killed, so as to do away with them day by day, one after another, and thus establish his peace.[11]
2.27.12	Les belles matieres siesent bien en quelque place qu'on les seme. Moy, qui ay plus de soin du poids et vtilité des discours, que de leur ordre et suite, ne doy pas craindre de loger icy vn peu à l'escart, vne tres-belle histoire. Quand elles sont si riches de leur propre beauté, et se peuuent seules trop soustenir, ie me contente du bout d'vn poil, pour les ioindre à mon propos.	Fine material sits well wherever it is sown. I, who care more about the weight and usefulness of my reflections than about their order and sequence, need not fear to lodge a very fine story here, a little off to one side. When such stories are so rich in their own beauty and can more than stand on their own, I am content with the end of a hair to tie them to my subject.
2.27.13	Entre les autres condamnez par Philippus, auoit esté vn Herodicus, Prince des Thessaliens. Apres luy, il auoit encore depuis faict mourir ses deux gendres, laissants chacun vn fils bien petit. Theoxena et Archo estoyent les deux vefues. Theoxena ne peut estre induicte à se remarier, en estant fort poursuyuie. Archo espousa Poris,	Among others condemned by Philip had been one Herodicus, a prince of the Thessalians. After him, Philip had later put to death his two sons-in-law as well, each of whom left a very small son. Theoxena and Archo were the two widows. Theoxena could not be induced to remarry, though she was

10 Maurice, Byzantine emperor, was overthrown and killed by Phocas in AD 602.
11 Claudian, Against Eutropius.

FRENCH

le premier homme d'entre les Æniens, et en eut nombre d'enfants, qu'elle laissa tous en bas aage. Theoxena, espoinçonnée d'vne charité maternelle enuers ses nepueux, pour les auoir en sa conduitte et protection, espousa Poris. Voicy venir la proclamation de l'edict du Roy.

Cette courageuse mere, se deffiant et de la cruauté de Philippus, et de la licence de ses satellites enuers cette belle et tendre ieunesse, osa dire, qu'elle les tueroit plustost de ses mains, que de les rendre. Poris effrayé de cette protestation, luy promet de les desrober, et emporter à Athenes, en la garde d'aucuns siens hostes fidelles. Ils prennent occasion d'vne feste annuelle, qui se celebroit à Ænie en l'honneur d'Æneas, et s'y en vont. Ayans assisté le iour aux ceremonies et banquet publique, la nuict ils s'escoulent en vn vaisseau preparé, pour gaigner païs par mer. Le vent leur fut contraire: et se trouuans l'endemain à la veuë de la terre, d'où ils auoyent desmaré, furent suyuis par les gardes des ports.

Au ioindre, Poris s'embesoignant à haster les mariniers pour la fuitte, Theoxena forcenée d'amour et de vengeance, se reiettant à sa premiere proposition, fait apprest d'armes et de poison, et les presentant à leur veuë: Or sus mes enfants, la mort est meshuy le seul moyen de vostre defense et liberté, et sera matiere aux Dieux de leur saincte iustice: ces espées traictes, ces couppes pleines vous en ouurent l'entrée. Courage. Et toy mon fils, qui es plus grand, empoigne ce fer, pour mourir de la mort plus forte. Ayants d'vn costé cette vigoureuse conseillere, les ennemis de l'autre, à leur gorge, ils coururent de furie chacun à ce qui luy fut le plus à main. Et demy morts furent iettez en la mer.

Theoxena fiere d'auoir si glorieusement pourueu à la seureté de tous ses enfants, accollant chaudement son mary: Suyuons ces garçons, mon amy, et iouyssons de mesme sepulture auec eux. Et se tenants ainsin embrassez, se precipiterent: de maniere que le vaisseau fut ramené à bord, vuide de ses maistres.

ENGLISH

much courted. Archo married Poris, the leading man among the Aenians, and had a number of children by him, all of whom she left very young. Theoxena, spurred by a mother's love for her nephews, married Poris so as to have them under her guidance and protection. Then came the proclamation of the king's edict.

This courageous mother, distrusting both Philip's cruelty and the license of his henchmen toward these fine and tender young people, dared to say that she would kill them with her own hands rather than hand them over. Poris, alarmed at this declaration, promised her to steal them away and take them to Athens, into the keeping of some faithful friends of his. They seized the occasion of an annual festival held at Aenia in honor of Aeneas, and went there. Having attended the ceremonies and the public banquet by day, at night they slipped away in a ship made ready to carry them to safety by sea. The wind was against them; and finding themselves the next day within sight of the land they had set out from, they were pursued by the harbor guards.

As the guards closed in, while Poris was busy urging the sailors on in their flight, Theoxena, frantic with love and vengeance, went back to her first resolve. She got weapons and poison ready and, setting them before the children's eyes, said: "Come now, my children, death is now the only means of your defense and your liberty, and it will give the gods matter for their holy justice. These drawn swords, these full cups, open the way to it for you. Courage! And you, my son, who are the eldest, take hold of this blade, to die the stronger death." With this vigorous counselor on one side and the enemy at their throats on the other, they rushed in a frenzy, each to whatever was nearest to hand. And half dead, they were thrown into the sea.

Theoxena, proud of having so gloriously provided for the safety of all her children, embraced her husband warmly: "Let us follow these boys, my love, and share the same grave with them." And holding each other thus, they threw themselves overboard, so that the ship was brought back to shore empty of its masters.

TORMENTS BEYOND DEATH

Everything beyond plain death is cruelty; Montaigne recalls atrocious tortures from history and his own century.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
2.27.14	Les tyrans pour faire tous les deux ensemble, et tuer, et faire sentir leur colere, ils ont employé toute leur suffisance, à trouuer moyen d'allonger la mort. Ils veulent que leurs ennemis s'en aillent, mais non pas si viste, qu'ils n'ayent loisir de sauourer leur vengeance. Là dessus ils sont en grand peine: car si les tourmens sont violents, ils sont cours: s'ils sont longs, ils ne sont pas assez douloureux à leur gré: les voyla à dispenser leurs engins. Nous en voyons mille exemples en l'antiquité; et ie ne sçay si sans y penser, nous ne retenons pas quelque trace de cette barbarie.	Tyrants, in order to do both things at once—kill and make their anger felt—have used all their ingenuity to find ways of drawing out death. They want their enemies to go, but not so fast that they themselves lack the leisure to savor their revenge. Here they are in great difficulty: for if the torments are violent, they are short; if they are long, they are not painful enough to suit them. So there they are, measuring out their devices. We see a thousand examples of this in antiquity; and I do not know whether, without realizing it, we do not retain some trace of this barbarism.
2.27.15	Tout ce qui est au delà de la mort simple, me semble pure cruauté. Nostre iustice ne peut esperer, que celuy que la crainte de mourir et d'estre decapité, ou pendu, ne gardera de faillir; en soit empesché, par l'imagination d'vn feu languissant, ou des tenailles, ou de la roue. Et ie ne sçay cependant, si nous les iettons au desespoir. Car en quel estat peut estre l'ame d'vn homme, attendant vingt-quatre heures la mort, brisé sur vne rouë, ou à la vieille façon cloué à vne croix?	Everything beyond plain death seems to me pure cruelty. Our justice cannot hope that a man whom the fear of dying, of being beheaded or hanged, will not keep from wrongdoing will be stopped by the thought of a slow fire, or pincers, or the wheel. And I do not know, meanwhile, whether we are not driving such men to despair. For what state can a man's soul be in, waiting twenty-four hours for death, broken on a wheel, or, in the old fashion, nailed to a cross?
	Iosephe recite, que pendant les guerres des Romains en Iudée, passant où lon auoit crucifié quelques Iuifs, trois iours y auoit, il recogneut trois de ses amis, et obtint de les oster de là; les deux moururent, dit-il, l'autre vescut encore depuis.	Josephus relates that during the Romans' wars in Judea, passing a place where some Jews had been crucified three days before, he recognized three of his friends and obtained leave to take them down. Two of them died, he says; the other lived on afterward.[12]
2.27.16	Chalcondyle homme de foy, aux memoires qu'il a laissé des choses aduenues de son temps, et pres de luy, recite pour extreme supplice, celuy que l'Empereur Mechmed pratiquoit souuent, de faire trancher les hommes en deux parts, par le faux du corps, à l'endroit du diaphragme, et d'vn seul coup de simeterre: d'où il arriuoit, qu'ils mourussent comme de deux morts à la fois: et voyoit-on, dit-il, l'vne et l'autre part pleine de vie, se demener long temps apres pressée de tourment. Ie n'estime pas, qu'il y eust grand'souffrance en ce mouuement. Les supplices plus hideux à voir, ne sont pas tousiours les plus forts à souffrir.	Chalcondyles, a trustworthy man, in the memoirs he left of the things that happened in his time and near him, relates as the most extreme punishment one that the Emperor Mehmed often practiced: having men cut in two through the waist, at the diaphragm, with a single stroke of the scimitar. As a result they died, as it were, two deaths at once; and one could see, he says, both parts, full of life, thrashing about for a long time afterward in torment. I do not think there was much suffering in that movement. The punishments most hideous to see are not always the hardest to bear.[13]
	Et trouue plus atroce ce que d'autres historiens en recitent contre des Seigneurs Epirotes, qu'il les feit	And I find more atrocious what other historians relate of his treatment of certain lords of Epirus:

12 The episode is in Josephus' Life.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
	escorcher par le menu, d'vne dispensation si malicieusement ordonnée, que leur vie dura quinze iours à cette angoisse.	that he had them flayed bit by bit, in stages so maliciously arranged that their lives lasted fifteen days in that agony.
2.27.17	Et ces deux autres. Crœsus avant faict prendre vn Gentilhomme fauori de Pantaleon son frere, le mena en la boutique d'vn foullon, où il le feit gratter et carder, à coups de cardes et peignes de ce mestier, iusques à ce qu'il en mourut. George Sechel chef de ces paysans de Polongne, qui soubs tiltre de la Croysade, firent tant de maux, deffaict en battaille par le Vayuode de Transsiluanie, et prins, fut trois iours attaché nud sur vn cheualet; exposé à toutes les manieres de tourmens que chacun pouuoit apporter contre luy: pendant lequel temps on fit ieusner plusieurs autres prisonniers.	And these two others. Croesus, having had a gentleman who was a favorite of his brother Pantaleon seized, took him to a fuller's shop, where he had him scraped and carded with the cards and combs of that trade until he died. George Sechel, leader of those peasants of Poland who did so much harm under the name of the Crusade, was defeated in battle by the Voivode of Transylvania and captured. He was tied naked for three days on a wooden horse, exposed to every kind of torment that anyone could bring against him; during which time several other prisoners were made to fast.[14]
	En fin, luy viuant et voyant, on abbreuua de son sang Lucat son cher frere, et pour le salut duquel seul il prioit, tirant sur soy toute l'enuie de leurs meffaits: et fit on paistre vingt de ses plus fauoris Capitaines, deschirans à belles dents sa chair, et en engloutissants les morceaux. Le reste du corps, et parties du dedans, luy expiré, furent mises bouillir, qu'on fit manger à d'autres de sa suitte.	Finally, while he was still alive and watching, they made Lucat, his dear brother, drink his blood—Lucat, for whose safety alone he was pleading, drawing upon himself all the blame for their misdeeds. And they made twenty of his most favored captains feed on him, tearing his flesh with their teeth and swallowing the pieces. The rest of his body and his inner parts, once he had expired, were put to boil and given to others of his followers to eat.

13 Laonicus Chalcondyles was a 15th-century Byzantine historian of the Ottoman conquests.
14 This is György Dózsa (Székely), leader of the Hungarian peasant revolt of 1514, which began as a crusade against the Turks.

II.28 All Things Have Their Season

Toutes choses ont leur saison
Learning Greek in old age, as Cato the Censor did, strikes Montaigne as unseemly; he himself is now winding down his hopes.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
2.28.1	CEVX qui apparient Caton le Censeur, au ieune Caton meurtrier de soy-mesme, apparient deux belles natures et de formes voisines. Le premier exploitta la sienne à plus de visages, et precelle en exploits militaires, et en vtilité de ses vacations publiques. Mais la vertu du ieune, outre ce que c'est blaspheme de luy en apparier nulle en vigueur, fut bien plus nette. Car qui deschargeroit d'enuie et d'ambition, celle du Censeur, ayant osé chocquer l'honneur de Scipion, en bonté et en toutes parties d'excellence, de bien loing plus grand que luy, et que tout autre homme de son siecle?	Those who pair Cato the Censor with the younger Cato, who killed himself, are pairing two fine natures of similar form. The first exercised his in more ways, and excels in military exploits and in the usefulness of his public offices. But the virtue of the younger—besides the fact that it is blasphemy to set any beside it in vigor—was far purer. For who could clear the Censor's virtue of envy and ambition, when he dared to attack the honor of Scipio, a man far greater than he, in goodness and in every quality of excellence, and greater than any other man of his age?[1]
2.28.2	Ce qu'on dit entre autres choses de luy, qu'en son extreme vieillesse, il se mit à apprendre la langue Grecque, d'vn ardant appetit, comme pour assouuir vne longue soif, ne me semble pas luy estre fort honnorable. C'est proprement ce que nous disons, retomber en enfantillage. Toutes choses ont leur saison, les bonnes et tout. Et ie puis dire mon patenostre hors de propos. Comme on defera T. Quintius Flaminius, de ce qu'estant general d'armée, on l'auoit veu à quartier sur l'heure du conflict, s'amusant à prier Dieu, en vne battaille, qu'il gaigna. *Imponit finem sapiens et rebus honestis.*	What is said of him, among other things, that in his extreme old age he set about learning the Greek language with an ardent appetite, as if to quench a long thirst, does not seem to me much to his honor. It is precisely what we call falling back into childhood. All things have their season, good ones and all. And I can say my Paternoster at the wrong time. Thus Titus Quinctius Flamininus was accused because, when he was general of an army, he had been seen off to one side at the moment of the clash, busy praying to God, in a battle that he won. *The wise man sets a limit even to good things.*[2]
2.28.3	Eudemonidas voyant Xenocrates fort vieil s'empresser aux leçons de son escole: Quand sçaura cettuy-cy, dit-il, s'il apprend encore? Et Philopœmen, à ceux qui hault-louoyent le Roy Ptolomæus, de ce qu'il durcissoit sa personne tous les iours à l'exercice des armes: Ce n'est, dit-il, pas chose louable à vn Roy de son aage, de s'y exercer, il les deuoit hormais reellement employer. Le ieune doit faire ses apprests, le vieil en iouïr, disent les sages. Et le plus grand vice qu'ils remerquent en nous, c'est que noz desirs raieunissent sans cesse. Nous recommençons tousiours à viure.	Eudemonidas, seeing Xenocrates, very old, eagerly attending the lessons of his school, said: "When will this man know, if he is still learning?" And Philopoemen, to those who were highly praising King Ptolemy for hardening his body every day in the exercise of arms: "It is not a praiseworthy thing," he said, "for a king of his age to practice with them; by now he ought to be using them in earnest." The young should make their preparations, the old enjoy them, say the wise. And the greatest vice they note in us is that our de-

1 Cato the Censor (234–149 BC) was the great-grandfather of Cato the Younger.
2 Juvenal, Satires.

FRENCH

ENGLISH

sires keep growing young again. We are always beginning to live.

2.28.4 Nostre estude et nostre enuie deuroyent quelque fois sentir la vieillesse. Nous auons le pied à la fosse, et noz appetis et poursuites ne font que naistre. *Tu secanda marmora*
Locas sub ipsum funus, et, sepulcri
Immemor, struis domos. Le plus long de mes desseins n'a pas vn an d'estenduë: ie ne pense desormais qu'à finir: me deffay de toutes nouuelles esperances et entreprinses: prens mon dernier congé de tous les lieux, que ie laisse: et me depossede tous les iours de ce que i'ay. *Olim iam nec perit quicquam mihi, nec acquiritur, plus superest viatici quàm viæ. Vixi, et quem dederat cursum fortuna peregi.*

Our studies and our desires ought sometimes to smack of old age. We have one foot in the grave, and our appetites and pursuits are only just being born. *You contract for marble to be cut*
on the very brink of death, and, forgetful of the tomb, you build houses. The longest of my plans does not extend a year. I think now only of ending; I am getting rid of all new hopes and undertakings; I take my last leave of every place I depart from; and every day I strip myself of what I have. *For a long time now I have neither lost nor gained anything; I have more provisions for the journey than journey left. I have lived, and finished the course that Fortune gave me.*[3]

2.28.5 C'est en fin tout le soulagement que ie trouue en ma vieillesse, qu'elle amortist en moy plusieurs desirs et soings, dequoy la vie est inquietée. Le soing du cours du monde, le soing des richesses, de la grandeur, de la science, de la santé, de moy. Cettuy-cy apprend à parler, lors qu'il luy faut apprendre à se taire pour iamais. On peut continuer à tout temps l'estude, non pas l'escholage. La sotte chose, qu'vn vieillard abecedaire! *Diuersos diuersa iuuant, non omnibus annis / Omnia conueniunt.*

This, in short, is all the relief I find in my old age: that it deadens in me many desires and cares by which life is disturbed—care for the course of the world, care for riches, for greatness, for knowledge, for health, for myself. This man is learning to speak when he ought to be learning to be silent forever. One can go on studying at any age, but not going to school. What a silly thing, an old man learning his ABCs! *Different things please different men; not all things / suit all ages.*[4]

2.28.6 S'il faut estudier, estudions vn estude sortable à nostre condition: afin que nous puissions respondre, comme celuy, à qui quand on demanda à quoy faire ces estudes en sa decrepitude: A m'en partir meilleur, et plus à mon aise, respondit-il. Tel estude fut celuy du ieune Caton, sentant sa fin prochaine, qui se rencontra au discours de Platon, de l'eternité de l'ame. Non, comme il faut croire, qu'il ne fust de long temps garny de toute sorte de munition pour vn tel deslogement. D'asseurance, de volonté ferme, et d'instruction, il en auoit plus que Platon n'en a en ses escrits. Sa science et son courage estoient pour ce regard, au dessus de la philosophie.

If we must study, let us take up a study suited to our condition, so that we may answer like the man who, when asked what he wanted these studies for in his decrepitude, replied: "To leave this world better and more at ease." Such was the study of the younger Cato when, feeling his end approaching, he came upon Plato's discourse on the eternity of the soul. Not, we must believe, that he had not long been furnished with every kind of provision for such a departure. Of assurance, firm will and learning he had more than Plato has in his writings. His knowledge and his courage were, in this respect, above philosophy.[5]

Il print cette occupation, non pour le seruice de sa mort, mais comme celuy qui n'interrompit pas seulement son sommeil, en l'importance d'vne telle deliberation, il continua aussi sans choix et sans changement, ses estudes, auec les autres actions accoustumées de sa vie.

He took up this occupation not for the sake of his death. Rather, as a man who did not even interrupt his sleep for the gravity of such a decision, he also went on with his studies, without choosing and without changing, along with the other customary

3 Horace, Odes; then Seneca, Letters; then Virgil, Aeneid.
4 Maximianus, Elegies.
5 Plato's Phaedo, on the immortality of the soul.

FRENCH	ENGLISH
La nuict, qu'il vint d'estre refusé de la Preture, il la passa à iouer. Celle en laquelle il deuoit mourir, il la passa à lire. La perte ou de la vie, ou de l'office, tout luy fut vn.	actions of his life. The night after he was refused the praetorship he spent playing games. The night on which he was to die he spent reading. Losing life or losing office—it was all one to him.

II.29 Of Virtue

De la vertu

Heroic virtue comes in fits and starts, Montaigne finds, rarely becoming settled habit, and fanatics' readiness to die proves little.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
2.29.1	IE trouue par experience, qu'il y a bien à dire entre les boutées et saillies de l'ame, ou vne resolue et constante habitude: et voy bien qu'il n'est rien que nous ne puissions, voire iusques à surpasser la diuinité mesme, dit quelqu'vn, d'autant que c'est plus, de se rendre impassible de soy, que d'estre tel, de sa condition originelle: et iusques à pouuoir ioindre à l'imbecillité de l'homme, vne resolution et asseurance de Dieu. Mais c'est par secousse.	I find by experience that there is a great difference between the sallies and bursts of the soul and a settled and constant habit. And I see well that there is nothing we cannot do—even to the point of surpassing divinity itself, as someone says, since it is more to make oneself impassive by one's own effort than to be so by one's original condition—and even to the point of joining to man's weakness a resolution and assurance worthy of God. But it comes in fits and starts.[1]
	Et és vies de ces heros du temps passé, il y a quelque fois des traits miraculeux, et qui semblent de bien loing surpasser noz forces naturelles: mais ce sont traits à la verité: et est dur à croire, que de ces conditions ainsin esleuées, on en puisse teindre et abbreuuer l'ame, en maniere, qu'elles luy deuiennent ordinaires, et comme naturelles. Il nous eschoit à nous mesmes, qui ne sommes qu'auortons d'hommes, d'eslancer par fois nostre ame, esueillée par les discours, ou exemples d'autruy, bien loing au delà de son ordinaire.	And in the lives of those heroes of times past there are sometimes miraculous strokes that seem to surpass our natural strength by far. But they are only strokes, to tell the truth; and it is hard to believe that the soul can be so dyed and steeped in these lofty qualities that they become ordinary to it, and as if natural. It happens even to us, who are only stunted specimens of men, to launch our soul at times far beyond its ordinary range, when it is roused by the reasonings or examples of others.
	Mais c'est vne espece de passion, qui la pousse et agite, et qui la rauit aucunement hors de soy: car ce tourbillon franchi, nous voyons, que sans y penser elle se desbande et relasche d'elle mesme, sinon iusques à la derniere touche; au moins iusques à n'estre plus celles-là: de façon que lors, à toute occasion, pour vn oyseau perdu, ou vn verre cassé, nous nous laissons esmouuoir à peu pres comme l'vn du vulgaire. Sauf l'ordre, la moderation, et la constance, i'estime que toutes choses soient faisables par vn homme bien manque et deffaillant en gros.	But it is a kind of passion that drives and stirs it, and carries it somewhat out of itself. For once that whirlwind is past, we see that it unbends and slackens of its own accord, without our thinking about it—if not down to the lowest note, at least to the point of no longer being up there; so that then, on every occasion, for a lost bird or a broken glass, we let ourselves be upset almost like one of the common people. Except for order, moderation and constancy, I think that all things are within reach of a man who is quite lacking and deficient on the whole.
	A cette cause disent les sages, il faut pour iuger bien à poinct d'vn homme, principalement contreroller ses actions communes, et le surprendre en son à tous les iours.	That is why, say the wise, to judge a man properly we must chiefly examine his common actions and catch him in his everyday life.

1 Seneca, Letters.

PYRRHO'S CONSISTENCY

Pyrrho tried to live his skepticism, yet admitted that it is hard to strip off the man entirely.

FRENCH

2.29.2 Pyrrho, celuy qui bastit de l'ignorance vne si plaisante science, essaya, comme tous les autres vrayement philosophes, de faire respondre sa vie à sa doctrine. Et par ce qu'il maintenoit la foiblesse du iugement humain, estre si extreme, que de ne pouuoir prendre party ou inclination: et le vouloit suspendre perpetuellement balancé, regardant et accueillant toutes choses, comme indifferentes, on conte qu'il se maintenoit tousiours de mesme façon, et visage: s'il auoit commencé vn propos, il ne laissoit pas de l'acheuer, quand celuy à qui il parloit s'en fust allé: s'il alloit, il ne rompoit son chemin pour empeschement qui se presentast, conserué des precipices, du heurt des charrettes, et autres accidens par ses amis.

Car de craindre ou euiter quelque chose, c'eust esté choquer ses propositions, qui ostoient au sens mesmes, toute eslection et certitude. Quelquefois il souffrit d'estre incisé et cauterisé, d'vne telle constance, qu'on ne luy en veit pas seulement siller les yeux. C'est quelque chose de ramener l'ame à ces imaginations, c'est plus d'y ioindre les effects, toutesfois il n'est pas impossible: mais de les ioindre auec telle perseuerance et constance, que d'en establir son train ordinaire, certes en ces entreprinses si esloignées de l'vsage commun, il est quasi incroyable qu'on le puisse. Voyla pourquoy comme il fust quelquefois rencontré en sa maison, tançant bien asprement auecques sa sœur, et luy estant reproché de faillir en cela à son indifferance: Quoy?

dit-il, faut-il qu'encore cette femmelette serue de tesmoignage à mes regles? Vn'autre fois, qu'on le veit se deffendre d'vn chien: Il est, dit-il, tres-difficile de despouiller entierement l'homme: et se faut mettre en deuoir, et efforcer de combattre les choses, premierement par les effects; mais au pis aller par la raison et par les discours.

2.29.3 Il y a enuiron sept ou huict ans, qu'à deux lieuës d'icy, vn homme de village, qui est encore viuant, ayant la teste de long temps rompue par la ialousie de sa femme, reuenant vn iour de la besongne, et elle le bien-veignant de ses crialleries accoustumées, entra en telle furie, que sur le champ à tout la serpe qu'il tenoit encore en ses mains,

ENGLISH

Pyrrho, who built so amusing a science out of ignorance, tried, like all other true philosophers, to make his life match his doctrine. He maintained that the weakness of human judgment was so extreme that it could not take sides or lean either way, and he wanted it held perpetually suspended in balance, regarding and receiving all things as indifferent. And so it is said that he always kept the same manner and the same countenance. If he had begun saying something, he did not fail to finish it even if the person he was speaking to had gone away. If he was walking, he would not turn from his path for any obstacle that came up, and had to be kept from precipices, from collisions with carts and other accidents by his friends.

For to fear or avoid anything would have clashed with his propositions, which took away all choice and certainty even from the senses. Sometimes he endured being cut and cauterized with such constancy that he was not even seen to blink. It is something to bring the soul to these notions; it is more to join deeds to them; and yet it is not impossible. But to join them with such perseverance and constancy as to make them one's ordinary way of life—truly, in undertakings so remote from common practice, it is almost unbelievable that anyone could do it. That is why, when he was once caught at home scolding his sister very sharply, and was reproached for failing in his indifference in this: "What?"

he said. "Must this little woman too serve as a test of my rules?" Another time, when he was seen defending himself against a dog: "It is very difficult," he said, "to strip off the man entirely; and one must make it one's duty and strive to fight against things, first by deeds, but at worst by reason and argument."

About seven or eight years ago, two leagues from here, a villager who is still alive, whose head had long been pounded by his wife's jealousy, came home from work one day and was greeted by her usual shrieking. He flew into such a fury that on the spot, with the billhook he still had in his hands, he cleanly harvested from himself the

FRENCH

s'estant moissonné tout net les pieces qui la mettoyent en fieure, les luy ietta au nez.

Et il se dit, qu'vn ieune Gentil-homme des nostres, amoureux et gaillard, ayant par sa perseuerance amolli en fin le cœur d'vne belle maistresse, desesperé, de ce que sur le point de la charge, il s'estoit trouué mol luy mesmes et deffailly, et que, *Non viriliter / Iners senile penis extulerat caput,* il s'en priua soudain reuenu au logis, et l'enuoya, cruelle et sanglante victime pour la purgation de son offence. Si c'eust esté par discours et religion, comme les prestres de Cibele, que ne dirions nous d'vne si hautaine entreprise?

2.29.4 Depuis peu de iours à Bragerac à cinq lieuës de ma maison, contremont la riuiere de Dordoigne, vne femme, ayant esté tourmentée et battue le soir auant, de son mary chagrin et fascheux de sa complexion, delibera d'eschapper à sa rudesse au prix de sa vie, et s'estant à son leuer accointée de ses voisines comme de coustume, leur laissa couler quelque mot de recommendation de ses affaires, prit vne sienne sœur par la main, la mena auec elle sur le pont, et apres auoir pris congé d'elle, comme par maniere de ieu, sans montrer autre changement ou alteration, se precipita du hault en bas, en la riuiere, où elle se perdit.

Ce qu'il y a de plus en cecy, c'est que ce conseil meurit vne nuict entiere dans sa teste.

ENGLISH

parts that put her in such a fever, and threw them in her face.

And it is said that a young gentleman of our parts, amorous and lusty, having by his perseverance at last softened the heart of a beautiful mistress, was in despair because at the very moment of the charge he had found himself soft and failing, and because *not manfully / had his sluggish penis raised its aged head*. As soon as he got home he deprived himself of it, and sent it to her, a cruel and bloody victim in atonement for his offense. If he had done it out of reasoning and religion, like the priests of Cybele, what would we not say of so lofty an undertaking?[2]

A few days ago at Bergerac, five leagues from my house, up the river Dordogne, a woman who had been tormented and beaten the evening before by her husband, a morose man, ill-tempered by nature, resolved to escape his harshness at the cost of her life. On getting up she chatted with her neighbors as usual, let slip a few words commending her affairs to them, took one of her sisters by the hand and led her onto the bridge. And after taking leave of her, as if in jest, without showing any other change or disturbance, she threw herself headlong from the top into the river, where she was lost.

What is more remarkable in this is that the resolve ripened for a whole night in her head.

THE WIDOWS OF INDIA

Indian widows and Gymnosophists burn themselves, a lifelong resolve that Montaigne finds miraculous.

FRENCH

2.29.5 C'est bien autre chose, des femmes Indiennes; car estant leur coustume aux maris d'auoir plusieurs femmes, et à la plus chere d'elles, de se tuer apres son mary, chacune par le dessein de toute sa vie, vise à gaigner ce poinct, et cet aduantage sur ses compagnes: et les bons offices qu'elles rendent à leur mary, ne regardent autre recompence que d'estre preferées à la compagnie de sa mort. *Vbi mortifero iacta est fax vltima lecto,*
Vxorum fusis stat pia turba comis:
Et certamen habent lethi, quæ viua sequatur
Coniugium: pudor est non licuisse mori.

ENGLISH

It is quite another thing with the women of India. For since it is their custom for husbands to have several wives, and for the dearest of them to kill herself after her husband, each one aims, by the design of her whole life, to win this point and this advantage over her companions. And the good services they render their husband look for no other reward than to be chosen to keep him company in death. *When the last torch has been thrown on the funeral bed,*
the dutiful throng of wives stands with streaming hair,
and they contend in death, which of them shall follow

2 The verse is from the Priapea, once attributed to Tibullus. The priests of the goddess Cybele castrated themselves in her honor.

FRENCH	ENGLISH
Ardent victrices, et flammæ pectora præbent, *Imponúntque suis ora perusta viris.*	*her husband* *alive: it is a disgrace not to be allowed to die.* *The winners burn, and offer their breasts to the flames,* *and lay their scorched lips upon their husbands.*[3]
2.29.6 Vn homme escrit encore en noz iours, auoir veu en ces nations Orientales, cette coustume en credit, que non seulement les femmes s'enterrent apres leurs maris, mais aussi les esclaues, desquelles il a eu iouïssance. Ce qui se faict en cette maniere. Le mary estant trespassé, la vefue peut, si elle veut, mais peu le veulent, demander deux ou trois mois d'espace à disposer de ses affaires. Le iour venu elle monte à cheual, parée comme à nopces: et d'vne contenance gaye, va, dit elle, dormir auec son espoux, tenant en sa main gauche vn miroüer, vne flesche en l'autre.	A man writes, in our own day too, that he saw in those Eastern nations this custom held in honor: that not only do wives bury themselves after their husbands, but also the slave women he has enjoyed. It is done in this manner. When the husband has died, the widow may, if she wishes—but few wish it—ask for two or three months' time to settle her affairs. When the day comes, she mounts a horse, dressed as for a wedding, and with a cheerful face goes, as she says, to sleep with her husband, holding a mirror in her left hand and an arrow in the other.[4]
S'estant ainsi promenée en pompe, accompagnée de ses amis et parents, et de grand peuple, en feste, elle est tantost rendue au lieu public, destiné à tels spectacles. C'est vne grande place, au milieu de laquelle il y a vne fosse pleine de bois: et ioignant icelle, vn lieu releué de quatre ou cinq marches: sur lequel elle est conduitte, et seruie d'vn magnifique repas. Apres lequel, elle se met à baller et à chanter: et ordonne, quand bon luy semble, qu'on allume le feu.	Having paraded thus in pomp, accompanied by her friends and relatives and a great crowd in festive mood, she is soon brought to the public place set aside for such spectacles. It is a large square, in the middle of which there is a pit full of wood, and next to it a platform raised four or five steps, onto which she is led and served a magnificent meal. After it she begins to dance and sing, and orders the fire to be lit when she sees fit.
Cela faict, elle descent, et prenant par la main le plus proche des parents de son mary, ils vont ensemble à la riuiere voisine, où elle se despouille toute nue, et distribue ses ioyaux et vestements à ses amis, et se va plongeant en l'eau, comme pour y lauer ses pechez. Sortant de là, elle s'enveloppe d'vn linge iaune de quatorze brasses de long, et donnant de rechef la main à ce parent de son mary, s'en reuont sur la motte, où elle parle au peuple, et recommande ses enfans, si elle en a. Entre la fosse et la motte, on tire volontiers vn rideau, pour leur oster la veuë de cette fournaise ardente: ce qu'aucunes deffendent, pour tesmoigner plus de courage.	That done, she comes down and, taking by the hand her husband's nearest relative, goes with him to the river nearby, where she strips quite naked, distributes her jewels and clothes to her friends, and plunges into the water as if to wash away her sins. Coming out of it, she wraps herself in a yellow cloth fourteen fathoms long and, again giving her hand to this relative of her husband, goes back with him to the mound, where she speaks to the people and commends her children to them, if she has any. Between the pit and the mound a curtain is usually drawn, to keep them from seeing that blazing furnace; some of the women forbid it, to show greater courage.
Finy qu'elle a de dire, vne femme luy presente vn vase plein d'huile à s'oindre la teste et tout le corps, lequel elle iette dedans le feu, quand elle en a faict: et en l'instant s'y lance elle mesme. Sur l'heure, le peuple renuerse sur elle quantité de busches, pour l'empescher de languir: et se change toute leur ioye en deuil et tristesse.	When she has finished speaking, a woman presents her with a vessel full of oil to anoint her head and her whole body, and she throws it into the fire when she has done; and in that instant she throws herself in. At once the people heap a quant-

3 Propertius, Elegies.
4 Montaigne's source is the Venetian Gasparo Balbi's account of his travels in the East Indies (1590).

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
		ity of logs on her, to keep her from lingering; and all their joy turns to mourning and sadness.
	Si ce sont personnes de moindre estoffe, le corps du mort est porté au lieu où on le veut enterrer, et là mis en son seant, la vefue à genoux deuant luy, l'embrassant estroittement: et se tient en ce poinct, pendant qu'on bastit au tour d'eux, vn mur, qui venant à se hausser iusques à l'endroit des espaules de la femme, quelqu'vn des siens par le derriere prenant sa teste, luy tort le col: et rendu qu'elle a l'esprit, le mur est soudain monté et clos, où ils demeurent enseuelis.	If they are persons of lesser standing, the dead man's body is carried to the place where they wish to bury him and there set upright in a sitting position, with the widow on her knees before him, embracing him tightly. She stays in that position while a wall is built around them. When it has risen to the height of the woman's shoulders, one of her people takes her head from behind and wrings her neck; and once she has given up the ghost, the wall is quickly raised and closed over, and there they remain buried.
2.29.7	En ce mesme païs, il y auoit quelque chose de pareil en leurs Gymnosophistes: car non par la contrainte d'autruy, non par l'impetuosité d'vn' humeur soudaine: mais par expresse profession de leur regle, leur façon estoit, à mesure qu'ils auoyent attaint certain aage, ou qu'ils se voyoient menassez par quelque maladie, de se faire dresser vn bucher, et au dessus, vn lict bien paré, et apres auoir festoyé joyeusement leurs amis et cognoissans, s'aller planter dans ce lict, en telle resolution, que le feu y estant mis, on ne les vist mouuoir, ny pieds ny mains: et ainsi mourut l'vn d'eux, Calanus, en presence de toute l'armée d'Alexandre le Grand.	In that same country there was something similar among their Gymnosophists. Not under constraint from others, nor from the impulse of a sudden mood, but by express profession of their rule, their custom was this: once they had reached a certain age, or saw themselves threatened by some illness, they had a pyre built, and on top of it a richly adorned bed. After joyfully feasting their friends and acquaintances, they went and settled themselves on that bed with such resolution that, when the fire was lit, they were not seen to move either foot or hand. That is how one of them, Calanus, died in the presence of the whole army of Alexander the Great.[5]
	Et n'estoit estimé entre eux, ny sainct ny bien heureux, qui ne s'estoit ainsi tué: enuoyant son ame purgée et purifiée par le feu, apres auoir consommé tout ce qu'il y auoit de mortel et terrestre. Cette constante premeditation de toute la vie, c'est ce qui fait le miracle.	Among them no one was thought either holy or blessed who had not killed himself in this way, sending forth his soul purged and purified by the fire once it had consumed all that was mortal and earthly in him. What makes the miracle is this constant premeditation throughout a whole life.

FATE AND FOREKNOWLEDGE

God's foreknowledge does not force events; belief in fixed destiny steadies Turks, Bedouins and assassins.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
2.29.8	Parmy noz autres disputes, celle du *Fatum*, s'y est meslée: et pour attacher les choses aduenir et nostre volonté mesme, à certaine et ineuitable necessité, on est encore sur cet argument, du temps passé: Puis que Dieu preuoit toutes choses deuoir ainsin aduenir, comme il fait, sans doubte: il faut donc qu'elles aduiennent ainsin. A quoy noz maistres respondent, que le voir que quelque chose aduienne, comme nous faisons, et Dieu de mesmes (car	Among our other disputes, the dispute over *Fatum* has got mixed in. To tie future things, and even our will, to a certain and inevitable necessity, people still rely on this argument from times past: since God foresees that all things are to happen thus, as he undoubtedly does, they must therefore happen thus. To which our masters reply that to

5 The Gymnosophists ("naked philosophers") were Indian ascetics, so named by the Greeks. Calanus burned himself alive in 323 BC.

FRENCH

tout luy estant present, il voit plustost qu'il ne preuoit) ce n'est pas la forcer d'aduenir: voire nous voyons, à cause que les choses aduiennent, et les choses n'aduiennent pas, à cause que nous voyons. L'aduenement fait la science, non la science l'aduenement.

Ce que nous voyons aduenir, aduient: mais il pouuoit autrement aduenir: et Dieu, au registre des causes des aduenements qu'il a en sa prescience, y a aussi celles qu'on appelle fortuites, et les volontaires, qui despendent de la liberté qu'il a donné à nostre arbitrage, et sçait que nous faudrons, par ce que nous auons voulu faillir.

2.29.9 Or i'ay veu assez de gens encourager leurs troupes de cette necessité fatale: car si nostre heure est attachée à certain point, ny les harquebusades ennemies, ny nostre hardiesse, ny nostre fuite et couardise, ne la peuuent auancer ou reculer. Cela est beau à dire, mais cherchez qui l'effectuera: et s'il est ainsi, qu'vne forte et viue creance, tire apres soy les actions de mesme, certes cette foy, dequoy nous remplissons tant la bouche, est merueilleusement legere en noz siecles: sinon que le mespris qu'elle a des œuures, luy face desdaigner leur compagnie.

Tant y a, qu'à ce mesme propos, le sire de Ioinuille tesmoing croyable autant que tout autre, nous racomte des Bedoins, nation meslée aux Sarrasins, ausquels le Roy sainct Louys eut affaire en la terre saincte, qu'ils croyoient si fermement en leur religion les iours d'vn chacun estre de toute eternité prefix et contez, d'vne preordonnance ineuitable, qu'ils alloyent à la guerre nudz, sauf vn glaiue à la turquesque, et le corps seulement couuert d'vn linge blanc: et pour leur plus extreme maudisson, quand ils se courroussoient aux leurs, ils auoyent tousiours en la bouche: Maudit sois tu, comme celuy, qui s'arme de peur de la mort. Voyla bien autre preuue de creance, et de foy, que la nostre.

Et de ce rang est aussi celle que donnerent ces deux religieux de Florence, du temps de nos peres. Estans en quelque controuerse de science, ils s'accorderent, d'entrer tous deux dans le feu, en presence de tout le peuple, et en la place publique, pour la verification

ENGLISH

see something happen, as we do, and as God does likewise (for since everything is present to him, he sees rather than foresees), is not to force it to happen. Indeed, we see because things happen, and things do not happen because we see. The happening makes the knowledge, not the knowledge the happening.[6]

What we see happen, happens; but it could have happened otherwise. In the register of the causes of events that God holds in his foreknowledge, he also has the causes called fortuitous, and the voluntary ones, which depend on the freedom he has given to our free will; and he knows that we shall go wrong, because we will have willed to go wrong.

Now I have seen plenty of people encourage their troops with this fatal necessity: if our hour is fixed at a certain point, neither the enemy's arquebus shots, nor our boldness, nor our flight and cowardice can bring it forward or put it back. That is fine to say, but look for someone who will act on it. And if it is true that a strong and lively belief draws actions of the same kind after it, then certainly this faith we are forever mouthing is wonderfully light in our times—unless its contempt for works makes it disdain their company.

Be that as it may, on this very subject the Sire de Joinville, as credible a witness as any, tells us something about the Bedouins, a nation mixed with the Saracens, with whom King Saint Louis had dealings in the Holy Land. They believed so firmly, in their religion, that each man's days were fixed and numbered from all eternity by an inevitable preordination, that they went to war naked except for a Turkish-style sword, their bodies covered only with a white linen cloth. And for their most extreme curse, when they were angry with their own people, they always had on their lips: "Cursed be you, like the man who arms himself for fear of death." That is a very different proof of belief and faith from ours.

Of the same rank, too, is the proof given by those two friars of Florence in our fathers' time. Being in some dispute over a point of learning, they agreed that both would walk into the fire, in the presence of all the people and in the public square, each to

6 *Fatum* is Latin for "fate." "Our masters" are the theologians.

FRENCH

chacun de son party: et en estoyent des-ia les apprests tous faicts, et la chose iustement sur le poinct de l'execution, quand elle fut interrompue par vn accident improuueu.

2.29.10 Vn ieune Seigneur Turc, ayant faict vn signalé fait d'armes de sa personne, à la veuë des deux battailles, d'Amurath et de l'Huniade, prestes à se donner: enquis par Amurath, qui l'auoit en si grande ieunesse et inexperience (car c'estoit la premiere guerre qu'il eust veu) remply d'vne si genereuse vigueur de courage: respondit, qu'il auoit eu pour souuerain percepteur de vaillance, vn lieure. Quelque iour estant à la chasse, dit-il, ie descouury vn lieure en forme: et encore que i'eusse deux excellents leuriers à mon costé: si me sembla-il, pour ne le faillir point, qu'il valloit mieux y employer encore mon arc: car il me faisoit fort beau ieu.

Ie commençay à descocher mes flesches: et iusques à quarante, qu'il y en auoit en ma trousse: non sans l'assener seulement, mais sans l'esueiller. Apres tout, ie descoupplay mes leuriers apres, qui n'y peurent non plus. I'apprins par là, qu'il auoit esté couuert par sa destinée: et que, ny les traits, ny les glaiues ne portent, que par le congé de nostre fatalité, laquelle il n'est en nous de reculer ny d'auancer. Ce compte doit seruir, à nous faire veoir en passant, combien nostre raison est flexible à toute sorte d'images.

Vn personnage grand d'ans, de nom, de dignité, et de doctrine, se vantoit à moy d'auoir esté porté à certaine mutation tres-importante de sa foy, par vne incitation estrangere, aussi bizarre: et au reste si mal concluante, que ie la trouuoy plus forte au reuers. Luy l'appelloit miracle: et moy aussi, à diuers sens. Leurs historiens disent, que la persuasion, estant populairement semée entre les Turcs de la fatale et imployable prescription de leurs iours, ayde apparemment à les asseurer aux dangers. Et ie cognois vn grand Prince, qui en fait heureusement son proffit: soit qu'il la croye, soit qu'il la prenne pour excuse, à se hazarder extraordinairement: pourueu que Fortune ne se lasse trop tost, de luy faire espaule.

2.29.11 Il n'est point aduenu de nostre memoire, vn plus admirable effect de resolution, que de ces deux qui

ENGLISH

verify his own side. The preparations were already all made, and the thing was just on the point of being carried out, when it was interrupted by an unforeseen accident.[7]

A young Turkish lord had performed a remarkable feat of arms in person, in sight of the two armies of Amurath and Hunyadi, which were ready to engage. Amurath asked him what had filled him, so young and inexperienced as he was (for it was the first war he had seen), with such noble vigor of courage. He replied that his supreme teacher of valor had been a hare. One day when I was out hunting, he said, I came upon a hare in its form; and although I had two excellent greyhounds at my side, it still seemed better to me, so as not to miss it, to use my bow as well, for it offered me a very fine shot.[8]

I began to loose my arrows, all forty that were in my quiver, not only without hitting it but without even waking it. After all that, I unleashed my greyhounds on it, and they could do no better. I learned from this that it had been protected by its destiny, and that neither arrows nor swords strike home except by leave of our fate, which it is not in our power to put back or bring forward. This story should serve to show us, in passing, how pliable our reason is to every sort of image.

A man great in years, in name, in rank and in learning boasted to me that he had been led to a certain very important change in his faith by an outside prompting just as bizarre, and moreover so unconvincing that I found it stronger the other way round. He called it a miracle, and so did I, in a different sense. Their historians say that the conviction, widely spread among the common people of the Turks, that the span of their days is fatally and inflexibly prescribed, evidently helps to make them steady in danger. And I know a great prince who profits from it nicely, whether he believes it or takes it as an excuse, to run extraordinary risks —provided Fortune does not tire too soon of backing him.[9]

Within our memory there has been no more admirable instance of resolution than that of the two

7 The ordeal by fire proposed in Florence in 1498 between a Franciscan and a Dominican follower of Savonarola; it was called off.
8 John Hunyadi, Hungarian general, fought the Ottomans in the 1440s.
9 The prince is probably Henry of Navarre, the future Henry IV.

FRENCH

conspirerent la mort du Prince d'Orenge. C'est merueille, comment on peut eschauffer le second, qui l'executa, à vne entreprinse, en laquelle il estoit si mal aduenu à son compagnon, y ayant apporté tout ce qu'il pouuoit. Et sur cette trace, et de mesmes armes, aller entreprendre vn Seigneur, armé d'vne si fraiche instruction de deffiance, puissant de suitte d'amis, et de force corporelle, en sa sale, parmy ses gardes, en vne ville toute à sa deuotion. Certes il y employa vne main bien determinée, et vn courage esmeu d'vne vigoreuse passion.

Vn poignard est plus seur, pour assener, mais d'autant qu'il a besoing de plus de mouuement, et de vigueur de bras, que n'a vn pistolet, son coup est plus subject à estre gauchy, ou troublé. Que celuy là, ne courust à vne mort certaine, ie n'y fay pas grand doubte: car les esperances, dequoy on eust sçeu l'amuser, ne pouuoient loger en entendement rassis: et la conduite de son exploit, montre qu'il n'en auoit pas faute, non plus que de courage. Les motifs d'vne si puissante persuasion, peuuent estre diuers, car nostre fantasie fait de soy et de nous, ce qu'il luy plaist.

L'execution qui fut faicte pres d'Orleans, n'eut rien de pareil, il y eut plus de hazard que de vigueur: le coup n'estoit pas à la mort, si la Fortune ne l'eust rendu tel: et l'entreprise de tirer estant à cheual, et de loing, et à vn qui se mouuoit au bransle de son cheual, fut l'entreprise d'vn homme, qui aymoit mieux faillir son effect, que faillir à se sauuer. Ce qui suyuit apres le montra. Car il se transit et s'enyura de la pensée de si haute execution, si qu'il perdit entierement son sens, et à conduire sa fuite, et à conduire sa langue, en ses responces. Que luy falloit-il, que recourir à ses amis au trauers d'vne riuiere?

C'est vn moyen, où ie me suis ietté à moindres dangers, et que i'estime de peu de hazard, quelque largeur qu'ait le passage, pourueu que vostre cheual trouue l'entrée facile, et que vous preuoyez au delà, vn bord aysé selon le cours de l'eau. L'autre, quand on luy prononça son horrible sentence: I'y estois preparé, dit-il, ie vous estonneray de ma patience.

2.29.12 Les Assassins, nation dependant de la Phœnicie, sont estimes entre les Mahumetans, d'vne souueraine

ENGLISH

men who plotted the death of the Prince of Orange. It is a marvel how anyone could fire up the second, who carried it out, for an undertaking in which his companion had fared so badly after putting into it all he could. And how he could, on the same track and with the same weapons, go and attack a lord armed with so fresh a lesson in distrust, powerful in his following of friends and in bodily strength, in his own hall, among his guards, in a town wholly devoted to him. Certainly he brought to it a very determined hand and a courage stirred by a vigorous passion.[10]

A dagger is surer for striking home, but since it needs more movement and strength of arm than a pistol, its blow is more liable to be deflected or disturbed. I have little doubt that this man was running to certain death; for the hopes with which he might have been beguiled could not lodge in a settled mind, and the conduct of his exploit shows that he lacked a settled mind no more than he lacked courage. The motives for so powerful a conviction may be various, for our fancy makes of itself and of us whatever it pleases.

The deed done near Orléans had nothing like it; there was more luck than vigor in it. The wound was not mortal, had Fortune not made it so. And the plan of shooting on horseback, from a distance, at a man moving with the motion of his horse, was the plan of a man who would rather miss his aim than fail to save himself. What followed showed it. For he was so transfixed and intoxicated by the thought of so lofty a deed that he entirely lost his wits, both in managing his flight and in managing his tongue in his answers. What did he need to do but reach his friends across a river?[11]

It is a means I have resorted to in lesser dangers, and I consider it of little risk, whatever the width of the crossing, provided your horse finds the way in easy and you foresee on the far side an easy bank, given the current. The other man, when his horrible sentence was pronounced, said: "I was prepared for it; I shall stun you with my endurance."

The Assassins, a nation dependent on Phoenicia, are reputed among the Muslims to be of supreme

10 William of Orange was wounded by a pistol shot in 1582 and killed by Balthasar Gérard at Delft in 1584.

FRENCH

deuotion et pureté de mœurs. Ils tiennent, que le plus court chemin à gaigner Paradis, c'est de tuer quelqu'vn de religion contraire. Parquoy, on l'a veu souuent entreprendre, à vn ou deux, en pourpoinct, contre des ennemis puissans, au prix d'vne mort certaine, et sans aucun soing de leur propre danger. Ainsi fut assassiné (ce mot est emprunté de leur nom) nostre Comte Raimond de Tripoli, au milieu de sa ville: pendant noz entreprinses de la guerre saincte. Et pareillement Conrad Marquis de Mont-ferrat, les meurtriers conduits au supplice, tous enflez et fiers d'vn si beau chef d'œuure.

ENGLISH

devotion and purity of morals. They hold that the shortest road to winning Paradise is to kill someone of the opposite religion. That is why they have often been seen to attack powerful enemies, one or two at a time, without armor, at the price of certain death and without any concern for their own danger. In this way our Count Raymond of Tripoli was assassinated (the word is borrowed from their name) in the middle of his city, during our enterprises in the holy war; and likewise Conrad, Marquis of Montferrat, his murderers going to their execution all swollen and proud of so fine a masterpiece.[12]

11 Poltrot de Méré's shooting of the Duke of Guise in 1563.
12 The Nizari Ismailis of Syria; Raymond II of Tripoli was killed in 1152, Conrad of Montferrat in 1192.

II.30 Of a Monstrous Child

D'vn enfant monstrueux
A plain description of conjoined twins Montaigne saw, ending with the claim that nothing is contrary to nature, only to custom.

FRENCH

2.30.1 CE comte s'en ira tout simple: car ie laisse aux medecins d'en discourir. Ie vis auant hier vn enfant que deux hommes et vne nourrisse, qui se disoient estre le pere, l'oncle, et la tante, conduisoient, pour tirer quelque soul de le montrer, à cause de son estrangeté. Il estoit en tout le reste d'vne forme commune, et se soustenoit sur ses pieds, marchoit et gasouilloit, enuiron comme les autres de mesme aage: il n'auoit encore voulu prendre autre nourriture, que du tetin de sa nourrisse: et ce qu'on essaya en ma presence de luy mettre en la bouche, il le maschoit vn peu, et le rendoit sans aualler: ses cris sembloient bien auoir quelque chose de particulier: il estoit aagé de quatorze mois iustement.

Au dessoubs de ses tetins, il estoit pris et collé à vn autre enfant, sans teste, et qui auoit le conduit du dos estouppé, le reste entier: car il auoit bien l'vn bras plus court, mais il luy auoit esté rompu par accident, à leur naissance; ils estoyent ioints face à face, et comme si vn plus petit enfant en vouloit accoler vn plus grandelet. La ioincture et l'espace par où ils se tenoient n'estoit que de quatre doigts, ou enuiron, en maniere, que si vous retroussiez cet enfant imparfaict, vous voyiez au dessoubs le nombril de l'autre: ainsi la cousture se faisoit entre les tetins et son nombril.

Le nombril de l'imparfaict ne se pouuoit voir, mais ouy bien tout le reste de son ventre. Voyla comme ce qui n'estoit pas attaché, comme bras, fessier, cuisses et iambes, de cet imparfaict, demouroient pendants et branslans sur l'autre, et luy pouuoit aller sa longueur iusques à my iambe. La nourrice nous adioustoit, qu'il vrinoit par tous les deux endroicts: aussi estoient les membres de cet autre nourris, et viuans, et en mesme poinct que les siens, sauf qu'ils estoient plus petits et menus. Ce double corps, et ces membres diuers, se rapportans à vne seule teste, pourroient bien fournir de fauorable prognostique au Roy, de maintenir soubs

ENGLISH

This story will go out plain, for I leave it to the physicians to discuss it. The day before yesterday I saw a child being led about by two men and a nurse, who said they were his father, uncle and aunt, to make a little money by showing him because of his strangeness. In all the rest he was of a common shape: he stood on his feet, walked and babbled more or less like other children of the same age. He had not yet been willing to take any nourishment except from his nurse's breast; what they tried to put in his mouth in my presence he chewed a little and gave back without swallowing. His cries did seem to have something peculiar about them. He was exactly fourteen months old.

Below his nipples he was attached and stuck to another child, without a head, whose back passage was stopped up, the rest being whole; for though one of its arms was shorter, it had been broken by accident at their birth. They were joined face to face, as if a smaller child were trying to hug a slightly bigger one. The joint and the space by which they held together was only four fingers wide or thereabouts, so that if you lifted up this imperfect child you could see the other's navel beneath; thus the seam ran between his nipples and his navel.

The navel of the imperfect one could not be seen, but all the rest of his belly could. So the parts of this imperfect one that were not attached, such as arms, buttocks, thighs and legs, hung dangling on the other, and might reach down to his mid-leg. The nurse added that he urinated through both places. The limbs of the other were also nourished and alive, and in the same condition as his own, except that they were smaller and thinner. This double body and these various limbs, connected to a single head, might well provide a favorable omen for the King, that he will maintain these

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
	l'vnion de ses loix, ces parts et pieces diuerses de nostre Estat.	various parts and pieces of our State under the union of his laws.
	Mais de peur que l'euenement ne le desmente, il vaut mieux le laisser passer deuant: car il n'est que de deuiner en choses faictes, *Vt quum facta sunt, tum ad coniecturam aliqua interpretatione reuocentur*: comme on dit d'Epimenides qu'il deuinoit à reculons.	But for fear that the outcome may give it the lie, it is better to let the event go first; for there is nothing like divining things already done, *so that, once they have happened, they may then be brought back to the prophecy by some interpretation*—as they say of Epimenides that he prophesied backward.[1]
2.30.2	Ie vien de voir vn pastre en Medoc, de trente ans ou enuiron, qui n'a aucune montre des parties genitales: il a trois trous par où il rend son eau incessamment, il est barbu, a desir, et recherche l'attouchement des femmes.	I have just seen a shepherd in Médoc, about thirty years old, who has no sign of genital parts. He has three holes through which he passes water continually. He is bearded, has desire, and seeks the touch of women.

WHAT WE CALL MONSTERS

Nothing is against nature; we call monstrous only what is contrary to our custom.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
2.30.3	Ce que nous appellons monstres, ne le sont pas à Dieu, qui voit en l'immensité de son ouurage, l'infinité des formes, qu'il y a comprinses. Et est à croire, que cette figure qui nous estonne, se rapporte et tient, à quelque autre figure de mesme genre, incognu à l'homme. De sa toute sagesse, il ne part rien que bon, et commun, et reglé: mais nous n'en voyons pas l'assortiment et la relation. *Quod crebrò videt, non miratur, etiam si, cur fiat nescit. Quod antè non vidit, id, si euenerit, ostentum esse censet.* Nous appellons contre Nature, ce qui aduient contre la coustume. Rien n'est que selon elle, quel qu'il soit.	What we call monsters are not so to God, who sees in the immensity of his work the infinity of forms he has included in it. And it is to be believed that this figure that astonishes us relates and belongs to some other figure of the same kind, unknown to man. From his all-wisdom nothing proceeds but what is good, common and regular; but we do not see its arrangement and relation. *What he sees often he does not wonder at, even if he does not know why it happens. What he has not seen before, if it happens, he thinks a portent.* We call contrary to nature what happens contrary to custom. Nothing whatever exists that is not in accordance with nature.
	Que cette raison vniuerselle et naturelle, chasse de nous l'erreur et l'estonnement que la nouuelleté nous apporte.	Let this universal and natural reason drive out of us the error and astonishment that novelty brings us.

1 Cicero, On Divination. Aristotle says that Epimenides divined not the future but the past.

II.31 Of Anger

De la cholere

Starting with parents who beat children in anger, Montaigne studies anger's effects and the folly of punishing while angry.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
2.31.1	PLVTARQVE est admirable par tout: mais principalement, où il iuge des actions humaines. On peut voir les belles choses, qu'il dit en la comparaison de Lycurgus, et de Numa, sur le propos de la grande simplesse que ce nous est, d'abandonner les enfans au gouuernement et à la charge de leurs peres. La plus part de noz polices, comme dit Aristote, laissent à chascun, en maniere des Cyclopes, la conduitte de leurs femmes et de leurs enfants, selon leur folle et indiscrete fantasie. Et quasi les seules, Lacedemonienne et Cretense, ont commis aux loix la discipline de l'enfance. Qui ne voit qu'en vn Estat tout despend de son education et nourriture?	Plutarch is admirable everywhere, but especially where he judges human actions. You can see the fine things he says in his comparison of Lycurgus and Numa about our great foolishness in abandoning children to the government and charge of their fathers. Most of our states, as Aristotle says, leave to each man, in the manner of the Cyclopes, the management of his wife and children according to his own foolish and thoughtless fancy; and almost the only ones that have committed the discipline of childhood to the laws are the Spartan and the Cretan. Who does not see that in a State everything depends on its education and upbringing?[1]
	et cependant sans aucune discretion, on la laisse à la mercy des parens, tant fols et meschants qu'ils soient.	And yet, without any discernment, it is left at the mercy of parents, however foolish and wicked they may be.
2.31.2	Entre autres choses combien de fois m'a-il prins enuie, passant par nos ruës, de dresser vne farce, pour venger des garçonnetz, que ie voyoy escorcher, assommer, et meurtrir à quelque pere ou mere furieux, et forcenez de colere? Vous leur voyez sortir le feu et la rage des yeux, *Rabie iecur incendente feruntur* *Præcipites, vt saxa iugis abrupta, quibus mons* *Subtrahitur, cliuóque latus pendente recedit:* (et selon Hippocrates les plus dangereuses maladies sont celles qui desfigurent le visage) à tout vne voix tranchante et esclatante, souuent contre qui ne fait que sortir de nourrisse. Et puis les voyla estroppiez, estourdis de coups: et nostre iustice qui n'en fait compte, comme si ces esboittements et eslochements n'estoient pas des membres de nostre chose publique.	Among other things, how many times, as I passed through our streets, have I felt like putting on a farce to avenge little boys whom I saw being flayed, beaten senseless and battered by some father or mother raging and mad with anger! You see fire and fury coming out of their eyes, *With rage inflaming their liver, they rush* *Headlong, like rocks torn from the ridges when the mountain* *Gives way beneath them and the side falls away from the overhanging slope* (and according to Hippocrates the most dangerous diseases are those that disfigure the face), with a sharp and piercing voice, often against a child just out of the nurse's hands. And then there they are, maimed, stunned by blows; and our justice takes no account of it, as if these dislocations and sprains were not of members of our commonwealth.[2]

1 In Homer each Cyclops lays down the law for his own wife and children; Aristotle cites them in the Ethics.
2 Juvenal, Satires.

FRENCH	ENGLISH
Gratum est quòd patriæ ciuem populóque dedisti, *Si facis vt patriæ sit idoneus, vtilis agris,* *Vtilis et bellorum et pacis rebus agendis.*	*It is a welcome thing that you have given a citizen to your country and people,* *If you make him fit for his country, useful in the fields,* *Useful in carrying out the affairs of both war and peace.*

NEVER PUNISH IN ANGER

Punishment given in anger is vengeance; Plutarch, Archytas and Plato refused to punish while angry.

FRENCH	ENGLISH
2.31.3 Il n'est passion qui esbranle tant la sincerité des iugements, que la cholere. Aucun ne feroit doubte de punir de mort, le iuge, qui par cholere auroit condamné son criminel: pourquoy est-il non plus permis aux peres, et aux pedantes, de fouetter les enfans, et les chastier estans en cholere? Ce n'est plus correction, c'est vengeance. Le chastiement tient lieu de medecine aux enfans; et souffririons nous vn medecin, qui fust animé et courroucé contre son patient?	There is no passion that so shakes the soundness of our judgments as anger. No one would hesitate to punish with death a judge who had condemned his criminal out of anger; why then is it any more permitted to fathers and schoolmasters to whip children and punish them while angry? It is no longer correction; it is vengeance. Punishment serves as medicine for children; and would we put up with a doctor who was worked up and angry with his patient?
2.31.4 Nous mesmes, pour bien faire, ne deurions iamais mettre la main sur noz seruiteurs, tandis que la cholere nous dure. Pendant que le pouls nous bat, et que nous sentons de l'esmotion, remettons la partie: les choses nous sembleront à la verité autres, quand nous serons r'accoisez et refroidis. C'est la passion qui commande lors, c'est la passion qui parle, ce n'est pas nous. Au trauers d'elle, les fautes nous apparoissent plus grandes, comme les corps au trauers d'vn brouillas. Celuy qui a faim, vse de viande, mais celuy qui veut vser de chastiement, n'en doit auoir faim ny soif. Et puis, les chastiemens, qui se font auec poix et discretion, se reçoiuent bien mieux, et auec plus de fruit, de celuy qui les souffre.	We ourselves, to do right, should never lay a hand on our servants while our anger lasts. While our pulse is racing and we feel agitated, let us put off the match. Things will truly seem different to us when we have calmed and cooled down. It is passion that commands then, passion that speaks, not we. Through it, faults look larger to us, like bodies seen through a fog. He who is hungry makes use of food; but he who would make use of punishment must have neither hunger nor thirst for it. And besides, punishments carried out with weight and discretion are much better received, and with more benefit, by the one who suffers them.
Autrement, il ne pense pas auoir esté iustement condamné, par vn homme agité d'ire et de furie: et allegue pour sa iustification, les mouuements extraordinaires de son maistre, l'inflammation de son visage, les sermens inusitez, et cette sienne inquietude, et precipitation temeraire. *Ora tument ira, nigrescunt sanguine venæ, / Lumina Gorgoneo sœuius igne micant.* Suetone recite, que Caïus Rabirius ayant esté condamné par Cæsar, ce qui luy seruit le plus enuers le peuple (auquel il appella) pour luy faire gaigner sa cause, ce fut l'animosité et l'aspreté que Cæsar auoit apporté en ce iugement.	Otherwise he does not think he has been justly condemned by a man shaken with wrath and fury; and he alleges in his own justification his master's extraordinary movements, the inflamed face, the unusual oaths, and that restlessness and rash haste of his. *Faces swell with anger, veins grow black with blood, / Eyes flash more fiercely than a Gorgon's fire.* Suetonius relates that when Gaius Rabirius had been condemned by Caesar, what helped him most with the people (to whom he appealed) in winning his case was the animosity and harshness Caesar had brought to the judgment.[3]

3 Ovid, The Art of Love.

THE PREACHER AND THE SERMON

Saying and doing differ, yet words carry more weight when the speaker lives by them.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
2.31.5	Le dire est autre chose que le faire, il faut considerer le presche à part, et le prescheur à part. Ceux-là se sont donnez beau ieu en nostre temps, qui ont essayé de choquer la verité de nostre Eglise, par les vices des ministres d'icelle: elle tire ses tesmoignages d'ailleurs. C'est vne sotte façon d'argumenter, et qui reietteroit toutes choses en confusion. Vn homme de bonnes mœurs, peut auoir des opinions faulces, et vn meschant peut prescher verité, voire celuy qui ne la croit pas.	Saying is one thing and doing another; we must consider the sermon apart and the preacher apart. Those in our time who have tried to shake the truth of our Church through the vices of its ministers have given themselves an easy game; the Church draws its testimonies from elsewhere. It is a foolish way of arguing, and one that would throw everything back into confusion. A man of good morals may hold false opinions, and a wicked man may preach the truth—even one who does not believe it.
	C'est sans doubte vne belle harmonie, quand le faire, et le dire vont ensemble: et ie ne veux pas nier, que le dire, lors que les actions suyuent, ne soit de plus d'authorité et efficace: comme disoit Eudamidas, oyant vn Philosophe discourir de la guerre; Ces propos sont beaux, mais celuy qui les dit, n'en est pas croyable, car il n'a pas les oreilles accoustumées au son de la trompette. Et Cleomenes oyant vn rhetoricien harenguer de la vaillance, s'en print fort à rire: et l'autre s'en scandalizant, il luy dit; I'en ferois de mesmes, si c'estoit vne arondelle qui en parlast: mais si c'estoit vne aigle, ie l'orrois volontiers.	It is no doubt a fine harmony when doing and saying go together; and I do not wish to deny that saying, when actions follow, carries more authority and effect. As Eudamidas said, hearing a philosopher discourse on war: "These remarks are fine, but the man who makes them is not to be believed, for his ears are not used to the sound of the trumpet." And Cleomenes, hearing a rhetorician harangue about valor, burst out laughing; and when the other was offended, he said to him: "I would do the same if it were a swallow talking about it; but if it were an eagle, I would gladly listen."[4]
	I'apperçois, ce me semble, és escrits des anciens, que celuy qui dit ce qu'il pense, l'assene bien plus viuement, que celuy qui se contrefaict. Oyez Cicero parler de l'amour de la liberté: oyez en parler Brutus, les escrits mesmes vous sonnent que cettuy-cy estoit homme pour l'achepter au prix de la vie. Que Cicero pere d'eloquence, traitte du mespris de la mort, que Seneque en traite aussi, celuy là traine languissant, et vous sentez qu'il vous veut resoudre de chose, dequoy il n'est pas resolu. Il ne vous donne point de cœur, car luy-mesmes n'en a point: l'autre vous anime et enflamme.	I notice, it seems to me, in the writings of the ancients, that the man who says what he thinks strikes home far more vividly than the one who is pretending. Listen to Cicero speak of the love of liberty; listen to Brutus speak of it: the very writings ring out to you that this man was one to buy it at the price of his life. Let Cicero, the father of eloquence, treat of the contempt of death; let Seneca treat of it too: the former drags along languidly, and you feel that he wants to make you resolved about something on which he is not resolved himself. He gives you no heart, for he has none himself; the other rouses and inflames you.
	Ie ne voy iamais autheur, mesmement de ceux qui traictent de la vertu et des actions, que ie ne recherche curieusement quel il a esté. Car les Ephores à Sparte voyans vn homme dissolu proposer au peuple vn aduis vtile, luy commanderent de se taire, et prierent vn homme de bien, de s'en attribuer l'inuention, et le proposer.	I never look at an author, especially one of those who write about virtue and actions, without inquiring curiously what kind of man he was. For the ephors at Sparta, seeing a dissolute man propose a useful piece of advice to the people, ordered him to be silent, and asked a good man to claim the idea as his own and propose it.

4 Eudamidas was a king of Sparta; both sayings come from Plutarch.

FRENCH

2.31.6 Les escrits de Plutarque, à les bien sauourer, nous le descouurent assez; et ie pense le cognoistre iusques dans l'ame: si voudrois-ie que nous eussions quelques memoires de sa vie. Et me suis ietté en ce discours à quartier, à propos du bon gré que ie sens à Aul. Gellius de nous auoir laissé par escrit ce compte de ses mœurs, qui reuient à mon subject de la cholere.

Vn sien esclaue mauuais homme et vicieux, mais qui auoit les oreilles aucunement abbreuuées des leçons de philosophie, ayant esté pour quelque sienne faute despouillé par le commandement de Plutarque; pendant qu'on le fouettoit, grondoit au commencement, que c'estoit sans raison, et qu'il n'auoit rien faict: mais en fin, se mettant à crier et iniurier bien à bon escient son maistre, luy reprochoit qu'il n'estoit pas philosophe, comme il s'en vantoit: qu'il luy auoit souuent ouy dire, qu'il estoit laid de se courroucer, voire qu'il en auoit faict vn liure: et ce que lors tout plongé en la colere, il le faisoit si cruellement battre, desmentoit entierement ses escrits.

A cela Plutarque, tout froidement et tout rassis; Comment, dit-il, rustre, à quoy iuges tu que ie sois à cette heure courroucé? mon visage, ma voix, ma couleur, ma parolle, te donne elle quelque tesmoignage que ie sois esmeu? Ie ne pense auoir ny les yeux effarouchez, ny le visage troublé, ny vn cry effroyable: rougis-ie? escume-ie? m'eschappe-il de dire chose, dequoy i'aye à me repentir? tressaulx-ie? fremis-ie de courroux? car pour te dire, ce sont là les vrais signes de la cholere. Et puis se destournant à celuy qui fouettoit: Continuez, luy dit-il, tousiours vostre besongne, pendant que cettuy-cy et moy disputons. Voyla son comte.

2.31.7 Archytas Tarentinus reuenant d'vne guerre, où il auoit esté Capitaine general, trouua tout plein de mauuais mesnage en sa maison, et ses terres en friche, par le mauuais gouuernement de son receueur: et l'ayant fait appeller: Va, luy dit-il, que si ie n'estois en cholere, ie t'estrillerois bien. Platon de mesme, s'estant eschauffé contre l'vn de ses esclaues, donna à Speusippus charge de le chastier, s'excusant d'y mettre la main luy-mesme, sur ce qu'il estoit courroucé. Charillus Lacedemonien, à vn Elote qui se portoit trop insolemment et audacieusement enuers luy: Par les Dieux, dit-il, si ie n'estois courroucé, ie te ferois tout à cette heure mourir.

ENGLISH

Plutarch's writings, if we savor them well, reveal him to us well enough, and I think I know him to the very soul; yet I wish we had some record of his life. And I have launched into this digression because of the gratitude I feel toward Aulus Gellius for leaving us in writing this story about his character, which brings me back to my subject of anger.[5]

A slave of his, a bad and vicious man, but whose ears were somewhat steeped in the lessons of philosophy, had been stripped by Plutarch's order for some fault of his. While he was being whipped, he grumbled at first that it was without reason and that he had done nothing. But in the end, starting to shout and insult his master in good earnest, he reproached him for not being the philosopher he boasted of being: he had often heard him say that it was ugly to get angry, indeed he had written a book about it; and the fact that he was now, wholly plunged in anger, having him so cruelly beaten, flatly contradicted his writings.

To this Plutarch replied, quite coolly and calmly: "What, you lout, what makes you judge that I am angry now? Does my face, my voice, my color, my speech give you any sign that I am agitated? I do not think my eyes are wild, or my face troubled, or my voice a frightful cry. Am I flushing? Am I foaming? Does anything escape me that I shall have to repent of? Am I trembling? Am I shaking with rage? For let me tell you, those are the true signs of anger." And then, turning to the man doing the whipping: "Carry on with your work," he said, "while this fellow and I argue." That is his story.

Archytas of Tarentum, returning from a war in which he had been commander-in-chief, found his household in a thorough mess and his lands lying fallow through the bad management of his steward. He had him summoned and said: "Go—if I were not angry, I would give you a good thrashing." Plato likewise, having grown heated against one of his slaves, gave Speusippus the job of punishing him, excusing himself from laying a hand on him himself on the ground that he was angry. Charillus, a Spartan, said to a helot who was behaving too insolently and boldly toward him: "By

5 Aulus Gellius, Roman author of the 2nd century AD, wrote the Attic Nights.

FRENCH

ENGLISH

the gods, if I were not angry, I would have you put to death this very moment."[6]

2.31.8 C'est vne passion qui se plaist en soy, et qui se flatte. Combien de fois nous estans esbranlez soubs vne fauce cause, si on vient à nous presenter quelque bonne deffence ou excuse, nous despitons nous contre la verité mesme et l'innocence? I'ay retenu à ce propos vn merueilleux exemple de l'antiquité. Piso personnage par tout ailleurs de notable vertu, s'estant esmeu contre vn sien soldat, dequoy reuenant seul du fourrage, il ne luy sçauoit rendre compte, où il auoit laissé vn sien compagnon, tinst pour aueré qu'il l'auoit tué, et le condamna soudain à la mort.

It is a passion that delights in itself and flatters itself. How many times, when we have been stirred up on a false cause, if someone comes and offers us some good defense or excuse, do we get annoyed at truth itself and innocence? I have kept in mind a wonderful example of this from antiquity. Piso, a man of notable virtue in every other respect, grew angry with one of his soldiers because, coming back alone from foraging, he could not tell him where he had left a comrade. Piso took it as proven that he had killed him and condemned him to death on the spot.[7]

Ainsi qu'il estoit au gibet, voicy arriuer ce compagnon esgaré: toute l'armée en fit grand'feste, et apres force caresses et accollades des deux compagnons, le bourreau meine l'vn et l'autre, en la presence de Piso, s'attendant bien toute l'assistance que ce luy seroit à luy-mesmes vn grand plaisir: mais ce fut au rebours, car par honte et despit, son ardeur qui estoit encore en son effort, se redoubla: et d'vne subtilité que sa passion luy fournit soudain, il en fit trois coulpables, par ce qu'il en auoit trouué vn innocent: et les fit depescher tous trois: Le premier soldat, par ce qu'il y auoit arrest contre luy: le second qui s'estoit esgaré, par ce qu'il estoit cause de la mort de son compagnon; et le bourreau pour n'auoir obey au commandement qu'on luy auoit faict.

Just as he was at the gallows, along came the lost comrade. The whole army made a great celebration of it, and after many embraces and hugs between the two comrades, the executioner brought them both before Piso, the whole company fully expecting that it would be a great pleasure to him too. But it was quite the reverse: out of shame and spite, his fury, which was still at its height, redoubled; and with a subtlety his passion suddenly supplied, he made three guilty men out of finding one innocent, and had all three dispatched: the first soldier, because there was a sentence against him; the second, who had got lost, because he was the cause of his comrade's death; and the executioner, for not having obeyed the order he had been given.

2.31.9 Ceux qui ont à negocier auec des femmes testues, peuuent auoir essayé à quelle rage on les iette, quand on oppose à leur agitation, le silence et la froideur, et qu'on desdaigne de nourrir leur courroux. L'orateur Celius estoit merueilleusement cholere de sa nature. A vn, qui souppoit en sa compagnie, homme de molle et douce conuersation, et qui pour ne l'esmouuoir, prenoit party d'approuuer tout ce qu'il disoit, et d'y consentir: luy ne pouuant souffrir son chagrin, se passer ainsi sans aliment: Nie moy quelque chose, de par les Dieux, dit-il, affin que nous soyons deux. Elles de mesmes, ne se courroucent, qu'affin qu'on se contre-courrouce, à l'imitation des loix de l'amour.

Those who have to deal with stubborn women may have found out into what a rage they are thrown when you meet their agitation with silence and coldness and disdain to feed their wrath. The orator Caelius was wonderfully hot-tempered by nature. A man was supping in his company, a man of soft and gentle conversation, who, so as not to provoke him, had decided to approve and agree with everything he said. Caelius, unable to bear having his ill humor pass thus without fuel, said: "Deny me something, by the gods, so that there may be two of us!" Women likewise get angry only so that you will get angry back, in imitation of the laws of love.[8]

6 Archytas of Tarentum was a Pythagorean philosopher and general.
7 Gnaeus Calpurnius Piso; the story is told by Seneca in On Anger.
8 Marcus Caelius Rufus, Roman orator and friend of Cicero; the story is in Seneca's On Anger.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
	Phocion à vn homme qui luy troubloit son propos, en l'iniuriant asprement, n'y fit autre chose que se taire, et luy donner tout loisir d'espuiser sa cholere: cela faict, sans aucune mention de ce trouble, il recommença son propos, en l'endroict où il l'auoit laissé. Il n'est replique si piquante comme est vn tel mespris.	Phocion, faced with a man who was interrupting his speech with harsh insults, did nothing but keep silent and give him all the time he wanted to exhaust his anger; that done, without any mention of this disturbance, he resumed his speech at the point where he had left off. There is no retort so stinging as such contempt.[9]

HIDDEN ANGER AND MY OWN

Suppressed anger gnaws within; Montaigne explains how he manages his own sudden but brief outbursts.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
2.31.10	Du plus cholere homme de France (et c'est tousiours imperfection, mais plus excusable à vn homme militaire: car en cet exercice il y a certes des parties, qui ne s'en peuuent passer) ie dy souuent, que c'est le plus patient homme que ie cognoisse à brider sa cholere: elle l'agite de telle violence et fureur, *Magno veluti cùm flamma sonore* *Virgea suggeritur costis vndantis aheni,* *Exultántque æstu latices, furit intus aquai* *Fumidus atque altè spumis exuberat amnis,* *Nec iam se capit vnda, volat vapor ater ad auras,* qu'il faut qu'il se contraingne cruellement, pour la moderer. Et pour moy, ie ne sçache passion, pour laquelle couurir et soustenir, ie peusse faire vn tel effort.	Of the most hot-tempered man in France (and it is always a flaw, but more excusable in a military man, for in that profession there are certainly parts that cannot do without it) I often say that he is the most patient man I know at bridling his anger. It shakes him with such violence and fury, *As when a fire of twigs, with a great roar, is heaped* *Beneath the ribs of a seething cauldron,* *And the water leaps with the heat; within, the smoking flood* *Rages and boils up high with foam,* *And the water can no longer contain itself; black steam flies up into the air,* that he has to restrain himself cruelly to moderate it. For my part, I know of no passion that I could make such an effort to hide and withstand.[10]
	Ie ne voudrois mettre la sagesse à si haut prix. Ie ne regarde pas tant ce qu'il fait, que combien il luy couste à ne faire pis. Vn autre se vantoit à moy, du reglement et douceur de ses mœurs, qui est, à la verité singuliere: ie luy disois, que c'estoit bien quelque chose, notamment à ceux, comme luy, d'eminente qualité, sur lesquels chacun a les yeux, de se presenter au monde tousiours bien temperez: mais que le principal estoit de prouuoir au dedans, et à soy-mesme: et que ce n'estoit pas à mon gré, bien mesnager ses affaires, que de se ronger interieurement: ce que ie craignois qu'il fist, pour maintenir ce masque, et cette reglée apparence par le dehors.	I would not want to set so high a price on wisdom. I look not so much at what he does as at how much it costs him not to do worse. Another man boasted to me of the orderliness and gentleness of his manners, which is truly remarkable. I told him that it was indeed something, especially for people like him of eminent rank, on whom all eyes are fixed, always to present themselves to the world well tempered; but that the main thing was to provide for the inside and for oneself; and that it was not, to my mind, managing one's affairs well to be gnawing at oneself inwardly—which I feared he was doing in order to keep up that mask and that orderly outward appearance.
2.31.11	On incorpore la cholere en la cachant: comme Diogenes dit à Demosthenes, lequel de peur d'estre apperceu en vne tauerne, se reculoit au dedans: Tant plus tu te recules	By hiding anger we drive it into our body—as Diogenes said to Demosthenes, who, for fear of being seen in a tavern, was drawing back inside: "The

9 Phocion, Athenian general and statesman of the 4th century BC.
10 Virgil, Aeneid.

FRENCH

arriere, tant plus tu y entres. Ie conseille qu'on donne plustost vne buffe à la iouë de son valet, vn peu hors de saison, que de gehenner sa fantasie, pour representer cette sage contenance. Et aymerois mieux produire mes passions, que de les couuer à mes despens. Elles s'alanguissent en s'esuantant, et en s'exprimant. Il vaut mieux que leur poincte agisse au dehors, que de la plier contre nous. *Omnia vitia in aperto leuiora sunt: et tunc perniciosissima, quum simulata sanitate subsidunt.*

2.31.12 I'aduertis ceux, qui ont loy de se pouuoir courroucer en ma famille, premierement qu'ils mesnagent leur cholere, et ne l'espandent pas à tout prix: car cela en empesche l'effect et le poids. La criaillerie temeraire et ordinaire, passe en vsage, et fait que chacun la mesprise: celle que vous employez contre vn seruiteur pour son larcin, ne se sent point, d'autant que c'est celle mesme qu'il vous a veu employer cent fois contre luy, pour auoir mal rinsé vn verre, ou mal assis vne escabelle.

Secondement, qu'ils ne se courroussent point en l'air, et regardent que leur reprehension arriue à celuy de qui ils se plaignent: car ordinairement ils crient, auant qu'il soit en leur presence, et durent à crier vn siecle apres qu'il est party. *Et secum petulans amentia certat.* Ils s'en prennent à leur ombre, et poussent cette tempeste, en lieu, où personne n'en est ny chastié ny interessé, que du tintamarre de leur voix, tel qui n'en peut mais. I'accuse pareillement aux querelles, ceux qui brauent et se mutinent sans partie: il faut garder ces Rodomontades, où elles portent.

Mugitus veluti cùm prima in prælia taurus
Terrificos ciet, atque irasci in cornua tentat,
Arboris obnixus trunco, ventósque lacessit
Ictibus, et sparsa ad pugnam proludit arena.

2.31.13 Quand ie me courrouce, c'est le plus vifuement, mais aussi le plus briefuement et secretement que ie puis: ie me pers bien en vistesse, et en violence, mais non pas en trouble: si que i'aille iettant à l'abandon, et sans choix, toute sorte de parolles iniurieuses, et que ie ne regarde d'assoir pertinemment mes pointes, où i'estime qu'elles blessent le plus: car ie n'y employe communement, que la langue. Mes valets en ont meilleur marché aux grandes occasions qu'aux petites. Les petites me surprennent: et

ENGLISH

further back you go, the further in you are." I advise giving your valet a slap on the cheek, a bit unseasonably, rather than torturing your mind to put on this wise countenance. And I would rather bring my passions out than brood on them at my own expense. They weaken by being vented and expressed. It is better that their point should act outward than that we bend it against ourselves. *All vices are lighter in the open, and most pernicious when they lurk beneath a pretense of health.*[11]

I warn those in my household who have the right to get angry, first, to husband their anger and not scatter it about at every turn, for that hinders its effect and weight. Rash and constant scolding becomes routine and makes everyone despise it. The scolding you use against a servant for his theft is not felt, since it is the very same he has seen you use against him a hundred times for rinsing a glass badly or setting a stool down wrong.

Secondly, not to get angry into thin air, and to see that their reproof reaches the person they are complaining of; for usually they shout before he is in their presence and go on shouting for an age after he has gone. *And wanton madness quarrels with itself.* They take on their own shadow and drive this storm to a place where no one is punished or touched by it, except, by the din of their voice, someone who is not to blame. I likewise blame, in quarrels, those who bluster and rebel with no opponent present: one must keep these rodomontades for where they strike home.[12]

As when a bull, before his first battle, raises
Terrifying bellows and tries to put anger into his horns,
Butting against a tree trunk, and lashes the winds
With blows, and paws the sand in prelude to the fight.

When I get angry, it is as sharply, but also as briefly and privately, as I can. I do lose myself in speed and violence, but not in confusion—not so far as to go flinging every sort of insult about recklessly and at random, without taking care to plant my barbs pointedly where I think they will wound most; for usually I use only my tongue. My servants get off more cheaply on big occasions than on small ones. The small ones take me by sur-

11 Seneca, Letters.
12 The Latin is Claudian, Against Eutropius. Rodomontades: from Rodomonte, the boastful warrior of Boiardo and Ariosto.

FRENCH

le mal'heur veut, que depuis que vous estes dans le precipice, il n'importe, qui vous ayt donné le bransle: vous allez tousiours iusques au fons. La cheute se presse, s'esmeut, et se haste d'elle mesme.

Aux grandes occasions cela me paye, qu'elles sont si iustes, que chacun s'attend d'en voir naistre vne raisonnable cholere: ie me glorifie à tromper leur attente: ie me bande et prepare contre celles cy, elles me mettent en ceruelle, et menassent de m'emporter bien loing si ie les suiuoy. Ayséement ie me garde d'y entrer, et suis assez fort, si ie l'attens, pour repousser l'impulsion de cette passion, quelque violente cause qu'elle aye: mais si elle me preoccupe, et saisit vne fois, elle m'emporte, quelque vaine cause qu'elle aye. Ie marchande ainsin auec ceux qui peuuent contester auec moy: Quand vous me sentirez esmeu le premier, laissez moy aller à tort ou à droict, i'en feray de mesme à mon tour.

La tempeste ne s'engendre que de la concurrence des choleres, qui se produisent volontiers l'vne de l'autre, et ne naissent en vn poinct. Donnons à chacune sa course, nous voyla tousiours en paix. Vtile ordonnance, mais de difficile execution. Par fois m'aduient il aussi, de representer le courroussé, pour le reiglement de ma maison, sans aucune vraye emotion. A mesure que l'aage me rend les humeurs plus aigres, i'estudie à m'y opposer, et feray si ie puis que ie seray d'oresenauant d'autant moins chagrin et difficile, que i'auray plus d'excuse et d'inclination à l'estre: quoy que parcydeuant ie l'aye esté, entre ceux qui le sont le moins.

2.31.14 Encore vn mot pour clorre ce pas. Aristote dit, que la colere sert par fois d'armes à la vertu et à la vaillance. Cela est vray-semblable: toutesfois ceux qui y contredisent, respondent plaisamment, que c'est vn' arme de nouuel vsage: car nous remuons les autres armes, ceste cy nous remue: nostre main ne la guide pas, c'est elle qui guide nostre main: elle nous tient, nous ne la tenons pas.

ENGLISH

prise; and the misfortune is that once you are over the precipice, it does not matter who gave you the push: you always go right to the bottom. The fall presses on, gathers speed and hurries of itself.

On big occasions I am repaid by this: they are so just that everyone expects to see a reasonable anger arise from them, and I pride myself on cheating their expectation. I brace and prepare myself against these; they put me on my guard and threaten to carry me very far if I followed them. I easily keep myself from entering into it, and I am strong enough, if I am expecting it, to repel the impulse of this passion, however violent its cause; but if it catches me unawares and once seizes me, it carries me away, however trivial its cause. So I strike this bargain with those who may have words with me: "When you feel that I am the first to be roused, let me run on, rightly or wrongly; I will do the same for you in my turn."

The storm arises only from the clash of angers, which readily breed one from the other and are not born at the same moment. Let us give each its run, and we are always at peace. A useful rule, but hard to carry out. Sometimes I also happen to play the angry man, for the good order of my household, without any real emotion. As age makes my temper sourer, I study to resist it; and if I can, I shall make myself henceforth all the less peevish and difficult, the more excuse and inclination I have to be so—although hitherto I have been among those who are least so.

One more word to close this topic. Aristotle says that anger sometimes serves as a weapon for virtue and valor. That is plausible; yet those who contradict it reply amusingly that it is a weapon of a novel kind: for we wield other weapons, but this one wields us. Our hand does not guide it; it guides our hand. It holds us; we do not hold it.

II.32 A Defense of Seneca and Plutarch

Defence de Seneque et de Plutarque
Montaigne defends Seneca against a Protestant pamphlet likening him to a hated cardinal, and Plutarch against Jean Bodin's charges.

FRENCH

2.32.1 LA familiarité que i'ay auec ces personnages icy, et l'assistance qu'ils font à ma vieillesse, et à mon liure massonné purement de leurs despouïlles, m'oblige à espouser leur honneur.

2.32.2 Quant à Seneque, parmy vne miliasse de petits liurets, que ceux de la Religion pretendue reformée font courir pour la deffence de leur cause, qui partent par fois de bonne main, et qu'il est grand dommage n'estre embesoignée à meilleur subiect, i'en ay veu autres-fois vn, qui pour alonger et remplir la similitude qu'il veut trouuer, du gouuernement de nostre pauure feu Roy Charles neufiesme, auec celuy de Neron, apparie feu Monsieur le Cardinal de Lorraine auec Seneque, leurs fortunes, d'auoir esté tous deux les premiers au gouuernement de leurs Princes, et quant et quant leurs mœurs, leurs conditions, et leurs deportemens.

Enquoy à mon opinion il fait bien de l'honneur audict Seigneur Cardinal: car encore que ie soys de ceux qui estiment autant son esprit, son eloquence, son zele enuers sa religion et seruice de son Roy, et sa bonne fortune, d'estre nay en vn siecle, où il fust si nouueau, et si rare, et quant et quant si necessaire pour le bien public, d'auoir vn personnage ecclesiastique de telle noblesse et dignité, suffisant et capable de sa charge: si est-ce qu'à confesser la verité, ie n'estime sa capacité de beaucoup pres telle, ny sa vertu si nette et entiere, ny si ferme, que celle de Seneque.

2.32.3 Or, ce liure dequoy ie parle, pour venir à son but, fait vne description de Seneque tres-iniurieuse, ayant emprunté ces reproches de Dion l'historien, duquel ie ne crois aucunement le tesmoignage. Car outre qu'il est inconstant, qui apres auoir appellé Seneque tres-sage tantost, et tantost ennemy mortel des vices de Neron, le fait ailleurs, auaritieux, vsurier, ambitieux, lasche, voluptueux, et contrefaisant le philosophe à fauces

ENGLISH

The familiarity I have with these two figures, and the help they give to my old age and to my book, built purely out of their spoils, oblige me to take up the defense of their honor.

As for Seneca: among the myriad little pamphlets that those of the so-called Reformed Religion circulate in defense of their cause—some of which come from a good hand, and it is a great pity that it is not employed on a better subject—I once saw one which, to stretch out and fill in the likeness it seeks to find between the government of our poor late King Charles IX and that of Nero, pairs the late Cardinal of Lorraine with Seneca: their fortunes, in that both were first in the government of their princes, and along with that their characters, their conditions and their conduct.[1]

In which, in my opinion, he does the said Lord Cardinal great honor. For although I am one of those who greatly esteem his mind, his eloquence, his zeal for his religion and for the service of his King, and his good fortune in being born in an age when it was so novel and so rare, and at the same time so necessary for the public good, to have a churchman of such nobility and rank who was competent and equal to his office—still, to confess the truth, I do not consider his ability anywhere near Seneca's, nor his virtue so clean, so whole or so firm.

Now this book I am speaking of, to reach its goal, gives a very insulting description of Seneca, having borrowed these reproaches from Dio the historian, whose testimony I do not believe at all. For besides being inconsistent—after calling Seneca at one moment most wise and at another a mortal enemy of Nero's vices, he elsewhere makes him

1 Charles de Guise, Cardinal of Lorraine (1524–1574), chief adviser to the French crown under Francis II and Charles IX.

FRENCH

enseignes: sa vertu paroist si viue et vigoureuse en ses escrits, et la defence y est si claire à aucunes de ces imputations, comme de sa richesse et despence excessiue, que ie n'en croiroy aucun tesmoignage au contraire. Et d'auantage, il est bien plus raisonnable, de croire en telles choses les historiens Romains, que les Grecs et estrangers.

Or Tacitus et les autres, parlent tres-honorablement, et de sa vie et de sa mort: et nous le peignent en toutes choses personnage tres-excellent et tres-vertueux. Et ie ne veux alleguer autre reproche contre le iugement de Dion, que cestuy-cy, qui est ineuitable: c'est qu'il a le sentiment si malade aux affaires Romaines, qu'il ose soustenir la cause de Iulius Cæsar contre Pompeius, et d'Antonius contre Cicero.

ENGLISH

avaricious, a usurer, ambitious, cowardly, given to pleasure, and a philosopher under false colors—Seneca's virtue appears so lively and vigorous in his writings, and his defense against some of these charges, such as his wealth and excessive spending, is so clear there, that I would believe no testimony to the contrary. Moreover, it is much more reasonable in such matters to believe the Roman historians than the Greeks and foreigners.[2]

Now Tacitus and the others speak very honorably both of his life and of his death, and portray him to us as in all things a most excellent and virtuous man. And I will allege no other reproach against Dio's judgment than this one, which is unanswerable: his feeling for Roman affairs is so unsound that he dares to uphold the cause of Julius Caesar against Pompey, and of Antony against Cicero.

BODIN AGAINST PLUTARCH

Montaigne answers Jean Bodin's charges that Plutarch told incredible tales and favored the Greeks.

FRENCH

2.32.4 Venons à Plutarque. Iean Bodin est vn bon autheur de nostre temps, et accompagné de beaucoup plus de iugement que la tourbe des escriuailleurs de son siecle, et merite qu'on le iuge et considere. Ie le trouue vn peu hardy en ce passage de sa Methode de l'histoire, où il accuse Plutarque non seulement d'ignorance (surquoy ie l'eusse laissé dire: car cela n'est pas de mon gibier), mais aussi en ce que cet autheur escrit souuent des choses incroyables et entierement fabuleuses (ce sont ses mots).

S'il eust dit simplement, les choses autrement qu'elles ne sont, ce n'estoit pas grande reprehension: car ce que nous n'auons pas veu, nous le prenons des mains d'autruy et à credit: et ie voy qu'à escient il recite par fois diuersement mesme histoire: comme le iugement des trois meilleurs capitaines qui eussent onques esté, faict par Hannibal, il est autrement en la vie de Flaminius, autrement en celle de Pyrrhus. Mais de le charger d'auoir pris pour argent content, des choses incroyables et impossibles, c'est accuser de faute de iugement, le plus iudicieux autheur du monde.

2.32.5 Et voicy son exemple: Comme, ce dit-il, quand il recite qu'vn enfant de Lacedemone se laissa deschirer tout le

ENGLISH

Let us come to Plutarch. Jean Bodin is a good author of our time, endowed with far more judgment than the mob of scribblers of his age, and he deserves to be judged and considered. I find him a little bold in the passage of his Method of History where he accuses Plutarch not only of ignorance (on which I would have let him have his say, for that is not my game), but also of often writing "things incredible and entirely fabulous" (those are his words).[3]

If he had simply said "things otherwise than they are," it would not have been a great reproach; for what we have not seen we take from the hands of others and on credit. And I see that he sometimes knowingly tells the same story in different ways: for instance, Hannibal's judgment of the three best captains who ever lived is given one way in the Life of Flamininus and another in that of Pyrrhus. But to charge him with having taken incredible and impossible things for ready cash is to accuse the most judicious author in the world of a lack of judgment.

And here is his example: "As," he says, "when he relates that a Spartan boy let his whole belly be

2 Cassius Dio, Greek historian of Rome, early 3rd century AD.

FRENCH

ventre à vn renardeau, qu'il auoit desrobé, et le tenoit caché soubs sa robe, iusques à mourir plustost que de descouurir son larecin. Ie trouue en premier lieu cet exemple mal choisi: d'autant qu'il est bien malaisé de borner les efforts des facultez de l'ame, là où des forces corporelles, nous auons plus de loy de les limiter et cognoistre. Et à cette cause, si c'eust esté à moy à faire, i'eusse plustost choisi vn exemple de cette seconde sorte: et il y en a de moins croyables.

Comme entre autres, ce qu'il recite de Pyrrhus, que tout blessé qu'il estoit, il donna si grand coup d'espée à vn sien ennemy armé de toutes pieces, qu'il le fendit du haut de la teste iusques au bas, si que le corps se partit en deux parts. En son exemple, ie n'y trouue pas grand miracle, ny ne reçois l'excuse de quoy il couure Plutarque, d'auoir adiousté ce mot, comme on dit, pour nous aduertir, et tenir en bride nostre creance. Car si ce n'est aux choses receuës par authorité et reuerence d'ancienneté ou de religion, il n'eust voulu ny recevoir luy mesme, ny nous proposer à croire, choses de foy incroyables.

Et que ce mot, comme on dit, il ne l'employe pas en ce lieu pour cet effect, il est aysé à voir par ce que luy mesme nous raconte ailleurs sur ce subiect de la patience des enfans Lacedemoniens, des exemples aduenuz de son temps plus malaisez à persuader. Comme celuy que Cicero a tesmoigné aussi autant luy, pour auoir, à ce qu'il dit, esté sur les lieux: Que iusques à leur temps, il se trouuoit des enfans en cette preuue de patience, à quoy on les essayoit deuant l'autel de Diane, qui souffroyent d'y estre fouëtez iusques à ce que le sang leur couloit par tout non seulement sans s'escrier, mais encores sans gemir, et aucuns iusques à y laisser volontairement la vie.

Et ce que Plutarque aussi recite, auec cent autres tesmoins, qu'au sacrifice, vn charbon ardent s'estant coulé dans la manche d'vn enfant Lacedemonien, ainsi qu'il encensoit, il se laissa brusler tout le bras, iusques à ce que la senteur de la chair cuyte en vint aux assistans. Il n'estoit rien selon leur coustume, où il leur allast plus de la reputation, ny dequoy ils eussent à souffrir plus de blasme et de honte, que d'estre surpris en larecin. Ie suis si imbu de la grandeur de ces hommes là, que non seulement il ne me semble, comme à Bodin, que son

ENGLISH

torn open by a fox cub he had stolen and was keeping hidden under his robe, going so far as to die rather than reveal his theft." I find this example badly chosen in the first place, because it is very hard to set bounds to the efforts of the faculties of the soul, whereas with bodily strength we have more right to limit and know it. For that reason, if it had been up to me, I would rather have chosen an example of this second kind; and there are some less believable ones.

For instance, among others, what he relates of Pyrrhus: that, wounded as he was, he dealt an enemy armed from head to foot such a blow with his sword that he split him from the top of his head to the bottom, so that the body fell apart in two pieces. In Bodin's example I find no great miracle; nor do I accept the excuse with which he covers Plutarch, that he added the words "as they say" to warn us and keep a rein on our belief. For except in matters received on authority and out of reverence for antiquity or religion, Plutarch would not have wanted either to accept himself, or to offer us for belief, things incredible in themselves.

And that he does not use these words "as they say" here for that purpose is easy to see from what he himself tells us elsewhere on this subject of the endurance of Spartan children—examples that occurred in his own time and are harder to credit. Such is the one that Cicero also attested before him, having, as he says, been on the spot: that even in their time there were children to be found, in that test of endurance to which they were put before the altar of Diana, who let themselves be whipped there until the blood ran all over them, not only without crying out but even without groaning, and some to the point of willingly giving up their lives there.

And there is what Plutarch also relates, along with a hundred other witnesses: that at a sacrifice, a burning coal slipped into the sleeve of a Spartan boy while he was burning incense, and he let his whole arm burn until the smell of cooked flesh reached the bystanders. By their custom there was nothing in which their reputation was more at stake, nor for which they had to suffer more blame and shame, than being caught stealing. I am so steeped in the greatness of those men that not

3 Bodin's Method for the Easy Understanding of History appeared in 1566.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
	conte soit incroyable, que ie ne le trouue pas seulement rare et estrange.	only does Plutarch's story not seem incredible to me, as it does to Bodin, but I do not even find it rare or strange.
	L'histoire Spartaine est pleine de mille plus aspres exemples et plus rares: elle est à ce prix toute miracle.	Spartan history is full of a thousand harsher and rarer examples; by that standard it is all miracle.
2.32.6	Marcellinus recite sur ce propos du larecin, que de son temps il ne s'estoit encores peu trouuer aucune sorte de tourment, qui peust forcer les Egyptiens surpris en ce mesfaict: qui estoit fort en vsage entre eux, à dire seulement leur nom.	Marcellinus relates, on this subject of theft, that in his time no kind of torture had yet been found that could force Egyptians caught in this crime, which was very common among them, even to tell their name.
2.32.7	Vn paisan Espagnol estant mis à la gehenne sur les complices de l'homicide du præteur Lucius Piso, crioit au milieu des tourmens, que ses amis ne bougeassent, et l'assistassent en toute seureté, et qu'il n'estoit pas en la douleur, de luy arracher vn mot de confession, et n'en eut on autre chose, pour le premier iour. Le lendemain, ainsi qu'on le ramenoit pour recommencer son tourment, s'esbranlant vigoureusement entre les mains de ses gardes, il alla froisser sa teste contre vne paroy, et s'y tua.	A Spanish peasant, put to torture to name the accomplices in the murder of the praetor Lucius Piso, cried out in the midst of his torments that his friends should not budge but should stand by and watch in complete safety, and that it was not in the power of pain to wring from him one word of confession; and nothing else was got from him the first day. The next day, as they were bringing him back to begin his torture again, he wrenched himself vigorously out of his guards' hands, dashed his head against a wall and killed himself.
2.32.8	Epicharis ayant saoulé et lassé la cruauté des satellites de Neron, et soustenu leur feu, leurs batures, leurs engins, sans aucune voix de reuelation de sa coniuration, tout vn iour: rapportée à la gehenne l'endemain, les membres touts brisez, passa vn lasset de sa robbe dans l'vn bras de sa chaize, à tout vn nœud coulant, et y fourrant sa teste, s'estrangla du pois de son corps. Ayant le courage d'ainsi mourir, et se desrober aux premiers tourments, semble elle pas à escient auoir presté sa vie à cette espreuue de sa patience du iour precedent, pour se moquer de ce tyran, et encourager d'autres à semblable entreprinse contre luy?	Epicharis glutted and wearied the cruelty of Nero's henchmen, withstanding their fire, their beatings and their instruments for a whole day without a word revealing her conspiracy. Carried back to the torture the next day, her limbs all broken, she passed a cord from her dress through one arm of her chair, with a running knot, put her head into it, and strangled herself with the weight of her body. Having the courage to die thus and escape the earlier torments, does she not seem to have deliberately lent her life to that trial of her endurance the day before, in order to mock the tyrant and encourage others to a similar enterprise against him?[4]
2.32.9	Et qui s'enquerra à nos argoulets, des experiences qu'ils ont euës en ces guerres ciuiles, il se trouuera des effets de patience, d'obstination et d'opiniastreté, parmy nos miserables siecles, et en cette tourbe molle et effeminée, encore plus que l'Egyptienne, dignes d'estre comparez à ceux que nous venons de reciter de la vertu Spartaine. Ie sçay qu'il s'est trouué des simples paysans, s'estre laissez griller la plante des pieds, ecrazer le bout des doigts à tout le chien d'vne pistole, pousser les yeux sanglants	And if you ask our light horsemen about what they have seen in these civil wars, you will find instances of endurance, obstinacy and stubbornness, in our wretched age and among this soft and spineless rabble, softer even than the Egyptian one, worthy of comparison with the examples of Spartan virtue we have just related. I know that there have been simple peasants who let the soles of their feet be roasted, the ends of their fingers crushed with the hammer of a pistol, and their

4 Epicharis, a freedwoman involved in the conspiracy of Piso against Nero in AD 65, as told by Tacitus.

FRENCH

hors de la teste, à force d'auoir le front serré d'vne corde, auant que de s'estre seulement voulu mettre à rançon.

I'en ay veu vn, laissé pour mort tout nud dans vn fossé, ayant le col tout meurtry et enflé, d'vn licol qui y pendoit encore, auec lequel on l'auoit tirassé toute la nuict, à la queuë d'vn cheual, le corps percé en cent lieux, à coups de dague, qu'on luy auoit donné, non pas pour le tuer, mais pour luy faire de la douleur et de la crainte: qui auoit souffert tout cela, et iusques à y auoir perdu parolle et sentiment, resolu, à ce qu'il me dit, de mourir plustost de mille morts (comme de vray, quant à sa souffrance, il en auoit passé vne toute entiere) auant que rien promettre: et si estoit vn des plus riches laboureurs de toute la contrée.

Combien en a lon veu se laisser patiemment brusler et rotir, pour des opinions empruntées d'autruy, ignorées et incognues? I'ay cogneu cent et cent femmes (car ils disent que les testes de Gascongne ont quelque prerogatiue en cela) que vous eussiez plustost faict mordre dans le fer chaut, que de leur faire desmordre vne opinion qu'elles eussent conçeuë en cholere. Elles s'exasperent à l'encontre des coups et de la contrainte.

Et celuy qui forgea le conte de la femme, qui pour aucune correction de menaces, et bastonnades, ne cessoit d'appeller son mary pouïlleux, et qui precipitée dans l'eau haussoit encores en s'estouffant, les mains, et faisoit au dessus de sa teste, signe de tuer des poux: forgea vn conte, duquel en verité tous les iours, on voit l'image expresse en l'opiniastreté des femmes. Et est l'opiniastreté sœur de la constance, au moins en vigueur et fermeté.

2.32.10 Il ne faut pas iuger ce qui est possible, et ce qui ne l'est pas, selon ce qui est croyable et incroyable à nostre sens, comme i'ay dit ailleurs. Et est vne grande faute, et en laquelle toutesfois la plus part des hommes tombent: ce que ie ne dis pas pour Bodin: de faire difficulté de croire d'autruy, ce qu'eux ne sçauroient faire, ou ne voudroient. Il semble à chacun que la maistresse forme de l'humaine nature est en luy: selon elle, il faut regler tous les autres. Les allures qui ne se rapportent aux siennes, sont faintes et fauces. Luy propose lon quelque chose des actions ou facultez d'vn autre?

la premiere chose qu'il appelle à la consultation de son iugement, c'est son exemple: selon qu'il en va chez luy, selon cela va l'ordre du monde. O l'asnerie dangereuse et

ENGLISH

bloody eyes forced out of their heads by a cord drawn tight around their foreheads, before they would so much as agree to pay a ransom.

I have seen one left for dead, stark naked in a ditch. His neck was all bruised and swollen from a halter still hanging from it, by which he had been dragged all night at a horse's tail. His body had been pierced in a hundred places with dagger thrusts, given him not to kill him but to cause him pain and fear. He had endured all this, to the point of losing speech and feeling, resolved, as he told me, to die a thousand deaths (and indeed, so far as suffering goes, he had gone through one entire death) rather than promise anything. And yet he was one of the richest farmers in the whole region.

How many have we seen let themselves be patiently burned and roasted for opinions borrowed from others, which they did not understand and did not know? I have known hundreds upon hundreds of women (for they say that Gascon heads have some special privilege in this) whom you could sooner have made sink their teeth into red-hot iron than make them let go of an opinion they had formed in anger. Blows and constraint only make them more furious.

The man who made up the tale of the woman who, for all the correction of threats and beatings, would not stop calling her husband lousy, and who, thrown into the water and choking, still raised her hands and made above her head the sign of cracking lice, made up a tale of which, in truth, we see the exact image every day in the stubbornness of women. And stubbornness is the sister of constancy, at least in vigor and firmness.

We must not judge what is possible and what is not by what is credible or incredible to our own mind, as I have said elsewhere. It is a great fault, and yet one into which most men fall (I do not say this about Bodin), to balk at believing of others what they themselves could not do, or would not. Each man thinks that the master pattern of human nature is in himself, and that all others must be measured by it. Ways of going that do not match his own are feigned and false. Is he told something about another man's actions or faculties?

The first thing he calls in to consult his judgment is his own example: as things go with him, so goes the order of the world. Oh, what dangerous and in-

FRENCH

insupportable! Moy ie considere aucuns hommes fort loing au dessus de moy, notamment entre les anciens: et encores que ie recognoisse clairement mon impuissance à les suyure de mille pas, ie ne laisse pas de les suyure à veuë, et iuger les ressorts qui les haussent ainsi, desquels i'apperçoy aucunement en moy les semences: comme ie fay aussi de l'extreme bassesse des esprits, qui ne m'estonne, et que ie ne mescroy non plus.

Ie voy bien le tour que celles là se donnent pour se monter, et i'admire leur grandeur: et ces eslancemens que ie trouue tres-beaux, ie les embrasse: et si mes forces n'y vont, au moins mon iugement s'y applique tres-volontiers.

2.32.11 L'autre exemple qu'il allegue des choses incroyables, et entierement fabuleuses, dictes par Plutarque: c'est qu'Agesilaus fut mulcté par les Ephores pour auoir attiré à soy seul, le cœur et la volonté de ses citoyens. Ie ne sçay quelle marque de fauceté il y treuue: mais tant y a, que Plutarque parle là des choses qui luy deuoyent estre beaucoup mieux cognuës qu'à nous: et n'estoit pas nouueau en Grece, de voir les hommes punis et exilez, pour cela seul, d'agreer trop à leurs citoyens: tesmoin l'Ostracisme et le Petalisme.

2.32.12 Il y a encore en ce mesme lieu, vn' autre accusation qui me pique pour Plutarque, où il dit qu'il a bien assorty de bonne foy, les Romains aux Romains, et les Grecs entre eux, mais non les Romains aux Grecz, tesmoin, dit-il, Demosthenes et Cicero, Caton et Aristides, Sylla et Lisander, Marcellus et Pelopidas, Pompeius et Agesilaus, estimant qu'il a fauorisé les Grecz, de leur auoir donné des compagnons si dispareils. C'est iustement attaquer ce que Plutarque a de plus excellent et loüable. Car en ses comparaisons (qui est la piece plus admirable de ses œuvres, et en laquelle à mon aduis il s'est autant pleu) la fidelité et syncerité de ses iugemens, esgale leur profondeur et leur poix.

C'est vn philosophe, qui nous apprend la vertu. Voyons si nous le pourrons garentir de ce reproche de preuarication et fauceté. Ce que ie puis penser auoir donné occasion à ce iugement, c'est ce grand et esclatant lustre des noms Romains, que nous auons en la teste: il ne

ENGLISH

tolerable asininity! As for me, I regard some men as far above me, notably among the ancients. And though I clearly recognize that I am powerless to follow them within a thousand paces, I still follow them with my eyes and judge the springs that raise them so high, the seeds of which I perceive in myself to some degree. I do the same with the extreme baseness of some minds, which does not stun me, and which I do not disbelieve either.

I can see the swing those lofty souls give themselves to rise, and I admire their greatness; and those leaps, which I find very beautiful, I embrace. If my strength does not reach that far, at least my judgment applies itself to them most willingly.

The other example he cites of incredible and wholly fabulous things told by Plutarch is that Agesilaus was fined by the ephors for having drawn to himself alone the hearts and goodwill of his fellow citizens. I do not know what mark of falsehood he finds in that. But at all events Plutarch is speaking there of things that must have been far better known to him than to us. And it was nothing new in Greece to see men punished and exiled for this alone, for being too pleasing to their fellow citizens: witness ostracism and petalism.[5]

In this same passage there is another accusation that stings me on Plutarch's behalf. Bodin says that Plutarch matched Romans with Romans and Greeks with Greeks in good faith, but not Romans with Greeks: witness, he says, Demosthenes and Cicero, Cato and Aristides, Sulla and Lysander, Marcellus and Pelopidas, Pompey and Agesilaus. He holds that Plutarch favored the Greeks by giving them such ill-matched companions. That is to attack precisely what is most excellent and praiseworthy in Plutarch. For in his comparisons (which are the most admirable part of his works, and the part in which, in my opinion, he took most pleasure) the fidelity and sincerity of his judgments equal their depth and their weight.

He is a philosopher who teaches us virtue. Let us see whether we can defend him against this charge of bad faith and falsehood. What I imagine gave rise to this judgment is the great and dazzling luster of Roman names that we carry in our heads:

5 Petalism was the Syracusan counterpart of Athenian ostracism, with the names of those to be banished written on olive leaves.

FRENCH

nous semble point, que Demosthenes puisse esgaler la gloire d'vn consul, proconsul, et questeur de cette grande republique. Mais qui considerera la verité de la chose, et les hommes en eux mesmes, à quoy Plutarque a plus visé, et à balancer leurs mœurs, leurs naturels, leur suffisance, que leur fortune: ie pense au rebours de Bodin, que Ciceron et le vieux Caton, en doiuent de reste à leurs compaignons.

Pour son dessein, i'eusse plustost choisi l'exemple du ieune Caton comparé à Phocion: car en ce pair, il se trouueroit vne plus vray-semblable disparité à l'aduantage du Romain. Quant à Marcellus, Sylla, et Pompeius, ie voy bien que leurs exploits de guerre sont plus enflez, glorieux, et pompeux, que ceux des Grecs, que Plutarque leur apparie: mais les actions les plus belles et vertueuses, non plus en la guerre qu'ailleurs, ne sont pas tousiours les plus fameuses. Ie voy souuent des noms de capitaines, estouffez soubs la splendeur d'autres noms, de moins de merite: tesmoin Labienus, Ventidius, Telesinus et plusieurs autres.

Et à le prendre par là, si i'auois à me plaindre pour les Grecs, pourrois-ie pas dire, que beaucoup moins est Camillus comparable à Themistocles, les Gracches à Agis et Cleomenes, Numa à Lycurgus? Mais c'est folie de vouloir iuger d'vn traict, les choses à tant de visages.

2.32.13 Quand Plutarque les compare, il ne les esgale pas pourtant. Qui plus disertement et conscientieusement, pourroit remarquer leurs differences? Vient-il à parangonner les victoires, les exploits d'armes, la puissance des armées conduites par Pompeius, et ses triumphes, auec ceux d'Agesilaus? Ie ne croy pas, dit-il, que Xenophon mesme, s'il estoit viuant, encore qu'on luy ait concedé d'escrire tout ce qu'il a voulu à l'aduantage d'Agesilaus, osast le mettre en comparaison. Parle-il de conferer Lysander à Sylla: Il n'y a, dit-il, point de comparaison, ny en nombre de victoires, ny en hazard de batailles: car Lysander ne gaigna seulement que deux batailles nauales, etc. Cela, ce n'est rien desrober aux Romains.

Pour les auoir simplement presentez aux Grecz, il ne leur peut auoir fait iniure, quelque disparité qui y puisse estre. Et Plutarque ne les contrepoise pas entiers: il n'y a en gros aucune preference: il apparie les pieces et les circonstances, l'vne apres l'autre, et les iuge separément.

ENGLISH

it does not seem to us that Demosthenes can equal the glory of a consul, proconsul and quaestor of that great republic. But if one considers the truth of the matter, and the men in themselves (which is what Plutarch chiefly aimed at, weighing their characters, their natures and their abilities rather than their fortune), I think, contrary to Bodin, that Cicero and the elder Cato fall short of their companions.

For his purpose I would rather have chosen the example of the younger Cato compared with Phocion: in that pair there would be a more plausible disparity to the Roman's advantage. As for Marcellus, Sulla and Pompey, I can see that their feats of war are grander, more glorious and more showy than those of the Greeks whom Plutarch pairs with them. But the finest and most virtuous actions, in war no more than elsewhere, are not always the most famous. I often see the names of commanders smothered beneath the splendor of other names of less merit: witness Labienus, Ventidius, Telesinus and many others.

And taking it from that angle, if I had to complain on behalf of the Greeks, could I not say that Camillus is much less comparable to Themistocles, the Gracchi to Agis and Cleomenes, Numa to Lycurgus? But it is folly to try to judge with a single stroke things that have so many faces.

When Plutarch compares them, he does not for all that make them equal. Who could point out their differences more clearly and conscientiously? Does he come to compare the victories, the feats of arms, the strength of the armies led by Pompey, and his triumphs, with those of Agesilaus? I do not believe, he says, that Xenophon himself, if he were alive, even though he was allowed to write whatever he liked to the advantage of Agesilaus, would dare to set them side by side. Does he speak of comparing Lysander with Sulla? There is no comparison, he says, either in the number of victories or in the hazard of battles: for Lysander won only two naval battles, etc. That is not robbing the Romans of anything.

By merely setting them beside the Greeks he cannot have wronged them, whatever disparity there may be. And Plutarch does not weigh them against each other as wholes; there is no overall preference. He matches the parts and the circumstances

FRENCH	ENGLISH
Parquoy, si on le vouloit conuaincre de faueur, il falloit en esplucher quelque iugement particulier: ou dire en general, qu'il auroit failly d'assortir tel Grec à tel Romain: d'autant qu'il y en auroit d'autres plus correspondans pour les apparier, et se rapportans mieux.	one after another and judges them separately. So if anyone wanted to convict him of partiality, he should have picked apart some particular judgment, or said in general that Plutarch was wrong to match such a Greek with such a Roman, since there were others better suited to the pairing and more alike.

II.33 The Story of Spurina

L'histoire de Spurina

A handsome youth who disfigured his face to escape women's desire leads Montaigne to Caesar's ambition and the mastery of passions.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
2.33.1	LA philosophie ne pense pas auoir mal employé ses moyens, quand elle a rendu à la raison, la souueraine maistrise de nostre ame, et l'authorité de tenir en bride nos appetits. Entre lesquels ceux qui iugent qu'il n'en y a point de plus violens, que ceux que l'amour engendre, ont cela pour leur opinion, qu'ils tiennent au corps et à l'ame, et que tout l'homme en est possedé: en maniere que la santé mesmes en depend, et est la medecine par fois contrainte de leur seruir de maquerellage. Mais au contraire, on pourroit aussi dire, que le meslange du corps y apporte du rabais, et de l'affoiblissement: car tels desirs sont subiects à satieté, et capables de remedes materiels.	Philosophy does not think it has used its means badly when it has given reason sovereign mastery over our soul and the authority to hold our appetites in check. Among these appetites, those who judge that none are more violent than the ones love engenders base their opinion on the fact that they belong to both body and soul, and that the whole man is possessed by them, so much so that even health depends on them and medicine is sometimes forced to act as their procurer. But on the contrary, one could also say that the admixture of the body brings them some abatement and weakening: for such desires are subject to satiety and can be cured by material remedies.
2.33.2	Plusieurs ayans voulu deliurer leurs ames des alarmes continuelles que leur donnoit cet appetit, se sont seruis d'incision et destranchement des parties esmeuës et alterées. D'autres en ont du tout abatu la force, et l'ardeur, par frequente application de choses froides, comme de neige, et de vinaigre. Les haires de nos aieulx estoient de cet vsage: c'est vne matiere tissue de poil de cheual, dequoy les vns d'entr'eux faisoient des chemises, et d'autres des ceintures à gehenner leurs reins.	Many who wanted to free their souls from the continual alarms this appetite gave them have resorted to cutting and amputating the aroused and disordered parts. Others have entirely beaten down its force and ardor by frequent application of cold things, such as snow and vinegar. The hair shirts of our forefathers served this purpose: it is a fabric woven of horsehair, of which some of them made shirts, and others belts to torment their loins.
	Vn Prince me disoit, il n'y a pas long temps, que pendant sa ieunesse, vn iour de feste solemne, en la cour du Roy François premier, où tout le monde estoit paré, il luy print enuie de se vestir de la haire, qui est encore chez luy, de monsieur son pere: mais quelque deuotion qu'il eust, qu'il ne sceut auoir la patience d'attendre la nuict pour se despouïller, et en fut long temps malade: adioustant qu'il ne pensoit pas qu'il y eust chaleur de ieunesse si aspre, que l'vsage de cette recepte ne peust amortir: toutesfois à l'aduanture ne les a-il pas essayées les plus cuisantes.	A prince told me not long ago that in his youth, on a solemn feast day at the court of King Francis I, when everyone was dressed in finery, he took a fancy to put on his father's hair shirt, which is still in his house. But whatever devotion he had, he could not find the patience to wait until night to take it off, and he was ill from it for a long time. He added that he did not think there was any heat of youth so fierce that this remedy could not quench it. Still, perhaps he has never felt the most burning ones.
	Car l'experience nous faict voir, qu'vne telle esmotion, se maintient bien souuent soubs des habits rudes et	For experience shows us that such a stirring very often persists under rough and shabby clothes,

FRENCH	ENGLISH
marmiteux: et que les haires ne rendent pas tousiours heres ceux qui les portent.	and that hair shirts do not always make sorry wretches of those who wear them.[1]
2.33.3 Xenocrates y proceda plus rigoureusement: car ses disciples pour essayer sa continence, luy ayants fourré dans son lict, Laïs, cette belle et fameuse courtisane toute nuë, sauf les armes de sa beauté et folasres apasts, ses phyltres: sentant qu'en despit de ses discours, et de ses regles, le corps reuesche commençoit à se mutiner, il se fit brusler les membres, qui auoient presté l'oreille à cette rebellion. Là où les passions qui sont toutes en l'ame, comme l'ambition, l'avarice, et autres, donnent bien plus à faire à la raison: car elle n'y peut estre secourue, que de ses propres moyens: ny ne sont ces appetits là, capables de satieté: voire ils s'esguisent et augmentent par la iouyssance.	Xenocrates went about it more rigorously. His disciples, to test his continence, had slipped into his bed Lais, that beautiful and famous courtesan, quite naked except for the weapons of her beauty and her wanton lures, her love potions. Feeling that in spite of his reasonings and his rules his unruly body was beginning to mutiny, he had the members that had lent an ear to this rebellion burned. Whereas the passions that are wholly in the soul, such as ambition, avarice and the rest, give reason much more trouble: for there it can be helped only by its own means; nor are those appetites capable of satiety; indeed they are sharpened and increased by enjoyment.

CAESAR'S TWO PASSIONS

Caesar loved women passionately, but ambition always mastered his pleasures and finally ruined him.

FRENCH	ENGLISH
2.33.4 Le seul exemple de Iulius Cæsar, peut suffire à nous montrer la disparité de ces appetits: car iamais homme ne fut plus addonné aux plaisirs amoureux. Le soin curieux qu'il auoit de sa personne, en est vn tesmoignage, iusques à se seruir à cela, des moyens les plus lascifs qui fussent lors en vsage: comme de se faire pinceter tout le corps, et farder de parfums d'vne extreme curiosité: et de soy il estoit beau personnage, blanc, de belle et allegre taille, le visage plein, les yeux bruns et vifs, s'il en faut croire Suetone: car les statues, qui se voyent de luy à Rome ne rapportent pas bien par tout, à cette peinture.	The single example of Julius Caesar may suffice to show us the disparity between these appetites: for never was a man more given to amorous pleasures. The meticulous care he took of his person is evidence of it, to the point of using for that purpose the most lascivious means then in fashion, such as having his whole body plucked and anointing himself with perfumes of extreme refinement. And by nature he was a handsome figure, fair-skinned, tall and nimble, with a full face and dark, keen eyes, if we are to believe Suetonius: for the statues of him to be seen in Rome do not everywhere match this portrait.
Outre ses femmes, qu'il changea quatre fois, sans conter les amours de son enfance, auec le Roy de Bithynie Nicomedes, il eut le pucelage de cette tant renommée Royne d'Ægypte, Cleopatra: tesmoin le petit Cæsarion, qui en nasquit. Il fit aussi l'amour à Eunoé Royne de Mauritanie: et à Rome, à Posthumia, femme de Seruius Sulpitius: à Lollia, de Gabinius: à Tertulla, de Crassus, et à Mutia mesme, femme du grand Pompeius. Qui fut la cause, disent les historiens Romains, pourquoy son mary la repudia, ce que Plutarque confesse auoir ignoré. Et les Curions pere et fils reprocherent depuis à Pompeius, quand il espousa la fille de Cæsar, qu'il se faisoit gendre	Besides his wives, whom he changed four times, and not counting the loves of his boyhood with the King of Bithynia, Nicomedes, he had the maidenhead of that so famous Queen of Egypt, Cleopatra: witness little Caesarion, who was born of it. He also had affairs with Eunoe, Queen of Mauritania, and in Rome with Postumia, wife of Servius Sulpicius; with Lollia, wife of Gabinius; with Tertulla, wife of Crassus; and even with Mucia, wife of the great Pompey. That was the reason, say the Roman historians, why her husband divorced her, though Plutarch admits he did not know it. And the

1 Montaigne puns on haire (hair shirt) and here (poor wretch).

FRENCH

d'vn homme qui l'auoit fait coqu, et que luy-mesme auoit accoustumé d'appeller Ægysthus.

ENGLISH

Curios, father and son, later reproached Pompey, when he married Caesar's daughter, with making himself son-in-law to a man who had made him a cuckold, and whom he himself used to call Aegisthus.[2]

Il entretint outre tout ce nombre, Seruilia sœur de Caton, et mere de Marcus Brutus, dont chacun tient que proceda cette grande affection qu'il portoit à Brutus: par ce qu'il estoit nay en temps, auquel il y auoit apparence qu'il fust issu de luy. Ainsi i'ai raison, ce me semble, de le prendre pour homme extremement addonné à cette desbauche, et de complexion tres-amoureuse. Mais l'autre passion de l'ambition, dequoy il estoit aussi infiniment blessé, venant à combattre celle là, elle luy fit incontinent perdre place.

Besides all these, he kept Servilia, Cato's sister and the mother of Marcus Brutus, and everyone holds that this was the source of the great affection he bore Brutus, since Brutus was born at a time when it seemed likely that he was his son. So I am right, it seems to me, to take him for a man extremely given to this kind of debauchery and of a very amorous constitution. But the other passion, ambition, by which he was also infinitely wounded, coming to fight against that one, at once made it give ground.

2.33.5 Me ressouuenant sur ce propos de Mehemed, celuy qui subiugua Constantinople, et apporta la finale extermination du nom Grec: ie ne sçache point où ces deux passions se trouuent plus egalement balancées: pareillement indefatigable ruffien, et soldat. Mais quand en sa vie, elles se presentent en concurrence l'vne de l'autre, l'ardeur querelleuse gourmande tousiours l'amoureuse ardeur. Et ceste-cy, encore que ce fust hors sa naturelle saison, ne regaigna pleinement l'authorité souueraine, que quand il se trouua en grande vieillesse, incapable de plus soutenir le faix des guerres.

Recalling on this subject Mehmed, the one who subjugated Constantinople and brought about the final extermination of the Greek name, I know of no one in whom these two passions are more evenly balanced: he was as tireless a rake as he was a soldier. But when in his life they compete with each other, the quarrelsome ardor always masters the amorous ardor. And the latter, though it was out of its natural season, regained full sovereign authority only when he was in great old age and no longer able to bear the burden of war.

2.33.6 Ce qu'on recite pour vn exemple contraire de Ladislaus Roy de Naples, est remarquable: Que bon capitaine, courageux, et ambitieux, il se proposoit pour fin principale de son ambition, l'execution de sa volupté, et iouïssance de quelque rare beauté. Sa mort fut de mesme. Ayant rengé par vn siege bien poursuiuy, la ville de Florence si à destroit, que les habitants estoient apres à composer de sa victoire: il la leur quitta pourueu qu'ils luy liurassent vne fille de leur ville dequoy il auoit ouy parler, de beauté excellente. Force fut de la luy accorder, et garantir la publique ruine par vne iniure priuée.

What is told as a contrary example about Ladislaus, King of Naples, is remarkable: that, though a good commander, courageous and ambitious, he set as the chief end of his ambition the satisfaction of his pleasure and the enjoyment of some rare beauty. His death was of a piece with this. Having by a well-pressed siege reduced the city of Florence to such straits that its inhabitants were about to negotiate the terms of his victory, he let them off on condition that they hand over to him a girl of their city, of excellent beauty, of whom he had heard. They had no choice but to grant her to him, and to avert the public ruin by a private wrong.[3]

Elle estoit fille d'vn medecin fameux de son temps; lequel se trouuant engagé en si villaine necessité, se resolut à vne haute entreprinse. Comme chacun paroit sa fille et l'attournoit d'ornements et ioyaux, qui la peussent

She was the daughter of a physician famous in his time, who, finding himself caught in so vile a necessity, resolved on a bold undertaking. While everyone was adorning his daughter and decking

2 Aegisthus seduced Clytemnestra, wife of Agamemnon, while her husband was away at Troy.
3 Ladislaus of Anjou-Durazzo, King of Naples (r. 1386–1414).

FRENCH

rendre aggreable à ce nouuel amant, luy aussi luy donna vn mouchoir exquis en senteur et en ouurage, duquel elle eust à se seruir en leurs premieres approches: meuble, qu'elles n'y oublient guere en ces quartiers là. Ce mouchoir empoisonné selon la capacité de son art, venant à se frotter à ces chairs esmeuës et pores ouuerts, inspira son venin si promptement, qu'ayant soudain changé leur sueur chaude en froide, ils expirerent entre les bras l'vn de l'autre.

2.33.7 Ie m'en reuay à Cæsar. Ses plaisirs ne luy firent iamais desrober vne seule minute d'heure, ny destourner vn pas des occasions qui se presentoient pour son agrandissement. Cette passion regenta en luy si souuerainement toutes les autres, et posseda son ame d'vne authorité si pleine, qu'elle l'emporta où elle voulut. Certes i'en suis despit: quand ie considere au demeurant, la grandeur de ce personnage, et les merueilleuses parties qui estoient en luy: tant de suffisance en toute sorte de sçauoir, qu'il n'y a quasi science en quoy il n'ait escrit: il estoit tel orateur, que plusieurs ont preferé son eloquence à celle de Cicero: et luy-mesmes, à mon aduis, n'estimoit luy deuoir guere en cette partie.

Et ses deux Anticatons, furent principalement escrits pour contre-balancer le bien dire, que Cicero auoit employé en son Caton. Au demeurant, fut-il iamais ame si vigilante, si actiue, et si patiente de labeur que la sienne? Et sans doubte, encore estoit elle embellie de plusieurs rares semences de vertu, ie dy viues, naturelles, et non contrefaictes. Il estoit singulierement sobre, et si peu delicat en son manger, qu'Oppius recite, qu'vn iour luy ayant esté presenté à table, en quelque sauce de l'huyle medecinée, au lieu d'huyle simple, il en mangea largement, pour ne faire honte à son hoste. Vne autrefois, il fit fouëtter son boulenger, pour luy auoir seruy d'autre pain que celuy du commun.

Caton mesme auoit accoustumé de dire de luy, que c'estoit le premier homme sobre, qui se fust acheminé à la ruyne de son pays. Et quant à ce que ce mesme Caton l'appella vn iour yurongne, cela aduint en cette façon. Estans tous deux au Senat, où il se parloit du fait de la coniuration de Catilina, de laquelle Cæsar estoit soupçonné, on luy vint apporter de dehors, vn breuet à cachetes: Caton estimant que ce fust quelque chose, dequoy les coniurez l'aduertissent, le somma de le luy

ENGLISH

her out with ornaments and jewels that might make her pleasing to this new lover, he too gave her a handkerchief, exquisite in scent and workmanship, which she was to use in their first embraces, an article women in those parts hardly ever forget. This handkerchief, poisoned with all the skill of his art, rubbing against those heated bodies and open pores, breathed its venom into them so swiftly that their warm sweat suddenly turned cold, and they expired in each other's arms.

I come back to Caesar. His pleasures never made him steal a single minute of an hour, or turn a single step aside from the opportunities that offered for his advancement. This passion, ambition, ruled all the others in him so sovereignly, and possessed his soul with such complete authority, that it carried him wherever it wished. Indeed it vexes me, when I consider otherwise the greatness of the man and the marvelous gifts he had: such ability in every kind of learning that there is hardly a science on which he did not write. He was such an orator that many have preferred his eloquence to Cicero's; and he himself, in my opinion, thought he owed him little in this respect.

His two Anti-Catos were written chiefly to counterbalance the fine speaking that Cicero had used in his Cato. For the rest, was there ever a soul so vigilant, so active and so enduring of toil as his? And it was certainly adorned as well with many rare seeds of virtue, living, natural ones, I mean, not counterfeit. He was singularly sober, and so little fastidious in his eating that Oppius relates that one day, when he was served at table some sauce made with medicinal oil instead of plain oil, he ate a good deal of it so as not to shame his host. Another time he had his baker whipped for serving him different bread from what was served to everyone else.

Cato himself used to say of him that he was the first sober man to set out to ruin his country. As for this same Cato calling him a drunkard one day, it happened in this way. They were both in the Senate, where Catiline's conspiracy, of which Caesar was suspected, was being discussed, when someone brought him a sealed note from outside. Cato, thinking it was something the conspirators were informing him of, demanded that he hand it

FRENCH

donner: ce que Cæsar fut contrainct de faire, pour euiter vn plus grand soupçon.

C'estoit de fortune vne lettre amoureuse, que Seruilia sœur de Caton luy escriuoit: Caton l'ayant leuë, la luy reietta, en luy disant: Tien yurongne. Cela, dis-ie, fut plustost vn mot de desdain et de colere, qu'vn expres reproche de ce vice: comme souuent nous iniurions ceux qui nous faschent, des premieres iniures qui nous viennent à la bouche, quoy qu'elles ne soyent nullement deuës à ceux à qui nous les attachons. Ioinct que ce vice que Caton luy reproche, est merueilleusement voisin de celuy, auquel il auoit surpris Cæsar: car Venus et Bacchus se conuiennent volontiers, à ce que dit le prouerbe: mais chez moy Venus est bien plus allegre, accompaignée de la sobrieté.

2.33.8 Les exemples de sa douceur, et de sa clemence, enuers ceux qui l'auoient offencé sont infinis: ie dis outre ceux qu'il donna, pendant le temps que la guerre ciuile estoit encore en son progrés, desquels il fait luy-mesmes assez sentir par ses escrits, qu'il se seruoit pour amadouër ses ennemis, et leur faire moins craindre sa future domination et sa victoire. Mais si faut il dire que ces exemples là s'ils ne sont suffisans à nous tesmoigner sa naïue douceur, ils nous montrent au moins vne merueilleuse confiance et grandeur de courage, en ce personnage.

Il luy est aduenu souuent, de renuoyer des armées toutes entieres à son ennemy, apres les auoir vaincuës, sans daigner seulement les obliger par serment, sinon de le fauoriser, aumoins de se contenir sans luy faire la guerre: il a prins trois et quatre fois tels capitaines de Pompeius, et autant de fois remis en liberté. Pompeius declaroit ses ennemis, tous ceux qui ne l'accompaignoient à la guerre: et luy fit proclamer qu'il tenoit pour amis tous ceux qui ne bougeoient, et qui ne s'armoyent effectuellement contre luy. A ceux de ses capitaines, qui se desroboient de luy pour aller prendre autre condition, il r'enuoioit encore les armes, cheuaux, et equipages.

Les villes qu'il auoit prinses par force, il les laissoit en liberté de suyure tel party qu'il leur plairoit, ne leur donnant autre garnison, que la memoire de sa douceur et clemence. Il deffendit le iour de sa grande bataille de Pharsale, qu'on ne mist qu'à toute extremité, la main sur les citoyens Romains. Voyla des traits bien hazardeux selon mon iugement: et n'est pas merueilles si aux guerres ciuiles, que nous sentons, ceux qui combattent, comme luy, l'estat ancien de leur pays, n'en imitent l'exemple. Ce sont moyens extraordinaires, et qu'il

ENGLISH

over, which Caesar was forced to do to avoid greater suspicion.

It happened to be a love letter that Servilia, Cato's sister, had written him. Cato, having read it, threw it back at him, saying, "Take it, drunkard." That, I say, was rather a word of disdain and anger than a deliberate reproach for that vice: just as we often insult those who annoy us with the first insults that come to our lips, though they are in no way deserved by the people we pin them on. Besides, the vice Cato reproaches him with is wonderfully close to the one in which he had caught Caesar: for Venus and Bacchus readily get along, as the proverb says. But with me Venus is much livelier in the company of sobriety.

The examples of his gentleness and clemency toward those who had offended him are countless. I mean besides those he gave while the civil war was still in progress, which, as he himself makes clear enough in his writings, he used to win over his enemies and make them less afraid of his future rule and victory. But it must still be said that if those examples are not enough to prove his natural gentleness, they at least show us a marvelous confidence and greatness of heart in the man.

He often sent whole armies back to his enemy after defeating them, without even deigning to bind them by oath, if not to support him, at least to refrain from making war on him. He captured certain of Pompey's commanders three and four times, and as many times set them free. Pompey declared as his enemies all those who did not follow him to the war; Caesar had it proclaimed that he held as friends all those who stayed put and did not actually take up arms against him. To those of his officers who slipped away from him to take service elsewhere, he even sent back their arms, horses and baggage.

The towns he had taken by force he left free to follow whatever side they pleased, giving them no other garrison than the memory of his gentleness and clemency. On the day of his great battle of Pharsalus he forbade anyone to lay hands on Roman citizens except in the last extremity. These are very risky strokes, in my judgment; and it is no wonder if, in the civil wars we are suffering, those who, like him, are fighting against the ancient

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
	n'appartient qu'à la fortune de Cæsar, et à son admirable pouruoyance, d'heureusement conduire.	state of their country do not follow his example. These are extraordinary means, and only Caesar's fortune and his admirable foresight could carry them off successfully.
	Quand ie considere la grandeur incomparable de cette ame, i'excuse la victoire, de ne s'estre peu depestrer de luy, voire en cette tres-iniuste et tres-inique cause.	When I consider the incomparable greatness of that soul, I excuse victory for being unable to break free of him, even in that most unjust and iniquitous cause.
2.33.9	Pour reuenir à sa clemence, nous en auons plusieurs naifs exemples, au temps de sa domination, lors que toutes choses estants reduites en sa main, il n'auoit plus à se feindre. Caius Memmius auoit escrit contre luy des oraisons tres-poignantes, ausquelles il auoit bien aigrement respondu: si ne laissa-il bien tost apres d'ayder à le faire Consul. Caius Caluus qui auoit faict plusieurs epigrammes iniurieux contre luy, ayant employé de ses amis pour le reconcilier, Cæsar se conuia luy-mesme à luy escrire le premier. Et nostre bon Catulle, qui l'auoit testonné si rudement sous le nom de Mamurra, s'en estant venu excuser à luy, il le fit ce iour mesme soupper à sa table.	To return to his clemency, we have many unfeigned examples of it from the time of his rule, when everything was in his hands and he no longer had to pretend. Gaius Memmius had written very stinging speeches against him, to which he had replied very sharply; yet soon afterward he did not fail to help make him consul. Gaius Calvus, who had written several abusive epigrams against him, had used some of his friends to bring about a reconciliation, and Caesar took it upon himself to write to him first. And our good Catullus, who had roughed him up so harshly under the name of Mamurra, came to apologize to him, and Caesar had him to supper at his table that very day.[4]
	Ayant esté aduerty d'aucuns qui parloient mal de luy, il n'en fit autre chose, que declarer en vne sienne harangue publique, qu'il en estoit aduerty. Il craignoit encore moins ses ennemis, qu'il ne les haissoit. Aucunes coniurations et assemblees, qu'on faisoit contre sa vie, luy ayants esté descouuertes, il se contenta de publier par edit qu'elles luy estoient cognuës, sans autrement en poursuyure les autheurs. Quant au respect qu'il auoit à ses amis: Caius Oppius voyageant auec luy, et se trouuant mal, il luy quitta vn seul logis qu'il y auoit, et coucha toute la nuict sur la dure et au descouuert.	When he was told of some people who were speaking ill of him, all he did was declare in one of his public speeches that he had been told of it. He feared his enemies even less than he hated them. When certain conspiracies and meetings formed against his life were revealed to him, he was content to publish an edict saying that he knew of them, without otherwise prosecuting those responsible. As for the regard he had for his friends: when Gaius Oppius, traveling with him, fell ill, he gave up to him the only lodging there was and slept all night on the hard ground in the open.
	Quant à sa iustice, il fit mourir vn sien seruiteur, qu'il aimoit singulierement, pour auoir couché auecques la femme d'vn cheualier Romain, quoy que personne ne s'en plaignist. Iamais homme n'apporta, ny plus de moderation en sa victoire, ny plus de resolution en sa fortune contraire.	As for his justice, he had a servant of his whom he was exceptionally fond of put to death for having slept with the wife of a Roman knight, though no one had complained. Never did a man show either more moderation in victory or more resolution in adverse fortune.
2.33.10	Mais toutes ces belles inclinations furent alterées et estouffées, par cette furieuse passion ambitieuse: à laquelle il se laissa si fort emporter, qu'on peut aisément maintenir, qu'elle tenoit le timon et le gouuernail de toutes ses actions.	But all these fine inclinations were spoiled and stifled by that furious passion of ambition, by which he let himself be carried away so far that one may easily maintain it held the tiller and the rudder of all his actions.

4 Mamurra, Caesar's chief engineer, is attacked together with Caesar in several of Catullus's poems.

FRENCH	ENGLISH
D'vn homme liberal, elle en rendit vn voleur publique, pour fournir à cette profusion et largesse, et luy fit dire ce vilain et tres-iniuste mot, que si les plus meschans et perdus hommes du monde, luy auoyent esté fidelles, au seruice de son agrandissement, il les cheriroit et auanceroit de son pouuoir, aussi bien que les plus gens de bien: l'enyura d'vne vanité si extreme, qu'il osoit se vanter en presence de ses concitoyens, d'auoir rendu cette grande Republique Romaine, vn nom sans forme et sans corps: et dire que ses responces deuoyent meshuy seruir de loix: et receuoir assis, le corps du Senat venant vers luy: et souffrir qu'on l'adorast, et qu'on luy fist en sa presence des honneurs diuins.	Out of a liberal man it made a public robber, to supply all that profusion and largesse. It made him utter that base and most unjust remark, that if the most wicked and abandoned men in the world had been faithful to him in the service of his advancement, he would cherish them and promote them as far as his power allowed, just as much as the best of men. It intoxicated him with so extreme a vanity that he dared to boast in the presence of his fellow citizens that he had made that great Roman Republic a name without form or body; to say that his answers should henceforth serve as laws; to receive the body of the Senate seated when it came to him; and to allow himself to be worshiped and divine honors to be paid him in his presence.
Somme, ce seul vice, à mon aduis, perdit en luy le plus beau, et le plus riche naturel qui fut onques: et a rendu sa memoire abominable à tous les gens de bien, pour auoir voulu chercher sa gloire de la ruyne de son païs, et subuersion de la plus puissante, et fleurissante chose publique que le monde verra iamais. Il se pourroit bien au contraire, trouuer plusieurs exemples de grands personnages, ausquels la volupté a faict oublier la conduicte de leurs affaires, comme Marcus Antonius, et autres: mais où l'amour et l'ambition seroient en esgale balance, et viendroient à se choquer de forces pareilles, ie ne fay aucun doubte, que ceste-cy ne gaignast le prix de la maistrise.	In sum, this one vice, in my opinion, ruined in him the finest and richest nature there ever was, and has made his memory abominable to all good men, for having sought his glory in the ruin of his country and the overthrow of the most powerful and flourishing republic the world will ever see. One could, on the other hand, find many examples of great men whom pleasure made forget the conduct of their affairs, such as Mark Antony and others. But where love and ambition were evenly balanced and came to clash with equal force, I have no doubt that ambition would carry off the prize of mastery.

SPURINA'S FACE

A beautiful young Tuscan scars his own face; Montaigne admires the act more than he honors it.

FRENCH	ENGLISH
2.33.11 Or pour me remettre sur mes brisées, c'est beaucoup de pouuoir brider nos appetits, par le discours de la raison, ou de forcer nos membres, par violence, à se tenir en leur deuoir. Mais de nous fouëtter pour l'interest de nos voisins, de non seulement nous deffaire de cette douce passion, qui nous chatouïlle, du plaisir que nous sentons de nous voir aggreables à autruy, et aymez et recherchez d'vn chascun: mais encore de prendre en haine, et à contre-cœur nos graces, qui en sont cause, et condamner nostre beauté, par ce que quelque autre s'en eschauffe, ie n'en ay veu guere d'exemples: cestuy-cy en est.	Now, to get back on my track: it is a great deal to be able to curb our appetites by the reasoning of reason, or to force our members by violence to keep to their duty. But to scourge ourselves for the sake of our neighbors; not only to rid ourselves of that sweet passion that tickles us, the pleasure we feel in seeing ourselves pleasing to others, loved and sought after by everyone, but even to take a hatred and aversion to the graces that cause it, and to condemn our own beauty because someone else is inflamed by it—of that I have seen few examples. Here is one.
Spurina ieune homme de la Toscane, *Qualis gemma micat, fuluum quæ diuidit aurum,*	Spurina, a young man of Tuscany, *As a gem sparkles that parts the tawny gold,*

FRENCH

Aut collo decus aut capiti, vel quale per artem
Inclusum buxo aut Oricia terebintho
Lucet ebur, estant doüé d'vne singuliere beauté, et si excessiue, que les yeux plus continents, ne pouuoient en souffrir l'esclat continemment, ne se contentant point de laisser sans secours tant de fiéure et de feu, qu'il alloit attisant par tout, entra en furieux despit contre soy-mesmes, et contre ces riches presens, que Nature luy auoit faits: comme si on se deuoit prendre à eux, de la faute d'autruy: et détailla, et troubla à force de playes, qu'il se fit à escient, et de cicatrices, la parfaicte proportion et ordonnance que Nature auoit si curieusement obseruée en son visage.

2.33.12 Pour en dire mon aduis: i'admire telles actions, plus que ie ne les honnore. Ces excez sont ennemis de mes regles. Le dessein en fut beau, et conscientieux: mais, à mon aduis, vn peu manque de prudence. Quoy? si sa laideur seruit depuis à en ietter d'autres au peché de mespris et de haine, ou d'enuie, pour la gloire d'vne si rare recommandation: ou de calomnie, interpretant cette humeur, à vne forcenée ambition. Y a-il quelque forme, de laquelle le vice ne tire, s'il veult, occasion à s'exercer en quelque maniere? Il estoit plus iuste, et aussi plus glorieux, qu'il fist de ces dons de Dieu, vn subiect de vertu exemplaire, et de reglement.

2.33.13 Ceux, qui se desrobent aux offices communs, et à ce nombre infini de regles espineuses, à tant de visages, qui lient vn homme d'exacte preud'hommie, en la vie ciuile: font, à mon gré, vne belle espargne: quelque pointe d'aspreté peculiere qu'ils s'enioignent. C'est aucunement mourir, pour fuir la peine de bien viure. Ils peuuent auoir autre prix, mais le prix de la difficulté, il ne m'a iamais semblé qu'ils l'eussent. Ny qu'en malaisance, il y ait rien audelà, de se tenir droit emmy les flots de la presse du monde, respondant et satisfaisant loyalement à touts les membres de sa charge.

Il est à l'aduenture plus facile, de se passer nettement de tout le sexe, que de se maintenir deuëment de tout poinct, en la compagnie de sa femme. Et a l'on dequoy couler plus incurieusement, en la pauureté, qu'en l'abondance, iustement dispensée. L'vsage, conduit selon raison, a plus d'aspreté, que n'a l'abstinence. La moderation est vertu bien plus affaireuse, que n'est la

ENGLISH

an ornament for neck or head, or as, by art
inlaid in boxwood or Orician terebinth,
ivory gleams, was endowed with a singular beauty, so excessive that the most continent eyes could not continently bear its brilliance. Not content to leave without relief all the fever and fire he went kindling everywhere, he fell into a furious rage against himself and against those rich gifts Nature had given him, as if they were to blame for the faults of others. And with wounds he deliberately inflicted on himself, and with scars, he slashed and spoiled the perfect proportion and order that Nature had so carefully observed in his face.[5]

To give my own opinion: I admire such actions more than I honor them. These excesses are enemies of my rules. The intention was fine and conscientious, but, in my view, somewhat lacking in prudence. What if his ugliness afterward served to cast others into the sin of contempt and hatred, or of envy at the glory of so rare a distinction, or of slander, interpreting his temperament as a frenzied ambition? Is there any form from which vice cannot, if it wishes, draw an occasion to exercise itself in some way? It would have been more just, and also more glorious, for him to make of these gifts of God a subject of exemplary virtue and self-control.

Those who slip away from the common duties, and from that infinite number of thorny, many-faced rules that bind a man of strict integrity in civil life, make, to my mind, a nice saving, whatever sharp point of peculiar austerity they impose on themselves. It is in a way dying to escape the trouble of living well. They may have some other merit; but the merit of difficulty I have never thought they had. Nor have I thought that anything is harder than to keep upright amid the waves of the world's throng, loyally answering and meeting all the parts of one's charge.

It is perhaps easier to do without the whole sex altogether than to conduct oneself properly in every respect in the company of one's wife. And one can slip along more carelessly in poverty than in abundance justly dispensed. Use guided by reason is harder than abstinence. Moderation is a far more demanding virtue than endurance. The good

5 Virgil, Aeneid. The story of Spurina comes from Valerius Maximus.

FRENCH	ENGLISH
souffrance. Le bien viure du ieune Scipion, a mille façons. Le bien viure de Diogenes, n'en a qu'vne. Ceste-cy surpasse d'autant en innocence les vies ordinaires, comme les exquises et accomplies la surpassent en vtilité et en force.	life of the younger Scipio has a thousand forms; the good life of Diogenes has only one. Diogenes' life surpasses ordinary lives in innocence by as much as the most exquisite and accomplished lives surpass it in usefulness and strength.

II.34 Observations on Julius Caesar's Methods of Making War

Obseruation sur les moyens de faire la guerre, de Iulius Cæsar
Montaigne gathers rare traits of Caesar's generalship from his Commentaries—his speed, daring, discipline and personal courage.

FRENCH

2.34.1 ON recite de plusieurs chefs de guerre, qu'ils ont eu certains liures en particuliere recommandation, comme le grand Alexandre, Homere: Scipion Aphricain, Xenophon: Marcus Brutus, Polybius: Charles cinquiesme, Philippe de Comines. Et dit-on de ce temps, que Machiauel est encores ailleurs en credit. Mais le feu Mareschal Strossy, qui auoit pris Cæsar pour sa part, auoit sans doubte bien mieux choisi: car à la verité ce deuroit estre le breuiaire de tout homme de guerre, comme estant le vray et souuerain patron de l'art militaire.

Et Dieu sçait encore de quelle grace, et de quelle beauté il a fardé cette riche matiere, d'vne façon de dire si pure, si delicate, et si parfaicte, qu'à mon goust, il n'y a aucuns escrits au monde, qui puissent estre comparables aux siens, en cette partie. Ie veux icy enregistrer certains traicts particuliers et rares, sur le faict de ses guerres, qui me sont demeurez en memoire.

2.34.2 Son armée estant en quelque effroy, pour le bruit qui couroit des grandes forces, que menoit contre luy le Roy Iuba, au lieu de rabattre l'opinion que ses soldats en auoyent prise, et appetisser les moyens de son ennemy, les ayant faict assembler pour les r'asseurer et leur donner courage, il print vne voye toute contraire à celle que nous auons accoustumé: car il leur dit qu'ils ne se missent plus en peine de s'enquerir des forces que menoit l'ennemy, et qu'il en auoit eu bien certain aduertissement: et lors il leur en fit le nombre surpassant de beaucoup, et la verité, et la renommée, qui en couroit en son armée. Suiuant ce que conseille Cyrus en Xenophon.

D'autant que la tromperie n'est pas de tel interest, de trouuer les ennemis par effect plus foibles qu'on n'auoit esperé: que de les trouuer à la verité bien forts, apres les auoir iugez foibles par reputation.

ENGLISH

It is told of several military leaders that they held certain books in particular esteem: Alexander the Great, Homer; Scipio Africanus, Xenophon; Marcus Brutus, Polybius; Charles V, Philippe de Commynes. And it is said that in our time Machiavelli is still in favor elsewhere. But the late Marshal Strozzi, who had taken Caesar for his share, certainly chose much better: for in truth he ought to be the breviary of every soldier, as being the true and supreme model of the military art.

And God knows, besides, with what grace and what beauty he has embellished this rich matter, with a style so pure, so delicate and so perfect that, to my taste, there are no writings in the world that can be compared to his in this respect. I want to record here certain particular and rare traits concerning his wars that have stayed in my memory.

His army was in some alarm at the rumor going around of the great forces King Juba was leading against him. Instead of beating down the opinion his soldiers had formed of them and belittling his enemy's means, he had them assembled to reassure them and give them courage, and took a path quite contrary to the one we usually take. He told them they need no longer trouble to inquire about the forces the enemy was bringing, since he had very reliable information about them; and then he gave them a number far exceeding both the truth and the reports going around his army. This follows what Cyrus advises in Xenophon.[1]

For being deceived does not matter so much when we find the enemy actually weaker than we had expected, as when we find him truly very strong after judging him weak by report.

1 Juba I, King of Numidia, ally of Pompey's party in Africa (46 BC).

FRENCH

2.34.3 Il accoustumoit sur tout ses soldats à obeyr simplement, sans se mesler de contreroller, ou parler des desseins de leur Capitaine; lesquels il ne leur communiquoit que sur le poinct de l'execution: et prenoit plaisir s'ils en auoyent descouuert quelque chose, de changer sur le champ d'aduis, pour les tromper: et souuent pour cet effect ayant assigné vn logis en quelque lieu, il passoit outre, et allongeoit la iournée, notamment s'il faisoit mauuais temps et pluuieux.

2.34.4 Les Souisses, au commencement de ses guerres de Gaule, ayans enuoyé vers luy pour leur donner passage au trauers des terres des Romains; estant deliberé de les empescher par force, il leur contrefit toutesfois vn bon visage, et print quelques iours de delay à leur faire responce, pour se seruir de ce loisir, à assembler son armée. Ces pauures gens ne sçauoyent pas combien il estoit excellent mesnager du temps: car il redit maintesfois, que c'est la plus souueraine partie d'vn capitaine, que la science de prendre au poinct les occasions, et la diligence, qui est en ses exploicts, à la verité, inouye et incroyable.

2.34.5 S'il n'estoit pas fort conscientieux en cela, de prendre aduantage sur son ennemy, sous couleur d'vn traicté d'accord: il l'estoit aussi peu, en ce qu'il ne requeroit en ses soldats autre vertu que la vaillance, ny ne punissoit guere autres vices, que la mutination, et la desobeyssance. Souuent apres ses victoires, il leur laschoit la bride à toute licence, les dispensant pour quelque temps des regles de la discipline militaire, adioustant à cela, qu'il auoit des soldats si bien creez, que tous perfumez et musquez, ils ne laissoyent pas d'aller furieusement au combat.

De vray, il aymoit qu'ils fussent richement armez, et leur faisoit porter des harnois grauez, dorez et argentez: afin que le soing de la conseruation de leurs armes, les rendist plus aspres à se deffendre. Parlant à eux, il les appelloit du nom de compagnons, que nous vsons encore: ce qu'Auguste son successeur reforma, estimant qu'il l'auoit faict pour la necessité de ses affaires, et pour flatter le cœur de ceux qui ne le suyuoient que volontairement: *Rheni mihi Cæsar in vndis / Dux erat: hic socius; facinus quos inquinat, æquat;* mais que cette façon estoit trop rabbaissée, pour la dignité d'vn Empereur et general d'armée, et remit en train de les appeller seulement soldats.

ENGLISH

Above all he accustomed his soldiers to obey simply, without meddling in criticizing or discussing their commander's plans, which he told them only at the moment of execution. And if they had found out something about them, he took pleasure in changing his mind on the spot to deceive them. Often, for this purpose, having fixed a camp in some place, he would go on past it and lengthen the day's march, especially if the weather was bad and rainy.

At the beginning of his Gallic wars, the Swiss sent to him asking for passage through Roman territory. He was determined to stop them by force, but he nevertheless put on a pleasant face and took a few days' delay before answering them, so as to use that time to assemble his army. These poor people did not know how excellent a manager of time he was: for he said many times that the most supreme quality of a commander is the knowledge of seizing opportunities at the right moment, and speed, which in his own exploits is, in truth, unheard-of and incredible.[2]

If he was not very scrupulous about taking advantage of his enemy under color of a treaty, he was just as unscrupulous in requiring of his soldiers no other virtue than valor and hardly punishing any vices but mutiny and disobedience. Often after his victories he gave them free rein for every license, dispensing them for a time from the rules of military discipline, and adding that his soldiers were so well trained that, all perfumed and musked as they were, they still went furiously into battle.

Indeed he liked them to be richly armed, and made them wear engraved, gilded and silvered armor, so that their concern to keep their arms would make them fiercer in defending themselves. When he spoke to them he called them by the name of comrades, which we still use. Augustus, his successor, changed this, judging that Caesar had done it out of the necessity of his affairs and to flatter the hearts of those who followed him only voluntarily: *On the waters of the Rhine Caesar was my general; / here he is my comrade; crime makes equal those it stains;* but that this form

2 The Helvetii, in 58 BC.

FRENCH

ENGLISH

of address was too lowly for the dignity of an emperor and commander of armies, and he went back to calling them simply soldiers.[3]

2.34.6 A cette courtoisie, Cæsar mesloit toutesfois vne grande seuerité, à les reprimer. La neufiesme legion s'estant mutinée au pres de Plaisance, il la cassa auec ignominie, quoy que Pompeius fust lors encore en pieds, et ne la reçeut en grace qu'auec plusieurs supplications. Il les rappaisoit plus par authorité et par audace, que par douceur.

With this courtesy, however, Caesar mixed great severity in keeping them in check. When the Ninth Legion mutinied near Piacenza, he disbanded it with ignominy, though Pompey was still standing at the time, and took it back into favor only after many entreaties. He calmed them more by authority and boldness than by gentleness.

2.34.7 Là où il parle de son passage de la riuiere du Rhin, vers l'Allemaigne, il dit qu'estimant indigne de l'honneur du peuple Romain, qu'il passast son armée à nauires, il fit dresser vn pont, afin qu'il passast à pied ferme. Ce fut là, qu'il bastit ce pont admirable, dequoy il dechiffre particulierement la fabrique: car il ne s'arreste si volontiers en nul endroit de ses faits, qu'à nous representer la subtilité de ses inuentions, en telle sorte d'ouurages de main.

Where he speaks of his crossing of the Rhine into Germany, he says that, judging it unworthy of the honor of the Roman people for him to take his army across in boats, he had a bridge built so that it might cross on firm footing. It was there that he built that admirable bridge whose construction he describes in detail: for there is no point in the account of his deeds where he lingers so willingly as in showing us the ingenuity of his inventions in such kinds of handiwork.

2.34.8 I'y ay aussi remarqué cela, qu'il fait grand cas de ses exhortations aux soldats auant le combat: car où il veut montrer auoir esté surpris, ou pressé, il allegue tousiours cela, qu'il n'eut pas seulement loisir de haranguer son armée.

I have also noticed that he sets great store by his exhortations to his soldiers before battle: for where he wants to show that he was taken by surprise or hard pressed, he always pleads that he did not even have time to harangue his army.

Auant cette grande battaille contre ceux de Tournay; Cæsar, dict-il, ayant ordonné du reste, courut soudainement, où la fortune le porta, pour exhorter ses gens; et rencontrant la dixiesme legion, il n'eut loisir de leur dire, sinon, qu'ils eussent souuenance de leur vertu accoustumée, qu'ils ne s'estonnassent point, et soustinsent hardiment l'effort des aduersaires: et par ce que l'ennemy estoit des-ia approché à vn iect de traict, il donna le signe de la battaille: et de là estant passé soudainement ailleurs pour en encourager d'autres, il trouua qu'ils estoyent des-ia aux prises: voyla ce qu'il en dit en ce lieu là.

Before that great battle against the people of Tournai, Caesar, he says, having arranged everything else, ran swiftly wherever fortune took him to exhort his men; and coming upon the Tenth Legion, he had time only to tell them to remember their customary valor, not to be dismayed, and to withstand the enemy's attack boldly. And because the enemy had already come within a javelin's throw, he gave the signal for battle; and having then gone quickly elsewhere to encourage others, he found that they were already engaged. That is what he says of it in that passage.[4]

De vray, sa langue luy a faict en plusieurs lieux de bien notables seruices, et estoit de son temps mesme, son eloquence militaire en telle recommendation, que plusieurs en son armée recueilloyent ses harangues: et par ce moyen, il en fut assemblé des volumes, qui ont duré long temps apres luy. Son parler auoit des graces particulieres; si que ses familiers, et entre autres Auguste, oyant reciter ce qui en auoit esté recueilly,

Indeed, his tongue did him very notable service on many occasions, and even in his own time his military eloquence was so highly esteemed that many in his army collected his harangues; in this way volumes of them were compiled which survived long after him. His speech had a particular grace, so that his intimates, among them Augus-

3 Lucan, Pharsalia.

4 The Nervii, at the battle of the Sambre (57 BC), whom Montaigne places around Tournai.

FRENCH	ENGLISH
recognoissoit iusques aux phrases, et aux mots, ce qui n'estoit pas du sien.	tus, hearing what had been collected read aloud, could recognize, down to the phrases and the words, what was not his.
2.34.9 La premiere fois qu'il sortit de Rome, auec charge publique, il arriua en huict iours à la riuiere du Rhone, ayant dans son coche deuant luy vn secretaire ou deux qui escriuoyent sans cesse, et derriere luy, celuy qui portoit son espée.	The first time he left Rome with a public office, he reached the river Rhône in eight days, with a secretary or two in front of him in his carriage writing continuously, and behind him the man who carried his sword.
Et certes quand on ne feroit qu'aller, à peine pourroit-on atteindre à cette promptitude, dequoy tousiours victorieux ayant laissé la Gaule, et suiuant Pompeius à Brindes, il subiuga l'Italie en dix huict iours; reuint de Brindes à Rome; de Rome il s'en alla au fin fond de l'Espaigne; où il passa des difficultez extremes, en la guerre contre Affranius et Petreius, et au long siege de Marseille: de là il s'en retourna en la Macedoine, battit l'armée Romaine à Pharsale; passa de là, suiuant Pompeius, en Ægypte, laquelle il subiuga; d'Ægypte il vint en Syrie, et au pays de Pont, où il combattit Pharnaces; de là en Afrique, où il deffit Scipion et Iuba; et rebroussa encore par l'Italie en Espaigne, où il deffit les enfans de Pompeius.	And certainly, even if one did nothing but travel, one could hardly match the speed with which, ever victorious, he left Gaul, pursued Pompey to Brindisi and subjugated Italy in eighteen days; came back from Brindisi to Rome; went from Rome to the farthest end of Spain, where he got through extreme difficulties in the war against Afranius and Petreius and in the long siege of Marseille; went back from there to Macedonia and beat the Roman army at Pharsalus; went on from there in pursuit of Pompey to Egypt, which he subjugated; came from Egypt to Syria and the country of Pontus, where he fought Pharnaces; from there to Africa, where he defeated Scipio and Juba; and doubled back once more through Italy into Spain, where he defeated Pompey's sons.
Ocior et cœli flammis et tigride fœta. *Ac veluti montis saxum de vertice præceps* *Cùm ruit auulsum vento, seu turbidus imber* *Proluit, aut annis soluit sublapsa vetustas,* *Fertur in abruptum magno mons improbus actu,* *Exultátque solo, siluas, armenta, virósque,* *Inuoluens secum.*	*Swifter than the lightning of heaven or a tigress with young.* *And as a rock plunging headlong from a mountain's top,* *when it crashes down, torn away by the wind, or a stormy rain* *washes it loose, or the slow lapse of years undermines it,* *the relentless mass is borne down the steep with mighty force* *and bounds along the ground, sweeping forests, herds and men* *along with it.* [5]

CAESAR'S DARING

Caesar reconnoitered in person and took enormous risks, from storms at sea to the siege of Alesia.

FRENCH	ENGLISH
2.34.10 Parlant du siege d'Auaricum, il dit, que c'estoit sa coustume, de se tenir nuict et iour pres des ouuriers, qu'il auoit en besoigne. En toutes entreprises de consequence, il faisoit tousiours la descouuerte luy mesme, et ne passa	Speaking of the siege of Avaricum, he says it was his custom to stay night and day near the workmen he had at work. In all undertakings of consequence he always did the reconnoitering him-

5 The first line is from Lucan, Pharsalia; the rest from Virgil, Aeneid.

FRENCH

iamais son armée en lieu, qu'il n'eust premierement recognu. Et si nous croyons Suetone; quand il fit l'entreprise de traietter en Angleterre, il fut le premier à sonder le gué.

2.34.11 Il auoit accoustumé de dire, qu'il aimoit mieux la victoire qui se conduisoit par conseil que par force. Et en la guerre contre Petreius et Afranius, la Fortune luy presentant vne bien apparante occasion d'aduantage; il la refusa, dit-il, esperant auec vn peu plus de longueur, mais moins de hazard, venir à bout de ses ennemis. Il fit aussi là vn merueilleux traict, de commander à tout son ost, de passer à nage la riuiere sans aucune necessité, *Rapuitque ruens in prælia miles,*
Quod fugiens timuisset iter: mox vda receptis
Membra fouent armis, gelidósque a gurgite, cursu
Restituunt artus.

2.34.12 Ie le trouue vn peu plus retenu et consideré en ses entreprinses, qu'Alexandre: car cettuy-cy semble rechercher et courir à force les dangers, comme vn impetueux torrent, qui choque et attaque sans discretion et sans chois, tout ce qu'il rencontre. *Sic tauriformis voluitur Aufidus,*
Qui regna Dauni perfluit Appuli
Dum sœuit, horrendámque cultis
Diluuiem meditatur agris. Aussi estoit-il embesongné en la fleur et premiere chaleur de son aage; là où Cæsar s'y print estant desia meur et bien auancé. Outre ce, qu'Alexandre estoit d'vne temperature plus sanguine, cholere, et ardente: et si esmouuoit encore cette humeur par le vin, duquel Cæsar estoit tres-abstinent.

2.34.13 Mais où les occasions de la necessité se presentoyent, et où la chose le requeroit, il ne fut iamais homme faisant meilleur marché de sa personne. Quant à moy, il me semble lire en plusieurs de ses exploicts, vne certaine resolution de se perdre, pour fuyr la honte d'estre vaincu. En cette grande battaille qu'il eut contre ceux de Tournay, il courut se presenter à la teste des ennemis, sans bouclier, comme il se trouua, voyant la pointe de son armée s'esbranler: ce qui luy est aduenu plusieurs autres fois. Oyant dire que ses gens estoyent assiegez, il passa

ENGLISH

self, and he never took his army through a place he had not first examined. And if we believe Suetonius, when he undertook the crossing to England, he was the first to sound the ford.[6]

He used to say that he preferred a victory won by counsel to one won by force. In the war against Petreius and Afranius, when Fortune offered him a very evident opportunity of gaining the advantage, he refused it, he says, hoping, with a little more time but less risk, to get the better of his enemies. He also performed a wonderful stroke there, ordering his whole army to swim across the river without any necessity: *The soldier, rushing into battle, seized*
the path he would have feared in flight; then they warm their wet
limbs in the armor they take up again, and by running restore
their bodies chilled by the flood.

I find him somewhat more restrained and deliberate in his undertakings than Alexander: for Alexander seems to seek out dangers and run at them full tilt, like an impetuous torrent that strikes and attacks everything it meets, without discernment and without choice. *So rolls the bull-shaped Aufidus, that flows through the realm of Apulian Daunus, when it rages and plots a fearful*
deluge for the tilled fields. And he was engaged in this in the flower and first heat of his youth, whereas Caesar took it up when already mature and well on in years. Besides, Alexander was of a more sanguine, choleric and ardent temperament, and he stirred up this humor still further with wine, from which Caesar abstained most strictly.[7]

But when occasions of necessity arose and the situation demanded it, there was never a man who held his own person cheaper. As for me, I seem to read in several of his exploits a certain resolve to throw away his life to escape the shame of defeat. In that great battle he fought against the people of Tournai, seeing the front of his army wavering, he ran to place himself facing the enemy's front ranks, without a shield, just as he was; and this happened to him several other times. Hearing that his men were besieged, he passed in disguise

6 Avaricum is modern Bourges (52 BC).
7 Horace, Odes.

FRENCH

desguisé au trauers l'armée ennemie, pour les aller fortifier de sa presence.

Ayant trauersé à Dirrachium, auec bien petites forces, et voyant que le reste de son armée qu'il auoit laissée à conduire à Antonius, tardoit à le suiure, il entreprit luy seul de repasser la mer par vne tres-grande tormente: et se desroba, pour aller reprendre le reste de ses forces; les ports de delà, et toute la mer estant saisie par Pompeius. Et quant aux entreprises qu'il a faictes à main armée, il y en a plusieurs, qui surpassent en hazard tout discours de raison militaire: car auec combien foibles moyens, entreprint-il de subiuger le Royaume d'Ægypte: et depuis d'aller attaquer les forces de Scipion et de Iuba, de dix parts plus grandes que les siennes?

Ces gens là ont eu ie ne sçay quelle plus qu'humaine confiance de leur fortune: et disoit-il, qu'il falloit executer, non pas consulter les hautes entreprises. Apres la battaille de Pharsale, comme il eust enuoyé son armée deuant en Asie, et passast auec vn seul vaisseau, le destroit de l'Hellespont, il rencontra en mer Lucius Cassius, auec dix gros nauires de guerre: il eut le courage non seulement de l'attendre, mais de tirer droit vers luy, et le sommer de se rendre: et en vint à bout.

2.34.14 Ayant entrepris ce furieux siege d'Alexia, où il y auoit quatre vingts mille hommes de deffence, toute la Gaule s'estant esleuée pour luy courre sus, et leuer le siege, et dressé vn' armée de cent neuf mille cheuaux, et de deux cens quarante mille hommes de pied, quelle hardiesse et maniacle confiance fut-ce, de n'en vouloir abandonner son entreprise, et se resoudre à deux si grandes difficultez ensemble? Lesquelles toutesfois il soustint: et apres auoir gaigné cette grande battaille contre ceux de dehors, rengea bien tost à sa mercy ceux qu'il tenoit enfermez. Il en aduint autant à Lucullus, au siege de Tigranocerta contre le Roy Tigranes, mais d'vne condition dispareille, veu la mollesse des ennemis, à qui Lucullus auoit affaire.

2.34.15 Ie veux icy remarquer deux rares euenemens et extraordinaires, sur le faict de ce siege d'Alexia, l'vn, que les Gaulois s'assemblans pour venir trouuer là Cæsar, ayans faict denombrement de toutes leurs forces, resolurent en leur conseil, de retrancher vne bonne partie de cette grande multitude, de peur qu'ils n'en tombassent en confusion. Cet exemple est nouueau, de

ENGLISH

through the enemy army to strengthen them with his presence.

Having crossed to Dyrrachium with very small forces, and seeing that the rest of his army, which he had left Antony to bring over, was slow to follow him, he undertook to cross the sea back again alone in a tremendous storm, and he stole away to go and fetch the rest of his forces, though the ports on the other side and the whole sea were held by Pompey. As for the enterprises he undertook by force of arms, there are several that go beyond all the reasoning of military science in their risk. For with what slender means did he undertake to subjugate the kingdom of Egypt, and afterward to go and attack the forces of Scipio and Juba, ten times larger than his own?

Such men have had some more than human confidence in their fortune; and he used to say that great enterprises must be carried out, not deliberated. After the battle of Pharsalus, having sent his army ahead into Asia, he was crossing the strait of the Hellespont with a single vessel when he met Lucius Cassius at sea with ten great warships. He had the courage not only to wait for him but to make straight for him and summon him to surrender—and he carried it off.

He undertook that furious siege of Alesia, where there were eighty thousand men defending the town. All Gaul had risen to fall upon him and raise the siege, and had raised an army of a hundred and nine thousand horse and two hundred and forty thousand foot. What boldness, what manic confidence was it, to refuse to give up his undertaking and to resolve to take on two such great difficulties at once? Yet he withstood them both. After winning that great battle against those outside, he soon brought those he held shut in to his mercy. The same thing happened to Lucullus at the siege of Tigranocerta against King Tigranes, but under very unequal conditions, given the softness of the enemies Lucullus had to deal with.

I want to note here two rare and extraordinary events concerning this siege of Alesia. One is that the Gauls, gathering to come and confront Caesar there, took a count of all their forces and resolved in their council to cut off a good part of that great multitude, for fear of falling into confusion. This is a new kind of example: to be afraid of being too

FRENCH

craindre à estre trop: mais à le bien prendre, il est vraysemblable, que le corps d'vne armée doit auoir vne grandeur moderée, et reglée à certaines bornes, soit pour la difficulté de la nourrir, soit pour la difficulté de la conduire et tenir en ordre. Aumoins seroit il bien aisé à verifier par exemple, que ces armées monstrueuses en nombre, n'ont guere rien fait qui vaille.

Suiuant le dire de Cyrus en Xenophon, ce n'est pas le nombre des hommes, ains le nombre des bons hommes, qui faict l'aduantage: le demeurant servant plus de destourbier que de secours. Et Baiazet print le principal fondement à sa resolution, de liurer iournée à Tamburlan, contre l'aduis de tous ses Capitaines, sur ce, que le nombre innombrable des hommes de son ennemy luy donnoit certaine esperance de confusion. Scanderbech bon iuge et tres expert, auoit accoustumé de dire, que dix ou douze mille combattans fideles, deuoient baster à vn suffisant chef de guerre, pour garantir sa reputation en toute sorte de besoing militaire.

L'autre poinct, qui semble estre contraire, et à l'vsage, et à la raison de la guerre, c'est que Vercingentorix, qui estoit nommé chef et general de toutes les parties des Gaules, reuoltées, print party de s'aller enfermer dans Alexia. Car celuy qui commande à tout vn pays ne se doit iamais engager qu'au cas de cette extremité, qu'il y allast de sa derniere place, et qu'il n'y eust rien plus à esperer qu'en la deffence d'icelle. Autrement il se doit tenir libre, pour auoir moyen de prouuoir en general à toutes les parties de son gouuernement.

2.34.16 Pour reuenir à Cæsar, il deuint auec le temps vn peu plus tardif et plus consideré, comme tesmoigne son familier Oppius: estimant, qu'il ne deuoit aisément hazarder l'honneur de tant de victoires, lequel, vne seule defortune luy pourroit faire perdre. C'est ce que disent les Italiens, quand ils veulent reprocher cette hardiesse temeraire, qui se void aux ieunes gens, les nommants necessiteux d'honneur, *bisognosi d'honore*: et qu'estans encore en cette grande faim et disette de reputation, ils ont raison de la chercher à quelque prix que ce soit: ce que ne doiuent pas faire ceux qui en ont desia acquis à suffisance.

Il y peut auoir quelque iuste moderation en ce desir de gloire, et quelque sacieté en cet appetit comme aux autres: assez de gens le pratiquent ainsin.

ENGLISH

many. But taken rightly, it is likely that the body of an army should be of moderate size, kept within certain bounds, whether because of the difficulty of feeding it or the difficulty of leading it and keeping it in order. At least it would be easy to show by examples that those armies monstrous in number have hardly ever done anything worthwhile.

As Cyrus says in Xenophon, it is not the number of men but the number of good men that gives the advantage; the rest are more of a hindrance than a help. And Bajazet based his resolution to give battle to Tamburlaine, against the advice of all his captains, chiefly on this: that the countless number of his enemy's men gave him sure hope that they would fall into confusion. Scanderbeg, a good judge and very expert, used to say that ten or twelve thousand loyal fighting men should be enough for a competent commander to secure his reputation in every kind of military need.

The other point, which seems contrary both to the practice and to the reason of war, is that Vercingetorix, who had been named leader and general of all the rebellious parts of Gaul, chose to go and shut himself up in Alesia. For whoever commands a whole country should never commit himself except in that extremity where his last stronghold is at stake and there is nothing more to hope for but in defending it. Otherwise he must keep himself free, so as to be able to provide generally for every part of his command.

To return to Caesar: with time he became somewhat slower and more deliberate, as his intimate friend Oppius testifies, judging that he should not lightly risk the honor of so many victories, which a single misfortune could make him lose. This is what the Italians mean when they want to reproach the reckless boldness seen in young men: they call them needy of honor, *in want of honor*, and say that, being still in that great hunger and dearth of reputation, they are right to seek it at any price—which those who have already acquired enough of it should not do.[8]

There can be some just measure in this desire for glory, and some point of fullness in this appetite

8 Gaius Oppius, Caesar's friend and agent, wrote about him; Montaigne takes this from Plutarch.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
		as in the others: plenty of people practice it that way.
2.34.17	Il estoit bien esloigné de cette religion des anciens Romains, qui ne se vouloyent preualoir en leurs guerres, que de la vertu simple et nayfue. Mais encore y apportoit il plus de conscience que nous ne ferions à cette heure, et n'approuuoit pas toutes sortes de moyens, pour acquerir la victoire. En la guerre contre Ariouistus, estant à parlementer auec luy, il y suruint quelque remuement entre les deux armées, qui commença par la faute des gens de cheual d'Ariouistus. Sur ce tumulte, Cæsar se trouua auoir fort grand aduantage sur ses ennemis, toutes-fois il ne s'en voulut point preualoir, de peur qu'on luy peust reprocher d'y auoir procedé de mauuaise foy.	He was far removed from that scrupulousness of the ancient Romans, who would make use in their wars only of plain, unaffected valor. Still, he brought more conscience to it than we would nowadays, and did not approve of every kind of means for gaining victory. In the war against Ariovistus, while he was parleying with him, some disturbance arose between the two armies, started through the fault of Ariovistus's horsemen. In this tumult Caesar found himself with a very great advantage over his enemies; yet he would not use it, for fear that he might be reproached with having acted in bad faith.[9]
2.34.18	Il auoit accoustumé de porter vn accoustrement riche au combat, et de couleur esclatante, pour se faire remarquer.	He used to wear rich clothing in battle, of a brilliant color, to make himself noticed.
2.34.19	Il tenoit la bride plus estroite à ses soldats, et les tenoit plus de court estants pres des ennemis.	He kept a tighter rein on his soldiers, and held them more closely in check, when they were near the enemy.
2.34.20	Quand les anciens Grecs vouloient accuser quelqu'vn d'extreme insuffisance, ils disoyent en commun prouerbe, qu'il ne sçauoit ny lire ny nager: il auoit cette mesme opinion, que la science de nager estoit tres-vtile à la guerre, et en tira plusieurs commoditez: s'il auoit à faire diligence, il franchissoit ordinairement à nage les riuieres qu'il rencontroit: car il aymoit à voyager à pied, comme le grand Alexandre.	When the ancient Greeks wanted to accuse someone of utter incompetence, they would say, as a common proverb, that he could neither read nor swim. He held this same opinion, that skill in swimming was very useful in war, and he drew several advantages from it. If he had to move fast, he usually swam across the rivers he came upon; for he liked to travel on foot, like Alexander the Great.
	En Ægypte, ayant esté forcé pour se sauuer, de se mettre dans vn petit batteau, et tant de gens s'y estants lancez quant et luy, qu'il estoit en danger d'aller à fons, il ayma mieux se ietter en la mer, et gaigna sa flotte à nage, qui estoit plus de deux cents pas au delà, tenant en sa main gauche ses tablettes hors de l'eau, et trainant à belles dents sa cotte d'armes, afin que l'ennemy n'en iouyst, estant desia bien auancé sur l'aage.	In Egypt he was forced to get into a small boat to save himself, and so many people jumped in along with him that it was in danger of sinking. He preferred to throw himself into the sea, and swam to his fleet, which was more than two hundred paces off, holding his writing tablets out of the water in his left hand and dragging his coat of armor along in his teeth so that the enemy should not have it—and this when he was already well on in years.

CAESAR'S LOYAL SOLDIERS

His soldiers served him unpaid, died rather than desert him, and the besieged of Salona broke out.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
2.34.21	Iamais chef de guerre n'eut tant de creance sur ses soldats. Au commencement de ses guerres ciuiles, les	Never did a commander have such credit with his soldiers. At the beginning of his civil wars, the

FRENCH

centeniers luy offrirent de soudoyer chacun sur sa bourse, vn homme d'armes, et les gens de pied, de le seruir à leurs despens: ceux qui estoyent plus aysez, entreprenants encore à deffrayer les plus necessiteux. Feu Monsieur l'Admiral de Chastillon nous fit veoir dernierement vn pareil cas en noz guerres ciuiles: car les François de son armée, fournissoient de leurs bourses au payement des estrangers, qui l'accompagnoient. Il ne se trouueroit guere d'exemples d'affection si ardente et si preste, parmy ceux qui marchent dans le vieux train, soubs l'ancienne police des loix. La passion nous commande bien plus viuement que la raison.

Il est pourtant aduenu en la guerre contre Annibal, qu'à l'exemple de la liberalité du peuple Romain en la ville, les gendarmes et Capitaines refuserent leur paye; et appelloit on au camp de Marcellus, mercenaires, ceux qui en prenoient. Ayant eu du pire aupres de Dyrrachium, ses soldats se vindrent d'eux mesmes offrir à estre chastiez et punis, de façon qu'il eut plus à les consoler qu'à les tancer. Vne sienne seule cohorte, soustint quatre legions de Pompeius plus de quatre heures, iusques à ce qu'elle fut quasi toute deffaicte à coups de trait, et se trouua dans la tranchée, cent trente mille flesches.

Vn soldat nommé Scæua, qui commandoit à l'vne des entrées, s'y maintint inuincible ayant vn œil creué, vne espaule et vne cuisse percées, et son escu faucé en deux cens trente lieux. Il est aduenu à plusieurs de ses soldats pris prisonniers, d'accepter plustost la mort, que de vouloir promettre de prendre autre party. Granius Petronius, pris par Scipion en Affrique, Scipion apres auoir faict mourir ses compagnons, luy manda qu'il luy donnoit la vie, car il estoit homme de reng et questeur: Petronius respondit que les soldats de Cæsar auoyent accoustumé de donner la vie aux autres, non la receuoir; et se tua tout soudain de sa main propre.

2.34.22 Il y a infinis exemples de leur fidelité: il ne faut pas oublier le traict de ceux qui furent assiegez à Salone, ville partizane pour Cæsar contre Pompeius, pour vn rare accident qui y aduint. Marcus Octauius les tenoit assiegez; ceux de dedans estans reduits en extreme

ENGLISH

centurions offered each to pay for a man-at-arms out of his own purse, and the foot soldiers offered to serve him at their own expense, the better-off even undertaking to support the neediest. The late Admiral de Châtillon showed us a similar case recently in our own civil wars: the Frenchmen in his army contributed from their own purses to pay the foreigners who were with him. Hardly any examples of such ardent and ready affection would be found among those who march along the old road, under the ancient government of the laws. Passion commands us far more forcefully than reason.[10]

Yet it did happen in the war against Hannibal that, following the example of the generosity of the Roman people in the city, the men-at-arms and captains refused their pay; and in Marcellus's camp those who took it were called mercenaries. When Caesar had had the worst of it near Dyrrachium, his soldiers came of their own accord to offer themselves to be chastised and punished, so that he had more need to console them than to scold them. A single cohort of his held off four of Pompey's legions for more than four hours, until it was almost entirely destroyed by missiles; and a hundred and thirty thousand arrows were found in the trench.

A soldier named Scaeva, who commanded at one of the entrances, held out there unconquered with one eye put out, a shoulder and a thigh pierced, and his shield pierced in two hundred and thirty places. Many of his soldiers who were taken prisoner chose to accept death rather than promise to change sides. Granius Petronius was captured by Scipio in Africa. Scipio, having put his companions to death, sent him word that he would spare his life, since he was a man of rank and a quaestor. Petronius answered that Caesar's soldiers were accustomed to give life to others, not to receive it; and immediately killed himself with his own hand.

There are countless examples of their loyalty. We must not forget the deed of those who were besieged at Salona, a town that took Caesar's side against Pompey, because of a rare event that happened there. Marcus Octavius held them un-

9 Ariovistus, a Germanic king, was defeated by Caesar in 58 BC.
10 Gaspard de Coligny, Admiral of France and Protestant leader, killed in the Saint Bartholomew's Day Massacre of 1572.

FRENCH

necessité de toutes choses, en maniere que pour suppleer au deffaut qu'ils auoyent d'hommes, la plus part d'entre eux y estans morts et blessez, ils auoyent mis en liberté tous leurs esclaues, et pour le seruice de leurs engins auoient esté contraints de coupper les cheueux de toutes les femmes, affin d'en faire des cordes; outre vne merueilleuse disette de viures; et ce neantmoins resolus de iamais ne se rendre.

Apres auoir trainé ce siege en grande longueur, d'où Octauius estoit deuenu plus nonchalant, et moins attentif à son entreprinse, ils choisirent vn iour sur le midy, et comme ils eurent rangé les femmes et les enfans sur leurs murailles, pour faire bonne mine, sortirent en telle furie, sur les assiegeans, qu'ayants enfoncé le premier, le second, et tiers corps de garde, et le quatriesme, et puis le reste, et ayants faict du tout abandonner les tranchées, les chasserent iusques dans les nauires: et Octauius mesmes se sauua à Dyrrachium, où estoit Pompeius.

Ie n'ay point memoire pour cett' heure, d'auoir veu aucun autre exemple, où les assiegez battent en gros les assiegeans, et gaignent la maistrise de la campaigne; ny qu'vne sortie ait tiré en consequence, vne pure et entiere victoire de battaille.

ENGLISH

der siege. Those inside were reduced to extreme want of everything. To make up for their lack of men, most of them having been killed or wounded, they had freed all their slaves; and to work their siege engines they had been forced to cut off the hair of all the women to make ropes from it—on top of a terrible shortage of food. And yet they were resolved never to surrender.[11]

The siege had dragged on a long time, which made Octavius more careless and less attentive to his enterprise. They chose a day, around noon, and after lining up the women and children on their walls to keep up appearances, they sallied out against the besiegers in such fury that they broke through the first, the second and the third guard posts, and the fourth, and then the rest; they made them abandon the trenches altogether and chased them right into their ships. Octavius himself escaped to Dyrrachium, where Pompey was.

I cannot remember for now having seen any other example where the besieged beat the besiegers wholesale and won mastery of the field, or where a sally resulted in a pure and complete victory in battle.

11 Salona, on the Dalmatian coast near modern Split; the siege took place in 48 BC.

II.35 Of Three Good Women

De trois bonnes femmes

Montaigne praises three wives—a humble neighbor of Pliny's, Arria and Seneca's Paulina—who chose to die alongside their husbands.

FRENCH

2.35.1 IL n'en est pas à douzaines, comme chacun sçait; et notamment aux deuoirs de mariage: car c'est vn marché plein de tant d'espineuses circonstances, qu'il est malaisé que la volonté d'vne femme, s'y maintienne entiere long temps. Les hommes, quoy qu'ils y soyent auec vn peu meilleure condition, y ont trop affaire. La touche d'vn bon mariage, et sa vraye preuue, regarde le temps que la societé dure; si elle a esté constamment douce, loyalle, et commode. En nostre siecle, elles reseruent plus communément, à estaller leurs bons offices, et la vehemence de leur affection, enuers leurs maris perdus: cherchent au moins lors, à donner tesmoignage de leur bonne volonté. Tardif tesmoignage, et hors de saison.

Elles preuuent plustost par là, qu'elles ne les ayment que morts. La vie est pleine de combustion, le trespas d'amour, et de courtoisie. Comme les peres cachent l'affection enuers leurs enfans, elles volontiers de mesmes, cachent la leur enuers le mary, pour maintenir vn honneste respect. Ce mystere n'est pas de mon goust. Elles ont beau s'escheueler et s'esgratigner; ie m'en vois à l'oreille d'vne femme de chambre, et d'vn secretaire: comment estoient-ils, Comment ont-ils vescu ensemble? il me souuient tousiours de ce bon mot, *iactantius mœrent, quæ minus dolent*. Leur rechigner est odieux aux viuans, et vain aux morts. Nous dispenserons volontiers qu'on rie apres, pourueu qu'on nous rie pendant la vie.

Est-ce pas de quoy resusciter de despit: qui m'aura craché au nez pendant que i'estoy, me vienne frotter les pieds, quand ie ne suis plus? S'il y a quelque honneur à pleurer les maris, il n'appartient qu'à celles qui leur ont ry: celles qui ont pleuré en la vie, qu'elles rient en la mort, au dehors comme au dedans. Aussi, ne regardez pas à ces yeux moites, et à cette piteuse voix: regardez ce port, ce teinct, et l'embonpoinct de ces iouës, soubs ces grands voiles: c'est par là qu'elle parle François. Il en est peu, de

ENGLISH

They do not come by the dozen, as everyone knows, and especially not in the duties of marriage. For it is a bargain full of so many thorny circumstances that it is hard for a woman's will to stay whole in it for long. Men, though they are in a somewhat better position in it, have their hands full. The touchstone of a good marriage, and its true proof, concerns the time the partnership lasts: whether it has been constantly gentle, loyal and agreeable. In our age, women more commonly save the display of their good offices and the vehemence of their affection for their lost husbands; at least then they try to give evidence of their goodwill. Late evidence, and out of season.

Rather, they prove by this that they love them only dead. Life is full of strife; death, full of love and courtesy. As fathers hide their affection for their children, so wives willingly hide theirs for their husbands, to maintain a decorous respect. This mystery is not to my taste. They may tear their hair and scratch their faces all they like; I go and whisper in the ear of a chambermaid or a secretary: "How were they? How did they live together?" I always remember that good saying: *Those who grieve least make the most show of it*. Their sour faces are odious to the living and useless to the dead. We will gladly let them laugh afterward, provided they smile on us while we live.[1]

Isn't it enough to make a man rise from the dead in vexation, that a woman who spat in my face while I lived should come and rub my feet when I am no more? If there is any honor in weeping for husbands, it belongs only to those who smiled on them: let those who wept during their life laugh at their death, outwardly as well as inwardly. So do not look at those moist eyes and that pitiful voice;

1 Adapted from Tacitus, Annals.

FRENCH

qui la santé n'aille en amendant, qualité qui ne sçait pas mentir. Cette ceremonieuse contenance ne regarde pas tant derriere soy, que deuant; c'est acquest, plus que payement.

En mon enfance, vne honneste et tresbelle dame, qui vit encores, vefue d'vn Prince, auoit ie ne sçay quoy plus en sa parure, qu'il n'est permis par les loix de nostre vefuage: à ceux qui le luy reprochoient: C'est, disoit elle, que ie ne practique plus de nouuelles amitiez, et suis hors de volonté de me remarier.

2.35.2 Pour ne disconuenir du tout à nostre vsage, i'ay icy choisi trois femmes, qui ont aussi employé l'effort de leur bonté, et affection, autour la mort de leurs maris. Ce sont pourtant exemples vn peu autres, et si pressans, qu'ils tirent hardiment la vie en consequence.

ENGLISH

look at that bearing, that complexion, and the plumpness of those cheeks under those great veils: that is where she speaks plain French. There are few whose health does not improve, and that is a quality that cannot lie. That ceremonious demeanor looks not so much behind as ahead; it is an investment rather than a repayment.

In my childhood, a virtuous and very beautiful lady, who is still living, the widow of a prince, wore something more in her attire than the laws of our widowhood allow. To those who reproached her for it she said: "It is because I am no longer making new friendships, and have no wish to remarry."

So as not to depart entirely from our custom, I have chosen here three women who also exerted all the force of their goodness and affection around the death of their husbands. Yet these are rather different examples, and so pressing that they boldly bring life itself into the bargain.

A HUMBLE WIFE

A woman of low station ties herself to her incurably sick husband and leaps with him into the sea.

FRENCH

2.35.3 Pline le ieune auoit pres d'vne sienne maison en Italie, vn voisin merueilleusement tourmenté de quelques vlceres, qui luy estoient suruenues és parties honteuses. Sa femme le voyant si longuement languir, le pria de permettre, qu'elle veist à loisir et de pres l'estat de son mal, et qu'elle luy diroit plus franchement qu'aucun autre ce qu'il auoit à en esperer. Apres auoir obtenu cela de luy, et l'auoir curieusement consideré, elle trouua qu'il estoit impossible, qu'il en peust guerir, et que tout ce qu'il auoit à attendre, c'estoit de trainer fort long temps vne vie douloureuse et languissante: si luy conseilla pour le plus seur et souuerain remede, de se tuer.

Et le trouuant vn peu mol, à vne si rude entreprise: Ne pense point, luy dit-elle, mon amy, que les douleurs que ie te voy souffrir ne me touchent autant qu'à toy, et que pour m'en deliurer, ie ne me vueille seruir moy-mesme, de cette medecine que ie t'ordonne. Ie te veux accompagner à la guerison, comme i'ay faict à la maladie: oste cette crainte, et pense que nous n'aurons que plaisir en ce passage, qui nous doit deliurer de tels tourmens:

ENGLISH

Pliny the Younger had, near one of his houses in Italy, a neighbor terribly tormented by some ulcers that had appeared on his private parts. His wife, seeing him languish so long, begged him to let her examine the state of his illness closely and at leisure, saying she would tell him more frankly than anyone else what he had to hope for. Having obtained this from him and examined him carefully, she found that it was impossible for him to recover, and that all he had to look forward to was dragging out a painful and languishing life for a very long time. So she advised him, as the surest and sovereign remedy, to kill himself.[2]

And finding him a little faint-hearted at so hard an undertaking, she said: "Do not think, my love, that the pains I see you suffer do not touch me as much as you, or that, to free myself from them, I do not mean to use the very medicine I prescribe for you. I want to go with you in the cure as I have in the illness. Put away this fear, and think that we shall have nothing but pleasure in this passage which is

2 He tells the story in his Letters (VI.24).

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
	nous nous en irons heureusement ensemble. Cela dit, et ayant rechauffé le courage de son mary, elle resolut qu'ils se precipiteroient en la mer, par vne fenestre de leur logis, qui y respondoit.	to free us from such torments: we shall go away happily together." That said, and having rekindled her husband's courage, she decided that they would throw themselves into the sea from a window of their house that overlooked it.
	Et pour maintenir iusques à sa fin, cette loyale et vehemente affection, dequoy elle l'auoit embrassé pendant sa vie, elle voulut encore qu'il mourust entre ses bras; mais de peur qu'ils ne luy faillissent, et que les estraintes de ses enlassemens, ne vinssent à se relascher par la cheute et la crainte, elle se fit lier et attacher bien estroitement auec luy, par le faux du corps; et abandonna ainsi sa vie, pour le repos de celle de son mary. Celle-là estoit de bas lieu; et parmy telle condition de gens, il n'est pas si nouueau d'y voir quelque traict de rare bonté, *Extrema per illos / Iustitia excedens terris vestigia fecit.*	And to keep up to the end the loyal and vehement affection with which she had embraced him during his life, she wanted him also to die in her arms. But for fear that her arms might fail her, and that the grip of her embrace might loosen in the fall and the fright, she had herself tied and bound very tightly to him by the waist; and so she gave up her life for the repose of her husband's. She was of low station; and among people of that condition it is not so unusual to see some act of rare goodness: *Justice, as she left the earth, / left her last footprints among them.*[3]
2.35.4	Les autres deux sont nobles et riches, où les exemples de vertu se logent rarement.	The other two are noble and rich, a station where examples of virtue rarely lodge.

ARRIA

Arria follows her condemned husband, then stabs herself first and tells him, "Paetus, it does not hurt."

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
2.35.5	Arria femme de Cecinna Pætus, personnage consulaire, fut mere d'vne autre Arria femme de Thrasea Pætus, celuy duquel la vertu fut tant renommée du temps de Neron; et par le moyen de ce gendre, mere-grand de Fannia; car la ressemblance des noms de ces hommes et femmes, et de leurs fortunes, en a fait mesconter plusieurs.	Arria, wife of Caecina Paetus, a man of consular rank, was the mother of another Arria, wife of Thrasea Paetus—the man whose virtue was so renowned in Nero's time—and through this son-in-law she was the grandmother of Fannia. For the likeness of the names of these men and women, and of their fortunes, has led many people astray.[4]
	Cette premiere Arria, Cecinna Pætus, son mary, ayant esté prins prisonnier par les gens de l'Empereur Claudius, apres la deffaicte de Scribonianus, duquel il auoit suiuy le party: supplia ceux qui l'emmenoient prisonnier à Rome, de la receuoir dans leur nauire, où elle leur seroit de beaucoup moins de despence et d'incommodité, qu'vn nombre de personnes, qu'il leur faudroit, pour le seruice de son mary: et qu'elle seule fourniroit à sa chambre, à sa cuisine, et à tous autres offices. Ils l'en refuserent: et elle s'estant iettée dans vn batteau de pescheur, qu'elle loua sur le champ, le suyuit en cette sorte depuis la Sclauonie.	This first Arria's husband, Caecina Paetus, was taken prisoner by the Emperor Claudius's men after the defeat of Scribonianus, whose party he had followed. She begged those who were taking him prisoner to Rome to take her aboard their ship, where she would cost them much less expense and trouble than the number of people they would need to serve her husband; she alone would see to his room, his kitchen and every other duty. They refused her; and throwing herself into a fishing boat that she hired on the spot, she followed him in this way all the way from Dalmatia.[5]
	Comme ils furent à Rome, vn iour, en presence de l'Empereur, Iunia vefue de Scribonianus, s'estant accostée	When they were in Rome, one day, in the Emperor's presence, Junia, Scribonianus's widow, came

3 Virgil, Georgics II.473–474, of country folk.
4 Arria the Elder died in AD 42; Thrasea Paetus, a Stoic senator, was forced to die by Nero in AD 66.

FRENCH

d'elle familierement, pour la societé de leurs fortunes, elle la repoussa rudement auec ces parolles: Moy, dit-elle, que ie parle à toy, ny que ie t'escoute, à toy, au giron de laquelle Scribonianus fut tué, et tu vis encores? Ces paroles, auec plusieurs autres signes, firent sentir à ses parents, qu'elle estoit pour se deffaire elle mesme, impatiente de supporter la fortune de son mary. Et Thrasea son gendre, la suppliant sur ce propos de ne se vouloir perdre, et luy disant ainsi: Quoy? si ie courois pareille fortune à celle de Cecinna, voudriez vous que ma femme vostre fille en fist de mesme? Comment donc?

si ie le voudrois, respondit-elle: ouy, ouy, ie le voudrois, si elle auoit vescu aussi long temps, et d'aussi bon accord auec toy, que i'ay faict auec mon mary. Ces responces augmentoient le soing, qu'on auoit d'elle, et faisoient qu'on regardoit de plus pres à ses deportemens.

Vn iour apres auoir dict à ceux qui la gardoient, Vous auez beau faire, vous me pouuez bien faire plus mal mourir, mais de me garder de mourir, vous ne sçauriez: s'eslançant furieusement d'vne chaire, où elle estoit assise, elle s'alla de toute sa force chocquer la teste contre la paroy voisine: duquel coup, estant cheute de son long esuanouye, et fort blessée apres qu'on l'eut à toute peine faite reuenir: Ie vous disois bien, dit-elle, que si vous me refusiez quelque façon aisée de me tuer, i'en choisirois quelque autre pour mal-aisée qu'elle fust.

La fin d'vne si admirable vertu fut telle: Son mary Pætus, n'ayant pas le cœur assez ferme de soy-mesme, pour se donner la mort, à laquelle la cruauté de l'Empereur le rengeoit; vn iour entre autres, apres auoir premierement employé les discours et enhortements, propres au conseil, qu'elle luy donnoit à ce faire, elle print le poignart, que son mary portoit: et le tenant traict en sa main, pour la conclusion de son exhortation; Fais ainsi Pætus, luy dit-elle. Et en mesme instant, s'en estant donné vn coup mortel dans l'estomach, et puis l'arrachant de sa playe, elle le luy presenta, finissant quant et quant sa vie: auec cette noble, genereuse, et immortelle parole, *Pæte non dolet*.

Elle n'eust loisir que de dire ces trois parolles d'vne si belle substance; Tien Pætus, il ne m'a point faict mal.
Casta suo gladium cùm traderet Arria Pæto,
Quem de visceribus traxerat ipsa suis:
Si qua fides, vulnus quod feci, non dolet, inquit,

ENGLISH

up to her familiarly because of the fortunes they shared. Arria pushed her away roughly with these words: "I," she said, "speak to you, or listen to you? You, in whose lap Scribonianus was killed, and you are still alive?" These words, along with many other signs, made her relatives realize that she meant to do away with herself, unable to bear her husband's fate. And Thrasea, her son-in-law, begged her on this account not to throw her life away, saying to her: "What? If I ran the same risk as Caecina, would you want my wife, your daughter, to do the same?" "What then?

Would I want it?" she replied. "Yes, yes, I would want it, if she had lived as long and in as good harmony with you as I have with my husband." These answers increased the care taken of her, and made them watch her conduct more closely.

One day, after saying to those who were guarding her, "It's no use: you can make me die a worse death, but you cannot keep me from dying," she sprang furiously from the chair where she was sitting and went and dashed her head with all her strength against the wall nearby. The blow laid her out full length in a faint, badly hurt; and after they had with great difficulty brought her round, she said: "I told you that if you refused me some easy way of killing myself, I would choose some other, however hard it might be."

The end of so admirable a virtue was this. Her husband Paetus did not have a heart firm enough of itself to give himself the death to which the Emperor's cruelty was driving him. One day, after first using the reasonings and exhortations suited to the advice she was giving him to do it, she took the dagger her husband wore and, holding it drawn in her hand as the conclusion of her exhortation, she said to him: "Do this, Paetus." And at the same instant, having struck herself a mortal blow in the breast and then pulled the dagger from the wound, she handed it to him, ending her life at that very moment, with these noble, generous and immortal words: *Paetus, it does not hurt.*

She had time only to say those three words of such fine substance: "Here, Paetus, it did not hurt me."
When chaste Arria handed Paetus the sword
she herself had drawn from her own flesh,
"Believe me," she said, "the wound I made does not

5 Scribonianus, governor of Dalmatia, rebelled against Claudius in AD 42.

FRENCH	ENGLISH
Sed quod tu facies, id mihi Pæte dolet. Il est bien plus vif en son naturel, et d'vn sens plus riche: car et la playe, et la mort de son mary, et les siennes, tant s'en faut qu'elles luy poisassent, qu'elle en auoit esté la conseillere et promotrice: mais ayant fait cette haulte et courageuse entreprinse pour la seule commodité de son mary, elle ne regarde qu'à luy, encore au dernier traict de sa vie, et à luy oster la crainte de la suiure en mourant.	*hurt;* *it is the one you will make, Paetus, that hurts me."* The saying is much more vivid in its natural form, and richer in meaning. For the wound and death of her husband, and her own, were so far from weighing on her that she had been their counselor and promoter. But having undertaken this lofty and courageous deed solely for her husband's sake, she thinks only of him, even at the last moment of her life, and of taking away his fear of following her in death.[6]
Pætus se frappa tout soudain, de ce mesme glaiue; honteux à mon aduis, d'auoir eu besoin d'vn si cher et pretieux enseignement.	Paetus immediately struck himself with that same blade—ashamed, in my opinion, to have needed so dear and precious a lesson.

PAULINA AND SENECA

Seneca's young wife chooses to die with him when Nero orders his death, but is saved against her will.

FRENCH	ENGLISH
2.35.6 Pompeia Paulina, ieune et tres-noble Dame Romaine, auoit espousé Seneque, en son extreme vieillesse. Neron, son beau disciple, enuoya ses satellites vers luy, pour luy denoncer l'ordonnance de sa mort, ce qui se faisoit en cette maniere.	Pompeia Paulina, a young and very noble Roman lady, had married Seneca in his extreme old age. Nero, his fine pupil, sent his henchmen to him to announce his sentence of death, which was done in this way.[7]
Quand les Empereurs Romains de ce temps, auoyent condamné quelque homme de qualité, ils luy mandoyent par leurs officiers de choisir quelque mort à sa poste, et de la prendre dans tel, ou tel delay, qu'ils luy faisoyent prescrire selon la trempe de leur cholere, tantost plus pressé, tantost plus long, luy donnant terme pour disposer pendant ce temps là, de ses affaires, et quelque fois luy ostant le moyen de ce faire, par la briefueté du temps: et si le condamné estriuoit à leur ordonnance, ils menoyent des gens propres à l'executer, ou luy couppant les veines des bras, et des iambes, ou luy faisant aualler du poison par force.	When the Roman emperors of that time had condemned some man of rank, they sent their officers to tell him to choose whatever death he liked and to take it within such and such a period, which they had set for him according to the temper of their anger—sometimes shorter, sometimes longer—giving him time during that period to put his affairs in order, and sometimes taking away the means of doing so by the shortness of the time. And if the condemned man resisted their order, they brought men fit to carry it out, either cutting the veins of his arms and legs or forcing him to swallow poison.
Mais les personnes d'honneur, n'attendoyent pas cette necessité, et se seruoyent de leurs propres medecins et chirurgiens à cet effect. Seneque ouyt leur charge, d'vn visage paisible et asseuré, et apres, demanda du papier pour faire son testament: ce que luy ayant esté refusé par le Capitaine, il se tourne vers ses amis: Puis que ie ne puis, leur dit-il, vous laisser autre chose en recognoissance de ce que ie vous doy, ie vous laisse au moins ce que i'ay de plus beau, à sçauoir l'image de mes	But people of honor did not wait for this necessity, and used their own physicians and surgeons for the purpose. Seneca heard their message with a calm and steady face, and then asked for paper to make his will. When the captain refused him, he turned to his friends: "Since I cannot," he said, "leave you anything else in acknowledgment of what I owe you, I leave you at least the finest thing I have, namely the image of my character and my

6 Martial, Epigrams I.13.
7 Seneca was forced to die in AD 65; Montaigne follows Tacitus, Annals XV.

FRENCH

mœurs et de ma vie, laquelle ie vous prie conseruer en vostre memoire: affin qu'en ce faisant, vous acqueriez la gloire de sinceres et veritables amis.

Et quant et quant, appaisant tantost l'aigreur de la douleur, qu'il leur voyoit souffrir, par douces paroles, tantost roidissant sa voix, pour les tancer: Où sont, disoit-il, ces beaux preceptes de la philosophie? que sont deuenuës les prouisions, que par tant d'années nous auons faictes, contre les accidens de la fortune? la cruauté de Neron nous estoit elle incognue? que pouuions nous attendre de celuy, qui auoit tué sa mere et son frere, sinon qu'il fist encor mourir son gouuerneur, qui l'a nourry et esleué?

Apres auoir dit ces paroles en commun, il se destourne à sa femme, et l'embrassant estroittement, comme par la pesanteur de la douleur elle deffailloit de cœur et de forces; la pria de porter vn peu plus patiemment cet accident, pour l'amour de luy; et que l'heure estoit venue, où il auoit à montrer, non plus par discours et par disputes, mais par effect, le fruict qu'il auoit tiré de ses estudes: et que sans doubte il embrassoit la mort, non seulement sans douleur, mais auecques allegresse.

Parquoy m'amie, disoit-il, ne la deshonnore par tes larmes, affin qu'il ne semble que tu t'aimes plus que ma reputation: appaise ta douleur, et te console en la connoissance, que tu as eu de moy, et de mes actions, conduisant le reste de ta vie, par les honnestes occupations, ausquelles tu és addonnée.

A quoy Paulina ayant vn peu repris ses esprits, et reschauffé la magnanimité de son courage, par vne tres-noble affection: Non Seneca, respondit-elle, ie ne suis pas pour vous laisser sans ma compagnie en telle necessité: ie ne veux pas que vous pensiez, que les vertueux exemples de vostre vie, ne m'ayent encore appris à sçauoir bien mourir: et quand le pourroy-ie ny mieux, ny plus honnestement, ny plus à mon gré qu'auecques vous? ainsi faictes estat que ie m'en voy quant et vous.

Lors Seneque prenant en bonne part vne si belle et glorieuse deliberation de sa femme; et pour se deliurer aussi de la crainte de la laisser apres sa mort, à la mercy et cruauté de ses ennemis: Ie t'auoy, Paulina, dit-il, conseillé ce qui seruoit à conduire plus heureusement ta vie: tu aymes donc mieux l'honneur de la mort: vrayement ie ne te l'enuieray point: la constance et la resolution, soyent pareilles à nostre commune fin, mais la beauté et la gloire soit plus grande de ta part.

ENGLISH

life. I beg you to keep it in your memory, so that in doing so you may win the glory of sincere and true friends."

And at the same time, now soothing with gentle words the bitterness of the grief he saw them suffering, now hardening his voice to scold them, he said: "Where are those fine precepts of philosophy? What has become of the provisions we have laid in for so many years against the accidents of fortune? Was Nero's cruelty unknown to us? What could we expect from a man who had killed his mother and his brother, but that he should also put to death his tutor, who brought him up and raised him?"

Having said these words to them all, he turned to his wife and held her tightly in his arms, as she was failing in heart and strength under the weight of her grief. He begged her to bear this misfortune a little more patiently, for love of him; he said that the hour had come when he must show, no longer by reasoning and debate but in deed, the fruit he had drawn from his studies, and that he was undoubtedly embracing death not only without pain but with gladness.

"Therefore, my dear," he said, "do not dishonor it with your tears, lest it seem that you love yourself more than my reputation. Calm your grief, and console yourself with the knowledge you have had of me and of my actions, spending the rest of your life in the honorable occupations to which you are devoted."

Paulina, having recovered her spirits a little and rekindled the greatness of her courage through a most noble affection, replied: "No, Seneca, I am not one to leave you without my company in such a need. I do not want you to think that the virtuous examples of your life have not yet taught me how to die well; and when could I do it better, or more honorably, or more to my liking, than with you? So count on it: I am going with you."

Then Seneca took his wife's fine and glorious resolution in good part; besides, it freed him from the fear of leaving her after his death at the mercy and cruelty of his enemies. "I had advised you, Paulina," he said, "what would help you lead your life more happily; so you prefer the honor of death. Truly, I will not begrudge it you. Let our constancy and resolution be equal in our common

FRENCH

Cela fait, on leur couppa en mesme temps les veines des bras: mais par ce que celles de Seneque reserrées tant par la vieillesse, que par son abstinence, donnoyent au sang le cours trop long et trop lasche, il commanda qu'on luy couppast encore les veines des cuisses: et de peur que le tourment qu'il en souffroit, n'attendrist le cœur de sa femme, et pour se deliurer aussi soy-mesme de l'affliction, qu'il portoit de la veoir en si piteux estat: apres auoir tres-amoureusement pris congé d'elle, il la pria de permettre qu'on l'emportast en la chambre voisine, comme on feit.

Mais toutes ces incisions estans encore insuffisantes pour le faire mourir, il commanda à Statius Anneus son medecin, de luy donner vn breuuage de poison; qui n'eut guere non plus d'effect: car par la foiblesse et froideur des membres, elle ne peut arriuer iusques au cœur. Par ainsin on luy fit en outre apprester vn baing fort chauld: et lors sentant sa fin prochaine, autant qu'il eut d'halene, il continua des discours tres-excellens sur le subiect de l'estat où il se trouuoit, que ses secretaires recueillirent tant qu'ils peurent ouyr sa voix; et demeurerent ses parolles dernieres long temps depuis en credit et honneur, és mains des hommes: ce nous est vne bien fascheuse perte, qu'elles ne soyent venues iusques à nous.

Comme il sentit les derniers traicts de la mort, prenant de l'eau du baing toute sanglante, il en arrousa sa teste, en disant; Ie vouë cette eau à Iuppiter le liberateur. Neron aduerty de tout cecy, craignant que la mort de Paulina, qui estoit des mieux apparentées dames Romaines, et enuers laquelle il n'auoit nulles particulieres inimitiez, luy vinst à reproche; renuoya en toute diligence luy faire r'atacher ses playes: ce que ses gens d'elle, firent sans son sçeu, estant desia demy morte, et sans aucun sentiment. Et ce que contre son dessein, elle vesquit depuis, ce fut tres-honnorablement, et comme il appartenoit à sa vertu, montrant par la couleur blesme de son visage, combien elle auoit escoulé de vie par ses blessures.

2.35.7 Voyla mes trois comtes tres-veritables, que ie trouue aussi plaisans et tragiques que ceux que nous forgeons à nostre poste, pour donner plaisir au commun: et m'estonne que ceux qui s'addonnent à cela, ne s'auisent de choisir plustost dix mille tres-belles histoires, qui se

ENGLISH

end, but let the beauty and the glory be greater on your side."

That done, the veins of their arms were cut at the same time. But because Seneca's veins, shrunk both by old age and by his abstemious diet, let the blood flow too slowly and too sluggishly, he ordered the veins of his thighs to be cut as well. And for fear that the torment he suffered might weaken his wife's heart, and also to free himself from the distress he felt at seeing her in so pitiful a state, he took a most loving leave of her and begged her to let herself be carried into the next room, which was done.

But since all these incisions were still not enough to kill him, he ordered Statius Annaeus, his physician, to give him a draught of poison, which had hardly any more effect: because of the weakness and coldness of his limbs, it could not reach his heart. So they also had a very hot bath prepared for him. Then, feeling his end near, as long as he had breath he went on with most excellent discourses on the state in which he found himself, which his secretaries took down as long as they could hear his voice; and his last words long remained in credit and honor in men's hands. It is a very grievous loss to us that they have not come down to us.

As he felt the last throes of death, he took some of the bathwater, all bloody, and sprinkled his head with it, saying: "I dedicate this water to Jupiter the Liberator." Nero, informed of all this, feared that the death of Paulina, who was among the best-connected ladies of Rome and against whom he had no particular enmity, might bring reproach upon him; he sent back in all haste to have her wounds bound up again. Her own servants did this without her knowledge, for she was already half dead and without any feeling. And as for living on afterward, against her intention, she did so most honorably and as befitted her virtue, showing by the pallor of her face how much life had drained out of her through her wounds.

There are my three very true tales, which I find as pleasing and as tragic as those we invent at our pleasure to entertain the common people. And I am amazed that those who devote themselves to that work do not think of choosing instead from the ten thousand very fine stories to be found in

FRENCH

rencontrent dans les liures, où ils auroyent moins de peine, et apporteroient plus de plaisir et profit.

Et qui en voudroit bastir vn corps entier et s'entretenant, il ne faudroit qu'il fournist du sien que la liaison, comme la soudure d'vn autre metal: et pourroit entasser par ce moyen force veritables euenemens de toutes sortes, les disposant et diuersifiant, selon que la beauté de l'ouurage le requerroit, à peu pres comme Ouide a cousu et r'apiecé sa Metamorphose, de ce grand nombre de fables diuerses.

ENGLISH

books, where they would have less trouble and would bring more pleasure and profit.

And whoever wanted to build a whole, connected body out of them would need to supply of his own only the joining, like the solder of another metal. In this way he could pile up plenty of true events of all kinds, arranging and varying them as the beauty of the work required, much as Ovid stitched and patched together his Metamorphoses out of that great number of various fables.

LIVING FOR ANOTHER'S SAKE

Seneca's letter shows that prolonging one's life for a loved one can itself be magnanimity.

FRENCH

2.35.8 En ce dernier couple, cela est encore digne d'estre consideré, que Paulina offre volontiers à quitter la vie pour l'amour de son mary, et que son mary auoit autrefois quitté aussi la mort pour l'amour d'elle. Il n'y a pas pour nous grand contre-poix en cet eschange: mais selon son humeur Stoïque, ie croy qu'il pensoit auoir autant faict pour elle, d'alonger sa vie en sa faueur, comme s'il fust mort pour elle.

En l'vne des lettres, qu'il escrit à Lucilius; apres qu'il luy a fait entendre, comme la fiebure l'ayant pris à Rome, il monta soudain en coche, pour s'en aller à vne sienne maison aux champs, contre l'opinion de sa femme, qui le vouloit arrester; et qu'il luy auoit respondu, que la fiebure qu'il auoit, ce n'estoit pas fiebure du corps, mais du lieu: il suit ainsin: Elle me laissa aller me recommandant fort ma santé.

Or moy, qui sçay que ie loge sa vie en la mienne, ie commence de pouruoir à moy, pour pouruoir à elle: le priuilege que ma vieillesse m'auoit donné, me rendant plus ferme et plus resolu à plusieurs choses, ie le pers, quand il me souuient qu'en ce vieillard, il y en a vne ieune à qui ie profite.

Puis que ie ne la puis ranger à m'aymer plus courageusement, elle me renge à m'aymer moy mesme plus curieusement: car il faut prester quelque chose aux honnestes affections: et par fois, encore que les occasions nous pressent au contraire, il faut r'appeler la vie, voire auec que tourment: il faut arrester l'ame entre les dents, puis que la loy de viure aux gens de bien, ce n'est pas autant qu'il leur plaist, mais autant qu'ils doiuent.

ENGLISH

In this last couple, this too is worth considering: that Paulina willingly offers to give up life for love of her husband, and that her husband had once also given up death for love of her. To us there is no great counterweight in this exchange; but given his Stoic temperament, I believe he thought he had done as much for her in prolonging his life for her sake as if he had died for her.

In one of the letters he writes to Lucilius, he tells him how, having been taken with fever in Rome, he immediately got into a carriage to go to a country house of his, against the opinion of his wife, who wanted to keep him back; and how he had answered her that the fever he had was not a fever of the body but of the place. He goes on thus: She let me go, urging me strongly to look after my health.[8]

Now I, knowing that I lodge her life in mine, begin to take care of myself in order to take care of her. The privilege my old age had given me, making me firmer and more resolute about many things, I lose when I remember that in this old man there is a young woman whom I benefit.

Since I cannot bring her to love me more bravely, she brings me to love myself more carefully. For we must grant something to honorable affections; and sometimes, even though circumstances urge us the other way, we must call life back, even in torment; we must hold the soul between our teeth, since the law of living for good men is not as long as they please but as long as they ought.

8 Seneca, Letters to Lucilius 104.

FRENCH

Celuy qui n'estime pas tant sa femme ou vn sien amy, que d'en allonger sa vie, et qui s'opiniastre à mourir, il est trop delicat et trop mol: il faut que l'ame se commande cela, quand l'vtilité des nostres le requiert: il faut par fois nous prester à noz amis: et quand nous voudrions mourir pour nous, interrompre nostre dessein pour eux.

C'est tesmoignage de grandeur de courage, de retourner en la vie pour la consideration d'autruy, comme plusieurs excellens personnages ont faict: et est vn traict de bonté singuliere, de conseruer la vieillesse, (de laquelle la commodité la plus grande, c'est la nonchalance de sa durée, et vn plus courageux et desdaigneux vsage de la vie,) si on sent que cet office soit doux, aggreable, et profitable à quelqu'vn bien affectionné. Et en reçoit on vne tres-plaisante recompense: car qu'est-il plus doux, que d'estre si cher à sa femme, qu'en sa consideration, on en deuienne plus cher à soy-mesme? Ainsi ma Paulina m'a chargé, non seulement sa crainte, mais encore la mienne.

Ce ne m'a pas esté assez de considerer, combien resolument ie pourrois mourir, mais i'ay aussi consideré, combien irresoluement elle le pourroit souffrir. Ie me suis contrainct a viure, et c'est quelquefois magnanimité que viure. Voyla ses mots excellens, comme est son vsage.

ENGLISH

He who does not value his wife or a friend enough to prolong his life for them, and who obstinately insists on dying, is too fastidious and too soft. The soul must command itself to do this when the needs of those close to us require it. We must sometimes lend ourselves to our friends, and when we would like to die for our own sake, interrupt our plan for theirs.

It is a sign of greatness of heart to return to life out of regard for another, as many excellent men have done; and it is a mark of singular goodness to preserve one's old age (whose greatest advantage is indifference to how long it lasts, and a bolder and more disdainful use of life) if one feels that this service is sweet, agreeable and useful to someone who loves us dearly. And one receives a very pleasant reward for it: for what is sweeter than to be so dear to one's wife that, for her sake, one becomes dearer to oneself? So my Paulina has burdened me not only with her fear but also with my own.

It was not enough for me to consider how resolutely I could die; I have also considered how irresolutely she could bear it. I have forced myself to live, and sometimes it is magnanimity to live. Those are his words, excellent as always.

II.36 Of the Most Excellent Men

Des plus excellens hommes
Montaigne ranks Homer, Alexander and above all Epaminondas as the most excellent men he knows, weighing each one's gifts and faults.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
2.36.1	SI on me demandoit le choix de tous les hommes qui sont venus à ma cognoissance, il me semble en trouuer trois excellens au dessus de tous les autres.	If I were asked to choose among all the men who have come to my knowledge, I think I find three who excel above all the others.

HOMER

Homer is the first of the three most excellent men, the master of all later poets and thinkers.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
2.36.2	L'vn Homere; non pas qu'Aristote ou Varro, pour exemple, ne fussent à l'aduenture aussi sçauans que luy; ny possible encore qu'en son art mesme, Virgile ne luy soit comparable. Ie le laisse à iuger à ceux, qui les cognoissent tous deux. Moy qui n'en cognoy que l'vn, puis seulement dire cela, selon ma portée, que ie ne croy pas que les Muses mesmes allassent au delà du Romain. *Tale facit carmen docta testudine, quale / Cynthius impositis temperat articulis.* Toutesfois en ce iugement, encore ne faudroit il pas oublier, que c'est principalement d'Homere que Virgile tient sa suffisance, que c'est son guide, et maistre d'escole; et qu'vn seul traict de l'Iliade, a fourny de corps et de matiere, à cette grande et diuine Eneide.	One is Homer. Not that Aristotle or Varro, for example, were not perhaps as learned as he; nor even, possibly, that Virgil is not comparable to him in his own art. I leave that to be judged by those who know them both. I, who know only one of them, can say only this, as far as my capacity goes: I do not believe the Muses themselves went beyond the Roman. *He makes such a song on his learned lyre / as the Cynthian god tunes with his fingers on the strings.* Yet in this judgment we must still not forget that it is chiefly from Homer that Virgil gets his ability, that Homer is his guide and schoolmaster, and that a single stroke of the Iliad supplied the body and matter for that great and divine Aeneid.[1]
	Ce n'est pas ainsi que ie compte: i'y mesle plusieurs autres circonstances, qui me rendent ce personnage admirable, quasi au dessus de l'humaine condition. Et à la verité, ie m'estonne souuent, que luy qui a produit, et mis en credit au monde plusieurs deitez, par son auctorité, n'a gaigné reng de Dieu luy mesme. Estant aueugle, indigent; estant auant que les sciences fussent redigées en regle, et obseruations certaines, il les a tant cognues, que tous ceux qui se sont meslez depuis d'establir des polices, de conduire guerres, et d'escrire ou de la religion, ou de la philosophie, en quelque secte que ce soit, ou des arts, se sont seruis de luy, comme d'vn maistre tres-parfaict en la cognoissance de toutes choses.	That is not how I reckon: I add many other circumstances that make this man admirable to me, almost above the human condition. And indeed I am often astonished that he, who by his authority produced so many deities and brought them into credit in the world, did not himself win the rank of a god. Blind, poor, living before the sciences were set down in rules and sure observations, he knew them so well that all those who have since undertaken to establish governments, conduct wars, or write about religion or philosophy, of whatever school, or about the arts, have used him as a most perfect master in the knowledge of all things.

1 The verse is from Propertius II.34; the "Cynthian god" is Apollo.

FRENCH

Et de ses liures, comme d'vne pepiniere de toute espece de suffisance, *Qui quid sit pulchrum, quid turpe, quid vtile, quid non,*
Plenius ac melius Chrysippo ac Crantore dicit: Et comme dit l'autre, *A quo, ceu fonte perenni,*
Vatum Pieriis labra rigantur aquis. Et l'autre, *Adde Heliconiadum comites, quorum vnus Homerus*
Astra potitus. Et l'autre, *Cuiúsque ex ore profuso*
Omnis posteritas latices in carmina duxit,
Amnémque in tenues ausa est deducere riuos,
Vnius fœcunda bonis.

2.36.3 C'est contre l'ordre de Nature, qu'il a faict la plus excellente production qui puisse estre: car la naissance ordinaire des choses, elle est imparfaicte: elles s'augmentent, se fortifient par l'accroissance. L'enfance de la poësie, et de plusieurs autres sciences, il l'a rendue meure, parfaicte, et accomplie. A cette cause le peut on nommer le premier et dernier des poëtes, suyuant ce beau tesmoignage que l'antiquité nous a laissé de luy, que n'ayant eu nul qu'il peust imiter auant luy, il n'a eu nul apres luy qui le peust imiter. Ses parolles, selon Aristote, sont les seules parolles, qui ayent mouuement et action: ce sont les seuls mots substantiels.

Alexandre le grand ayant rencontré parmy les despouïlles de Darius, vn riche coffret, ordonna qu'on le luy reseruast pour y loger son Homere: disant, que c'estoit le meilleur et plus fidelle conseiller qu'il eust en ses affaires militaires. Pour cette mesme raison disoit Cleomenes fils d'Anaxandridas, que c'estoit le Poëte des Lacedemoniens, par ce qu'il estoit tres-bon maistre de la discipline guerriere. Cette loüange singuliere et particuliere luy est aussi demeurée au iugement de Plutarque, que c'est le seul autheur du monde, qui n'a iamais soulé ne dégousté les hommes, se montrant aux lecteurs tousiours tout autre, et fleurissant tousiours en nouuelle grace.

Ce folastre d'Alcibiades, ayant demandé à vn, qui faisoit profession des lettres, vn liure d'Homere, luy donna vn soufflet, par ce qu'il n'en auoit point: comme qui trouueroit vn de nos prestres sans breuiaire.

2.36.4 Xenophanes se pleignoit vn iour à Hieron, tyran de Syracuse, de ce qu'il estoit si pauure, qu'il n'auoit dequoy

ENGLISH

And they have drawn on his books as on a nursery of every kind of ability: *He tells us what is fine, what is foul, what is useful and what is not,*
more fully and better than Chrysippus and Crantor. And as another says: *From whom, as from an everlasting spring,*
the lips of poets are moistened with Pierian waters. And another: *Add the companions of the Heliconian Muses, among whom Homer alone*
has won the stars. And another: *From whose overflowing mouth*
all posterity has drawn its waters for its songs,
and dared to divert the river into slender streams,
rich in the wealth of one man.[2]

It is against the order of Nature that he produced the most excellent work there can be. For the ordinary birth of things is imperfect; they grow and grow stronger as they develop. The infancy of poetry, and of several other sciences, he made mature, perfect and complete. For this reason he may be called the first and last of poets, in keeping with the fine testimony antiquity has left us about him: that having had no one before him whom he could imitate, he has had no one after him who could imitate him. His words, according to Aristotle, are the only words that have movement and action; they are the only words of substance.

Alexander the Great, having found a rich casket among the spoils of Darius, ordered it to be kept for him to hold his Homer, saying that it was the best and most faithful counselor he had in his military affairs. For this same reason Cleomenes, son of Anaxandridas, said that he was the poet of the Spartans, because he was a very good master of the discipline of war. This singular and special praise has also remained his in Plutarch's judgment: that he is the only author in the world who has never sated or wearied people, always showing himself quite different to his readers, and always flowering with new grace.

That madcap Alcibiades, having asked a man who professed letters for a book of Homer, slapped him because he had none—as if one found one of our priests without a breviary.

Xenophanes complained one day to Hiero, tyrant of Syracuse, that he was so poor he could not af-

2 Horace, Epistles I.2; Ovid, Amores III.9; Lucretius III.1037–1038; Manilius, Astronomica II.8–11.

FRENCH

nourrir deux seruiteurs: Et quoy, luy respondit-il, Homere qui estoit beaucoup plus pauure que toy, en nourrit bien plus de dix mille, tout mort qu'il est. Que n'estoit ce dire, à Panætius, quand il nommoit Platon l'Homere des philosophes? Outre cela, quelle gloire se peut comparer à la sienne? Il n'est rien qui viue en la bouche des hommes, comme son nom et ses ouurages: rien si cogneu, et si reçeu que Troye, Helene, et ses guerres, qui ne furent à l'aduenture iamais. Nos enfans s'appellent encore des noms qu'il forgea, il y a plus de trois mille ans. Qui ne cognoist Hector, et Achilles?

Non seulement aucunes races particulieres, mais la plus part des nations, cherchent origine en ses inuentions. Mahumet second de ce nom, Empereur des Turcs, escriuant à nostre Pape Pie second: Ie m'estonne, dit-il, comment les Italiens se bandent contre moy, attendu que nous auons nostre origine commune des Troyens: et que i'ay comme eux interest de venger le sang d'Hector sur les Grecs, lesquels ils vont fauorisant contre moy. N'est-ce pas vne noble farce, de laquelle les Roys, les choses publiques, et les Empereurs, vont ioüant leur personnage tant de siecles, et à laquelle tout ce grand vniuers sert de theatre?

Sept villes Grecques entrerent en debat du lieu de sa naissance, tant son obscurité mesmes luy apporta d'honneur: *Smyrna, Rhodos, Colophon, Salamis, Chios, Argos, Athenæ.*

ENGLISH

ford to feed two servants. "What?" Hiero answered. "Homer, who was much poorer than you, feeds more than ten thousand, dead as he is." What else did Panaetius mean when he called Plato the Homer of philosophers? Besides, what glory can compare with Homer's? Nothing lives in men's mouths like his name and his works; nothing is so well known and so accepted as Troy, Helen and her wars, which perhaps never happened. Our children are still called by names he coined more than three thousand years ago. Who does not know Hector and Achilles?

Not only certain particular families but most nations seek their origin in his inventions. Mehmed, second of that name, Emperor of the Turks, writing to our Pope Pius II, said: "I am astonished that the Italians band together against me, given that we have our common origin in the Trojans, and that I, like them, have an interest in avenging the blood of Hector on the Greeks, whom they keep favoring against me." Is it not a noble farce, in which kings, commonwealths and emperors have been playing their parts for so many centuries, and for which this whole great universe serves as the theater?[3]

Seven Greek cities disputed the place of his birth, so much honor did even his obscurity bring him: *Smyrna, Rhodes, Colophon, Salamis, Chios, Argos, Athens.*[4]

ALEXANDER

Alexander is the second, admired for his deeds and virtues and preferred even to Caesar.

FRENCH

2.36.5 L'autre, Alexandre le grand. Car qui considerera l'aage qu'il commença ses entreprises: le peu de moyen auec lequel il fit vn si glorieux dessein: l'authorité qu'il gaigna en cette sienne enfance, parmy les plus grands et experimentez capitaines du monde, desquels il estoit suyui: la faueur extraordinaire, dequoy Fortune embrassa, et fauorisa tant de siens exploits hazardeux, et à peu que ie ne die temeraires: *Impellens quicquid sibi summa petenti / Obstaret, gaudénsque viam fecisse ruina:* cette grandeur, d'auoir à l'aage de trente trois ans, passé victorieux toute la terre habitable, et en vne demie vie auoir atteint tout l'effort de l'humaine nature:

ENGLISH

The second is Alexander the Great. For consider the age at which he began his enterprises; the scant means with which he carried out so glorious a design; the authority he won, in this childhood of his, among the greatest and most experienced captains in the world, who followed him; the extraordinary favor with which Fortune embraced and favored so many of his hazardous—I almost said rash—exploits, *Overthrowing whatever stood in the way of his reaching for the heights, / and rejoicing to have made his path through ruin*; that greatness of having, at the age of thirty-three, passed victori-

3 Pius II was pope from 1458 to 1464.
4 A verse quoted by Aulus Gellius, Attic Nights III.11.

FRENCH

si que vous ne pouuez imaginer sa durée legitime, et la continuation de son accroissance, en vertu et en fortune, iusques à vn iuste terme d'aage, que vous n'imaginiez quelque chose au dessus de l'homme: d'auoir faict naistre de ses soldats tant de branches Royales: laissant apres sa mort le monde en partage à quatre successeurs, simples capitaines de son armée, desquels les descendans ont depuis si long temps duré, maintenans cette grande possession: tant d'excellentes vertus qui estoient en luy, iustice, tempérance, liberalité, foy en ses paroles, amour enuers les siens, humanité enuers les vaincus: car ses mœurs semblent à la verité n'auoir aucun iuste reproche: ouy bien aucunes de ses actions particulieres, rares, et extraordinaires.

Mais il est impossible de conduire si grands mouuemens, auec les regles de la iustice. Telles gens veulent estre iugez en gros, par la maistresse fin de leurs actions. La ruyne de Thebes, le meurtre de Menander, et du medecin d'Ephestion: de tant de prisonniers Persiens à vn coup, d'vne trouppe de soldats Indiens non sans interest de sa parolle, des Cosseïens iusques aux petits enfans: sont saillies vn peu mal excusables.

Car quant à Clytus, la faute en fut amendée outre son poix: et tesmoigne cette action autant que toute autre, la debonnaireté de sa complexion, et que c'estoit de soy vne complexion excellemment formée à la bonté, et a esté ingenieusement dict de luy, qu'il auoit de la Nature ses vertus, de la Fortune ses vices. Quant à ce qu'il estoit vn peu vanteur, vn peu trop impatient d'ouyr mesdire de soy, et quant à ses mangeoires, armes, et mors, qu'il fit semer aux Indes: toutes ces choses me semblent pouuoir estre condonées à son aage, et à l'estrange prosperité de sa fortune.

Qui considerera quand et quand, tant de vertus militaires, diligence, pouruoyance, patience, discipline, subtilité, magnanimité, resolution, bonheur, en quoy, quand l'authorité d'Hannibal ne nous l'auroit appris, il a esté le premier des hommes: les rares beautez et conditions de sa personne, iusques au miracle: ce port, et ce venerable maintien, soubs vn visage si ieune, vermeil, et

ENGLISH

ous through the whole habitable earth, and of having reached in half a life the utmost power of human nature,[5]

so that you cannot imagine his natural span, and the continuation of his growth in virtue and fortune up to a proper term of age, without imagining something above man; having caused so many royal branches to spring from his soldiers, leaving the world after his death divided among four successors, mere captains of his army, whose descendants lasted so long afterward, holding on to that great possession; so many excellent virtues that were in him—justice, temperance, generosity, faithfulness to his word, love for his own people, humanity toward the vanquished. For his character truly seems to deserve no just reproach—though some of his particular actions, rare and extraordinary ones, do.

But it is impossible to conduct such great movements within the rules of justice. Such men must be judged as a whole, by the chief end of their actions. The destruction of Thebes; the murder of Menander and of Hephaestion's physician; of so many Persian prisoners at once; of a troop of Indian soldiers, not without damage to his word; of the Cossaeans, down to the little children—these are outbursts that are rather hard to excuse.

As for Clitus, the fault was atoned for beyond its weight; and this action testifies, as much as any other, to the gentleness of his temperament, and shows that his was in itself a nature excellently formed for goodness. It has been cleverly said of him that he had his virtues from Nature and his vices from Fortune. As for his being somewhat boastful, somewhat too impatient of hearing himself spoken ill of, and as for the mangers, weapons and bits he had scattered about in India—all these things seem to me pardonable in view of his age and the strange prosperity of his fortune.[6]

Consider at the same time so many military virtues—diligence, foresight, endurance, discipline, subtlety, magnanimity, resolution, good fortune—in which, even if Hannibal's authority had not taught us so, he was the first of men; the rare beauty and qualities of his person, amounting to a miracle; that bearing and that venerable demean-

5 Lucan, Pharsalia I.149–150, said there of Caesar.
6 Alexander left oversized arms and horse gear in India to impress posterity.

FRENCH	ENGLISH
flamboyant: *Qualis, vbi Oceani perfusus Lucifer vnda,* *Quem Venus ante alios astrorum diligit ignes,* *Extulit os sacrum cœlo, tenebrásque resoluit:* l'excellence de son sçauoir et capacité:	or beneath so young, ruddy and radiant a face: *As when the Morning Star, bathed in the Ocean's wave, whom Venus loves above all the other fires of the stars, lifts his sacred face to the sky and dispels the darkness*; the excellence of his learning and capacity;[7]
la durée et grandeur de sa gloire, pure, nette, exempte de tache et d'enuie: et qu'encore long temps apres sa mort, ce fust vne religieuse croyance, d'estimer que ses medailles portassent bon-heur à ceux qui les auoyent sur eux: et que plus de Roys, et Princes ont escrit ses gestes, qu'autres historiens n'ont escrit les gestes d'autre Roy ou Prince que ce soit: et qu'encores à present, les Mahumetans, qui mesprisent toutes autres histoires, reçoiuent et honnorent la sienne seule par special priuilege: il confessera, tout cela mis ensemble, que i'ay eu raison de le preferer à Cæsar mesme, qui seul m'a peu mettre en doubte du choix.	the duration and greatness of his glory, pure, clean, free of stain and envy; and that long after his death it was a religious belief that his medals brought luck to those who carried them; and that more kings and princes have written of his deeds than other historians have written of the deeds of any other king or prince whatever; and that even now the Muslims, who despise all other histories, accept and honor his alone by special privilege. Whoever considers all this taken together will admit that I was right to prefer him even to Caesar, who alone could make me hesitate in my choice.
Et il ne se peut nier, qu'il n'y aye plus du sien en ses exploits, plus de la Fortune en ceux d'Alexandre. Ils ont eu plusieurs choses esgales, et Cæsar à l'aduenture aucunes plus grandes. Ce furent deux feux, ou deux torrens, à rauager le monde par diuers endroits.	And it cannot be denied that there is more of Caesar's own in his exploits, and more of Fortune in Alexander's. They had many things equal, and Caesar perhaps some greater. They were two fires, or two torrents, ravaging the world in different places.
Et velut immissi diuersis partibus ignes *Arentem in siluam, et virgulta sonantia lauro:* *Aut vbi decursu rapido de montibus altis* *Dant sonitum spumosi amnes, et in æquora currunt,* *Quisque suum populatus iter.* Mais quand l'ambition de Cæsar auroit de soy plus de moderation, elle a tant de mal'heur, ayant rencontré ce vilain subiect de la ruyne de son pays, et de l'empirement vniuersel du monde, que toutes pieces ramassées et mises en la balance, ie ne puis que ie ne panche du costé d'Alexandre.	*And as fires let loose from different sides* *into a dry forest and thickets crackling with laurel;* *or as when foaming rivers, rushing headlong down from the high mountains,* *roar and run to the sea,* *each having laid waste its own path.* But even if Caesar's ambition had more moderation in itself, it has such ill fortune, having met with that vile object, the ruin of his country and the universal worsening of the world, that with all the pieces gathered up and put in the scales, I cannot help leaning to Alexander's side.[8]

EPAMINONDAS

Epaminondas, the third and greatest, joined valor and ability to a conscience without stain.

FRENCH	ENGLISH
2.36.6 Le tiers, et le plus excellent, à mon gré, c'est Epaminondas. De gloire, il n'en a pas à beaucoup pres tant que d'autres (aussi n'est-ce pas vne piece de la substance de la chose,) de resolution et de vaillance, non pas de celle qui est esguisée par ambition, mais de celle	The third, and in my opinion the most excellent, is Epaminondas. Of glory he has nowhere near as much as others (nor is it any part of the substance of the thing). Of resolution and valor he had all that can be imagined: not the kind that ambition

7 Virgil, Aeneid VIII.589–591.
8 Virgil, Aeneid XII.521–525.

FRENCH

que la sapience et la raison peuuent planter en vne ame bien reglée, il en auoit tout ce qui s'en peut imaginer.

De preuue de cette sienne vertu, il en a faict autant, à mon aduis, qu'Alexandre mesme, et que Cæsar: car encore que ses exploits de guerre, ne soyent ny si frequens, ny si enflez, ils ne laissent pas pourtant, à les bien considerer et toutes leurs circonstances, d'estre aussi poisants et roides, et portant autant de tesmoignage de hardiesse et de suffisance militaire. Les Grecs luy ont faict cet honneur, sans contredit, de le nommer le premier homme d'entre eux: mais estre le premier de la Grece, c'est facilement estre le prime du monde. Quant à son sçauoir et suffisance, ce iugement ancien nous en est resté, que iamais homme ne sceut tant, et parla si peu que luy. Car il estoit Pythagorique de secte.

Et ce qu'il parla, nul ne parla iamais mieux: excellent orateur et tres persuasif. Mais quant à ses mœurs et conscience, il a de bien loing surpassé tous ceux, qui se sont iamais meslez de manier affaires: car en cette partie, qui doit estre principalement considerée, qui seule marque veritablement, quels nous sommes: et laquelle ie contrepoise seule à toutes les autres ensemble, il ne cede à aucun philosophe, non pas à Socrates mesmes. En cestuy-cy l'innocence est vne qualité, propre, maistresse, constante, vniforme, incorruptible. Au parangon de laquelle, elle paroist en Alexandre subalterne, incertaine, bigarrée, molle, et fortuite.

2.36.7 L'ancienneté iugea, qu'à esplucher par le menu touts les autres grands capitaines, il se trouue en chascun quelque speciale qualité, qui le rend illustre. En cestuy-cy seul, c'est vne vertu et suffisance pleine par tout, et pareille: qui en touts les offices de la vie humaine ne laisse rien à desirer de soy: soit en occupation publique ou priuée, ou paisible, ou guerriere: soit à viure soit à mourir grandement et glorieusement. Ie ne cognoy nulle ny forme ny fortune d'homme, que ie regarde auec tant d'honneur et d'amour.

2.36.8 Il est bien vray, que son obstination à la pauureté, ie la trouue aucunement scrupuleuse: comme elle est peinte par ses meilleurs amis. Et cette seule action, haute pourtant et tres digne d'admiration, ie la sens vn peu aigrette, pour par souhait mesme en la forme qu'elle estoit en luy, m'en desirer l'imitation.

2.36.9 Le seul Scipion Æmylian, qui luy donneroit vne fin aussi fiere et magnifique, et la cognoissance des sciences autant profonde et vniuerselle, se pourroit mettre à l'encontre à l'autre plat de la balance. O quel desplaisir le

ENGLISH

sharpens, but the kind that wisdom and reason can plant in a well-ordered soul.

Of proof of this virtue of his, he gave as much, in my view, as Alexander himself, and as Caesar. His feats of war are neither so frequent nor so swollen. Yet if you consider them well, with all their circumstances, they are just as weighty and hard-fought, and bear as much witness to boldness and military skill. The Greeks paid him the honor, without dispute, of calling him the first man among them; but to be the first of Greece is easily to be the foremost in the world. As for his learning and ability, this ancient judgment has come down to us: that no man ever knew so much and spoke so little. For he was of the Pythagorean sect.

And when he did speak, no one ever spoke better: he was an excellent orator and highly persuasive. But in his character and conscience he far surpassed all who have ever had a hand in managing affairs. In this respect, which ought to be considered above all, which alone truly marks what we are, and which alone I weigh against all the others put together, he yields to no philosopher, not even to Socrates. In him innocence is a quality that is his own, ruling, constant, uniform, incorruptible. Set beside his, Alexander's looks subordinate, uncertain, motley, soft, and accidental.

Antiquity judged that if you examine all the other great captains in detail, you find in each some special quality that makes him illustrious. In this one alone there is a virtue and ability that is full and even throughout. In all the offices of human life it leaves nothing to be desired: in public or private occupation, in peace or in war, in living or in dying grandly and gloriously. I know of no form or fortune of man that I regard with so much honor and love.

It is true that I find his obstinacy in poverty somewhat overscrupulous, as his best friends portray it. And this one action, lofty though it is and most worthy of admiration, I find a little too sharp for me to wish, even in wishing, to imitate it in the form it took in him.

Only Scipio Aemilianus, if we granted him an end as proud and magnificent and a knowledge of the sciences as deep and universal, could be set against him in the other pan of the scale. Oh, what

FRENCH

temps m'a faict, d'oster de nos yeux à poinct nommé, des premieres, la couple de vies iustement la plus noble, qui fust en Plutarque, de ces deux personnages: par le commun consentement du monde, l'vn le premier des Grecs, l'autre des Romains! Quelle matiere, quelle œuurier!

2.36.10 Pour vn homme non saint, mais que nous disons, galant homme, de mœurs ciuiles et communes: d'vne hauteur moderée: la plus riche vie, que ie sçache, à estre vescue entre les viuants, comme on dit: et estoffée de plus de riches parties et desirables, c'est, tout consideré, celle d'Alcibiades à mon gré.

2.36.11 Mais quant à Epaminondas, pour exemple d'vne excessiue bonté, ie veux adiouster icy aucunes de ses opinions. Le plus doux contentement qu'il eut en toute sa vie, il tesmoigna que c'estoit le plaisir qu'il auoit donné à son pere, et à sa mere, de sa victoire de Leuctres: il couche de beaucoup, preferant leur plaisir, au sien si iuste et si plein d'vne tant glorieuse action. Il ne pensoit pas qu'il fust loisible pour recouurer mesmes la liberté de son pays, de tuer vn homme sans cognoissance de cause. Voyla pourquoy il fut si froid à l'entreprise de Pelopidas son compaignon, pour la deliurance de Thebes.

Il tenoit aussi, qu'en vne bataille il falloit fuyr la rencontre d'vn amy, qui fust au party contraire, et l'espargner. Et son humanité à l'endroit des ennemis mesmes, l'ayant mis en soupçon enuers les Bœotiens, de ce qu'apres auoir miraculeusement forcé les Lacedemoniens de luy ouurir le pas, qu'ils auoyent entreprins de garder à l'entrée de la Morée pres de Corinthe, il s'estoit contenté de leur auoir passé sur le ventre, sans les poursuyure à toute outrance: il fut deposé de l'estat de Capitaine general.

Tres honorablement pour vne telle cause: et pour la honte que ce leur fut d'auoir par necessité à le remonter tantost apres en son degré, et recognoistre, combien dependoit de luy leur gloire et leur salut: la victoire le suyuant comme son ombre par tout où il guidast, la prosperité de son pays mourut aussi luy mort, comme elle estoit née par luy.

ENGLISH

a vexation time has caused me by taking from our sight, as if on purpose and among the very first, precisely the pair of lives that was rightly the noblest in Plutarch: those of these two men, by the common consent of the world the one the first of the Greeks, the other of the Romans! What material, and what a craftsman![9]

For a man who is no saint, but what we call a fine gentleman, of civil and ordinary ways and moderate elevation, the richest life I know of to be lived among the living, as they say, and the one furnished with the most rich and desirable qualities, is, all things considered, that of Alcibiades, in my opinion.[10]

But as for Epaminondas, as an example of an excessive goodness, I want to add here some of his opinions. The sweetest satisfaction he had in all his life, he declared, was the pleasure he had given his father and mother by his victory at Leuctra. That is going very far, to prefer their pleasure to his own, so just and so full of so glorious an action. He did not think it permissible, even to recover his country's liberty, to kill a man without knowing the case against him. That is why he was so cool toward the enterprise of his companion Pelopidas for the deliverance of Thebes.[11]

He also held that in battle one should avoid meeting a friend who was on the opposing side, and spare him. And his humanity even toward his enemies made the Boeotians suspicious of him. After miraculously forcing the Spartans to open to him the pass they had undertaken to guard at the entrance to the Morea, near Corinth, he had been content to ride over them without pursuing them to the bitter end. For this he was deposed from his office of commander-in-chief.[12]

Very honorably for him, given such a cause; and to their shame, since necessity soon forced them to restore him to his rank and to acknowledge how much their glory and their safety depended on him. Victory followed him like his shadow wherever he led; and the prosperity of his country

9 Scipio Aemilianus (185–129 BC) destroyed Carthage in 146 BC. Plutarch's paired Lives of Epaminondas and Scipio are lost.
10 Alcibiades (c. 450–404 BC), brilliant and unstable Athenian statesman and general, a companion of Socrates.
11 At Leuctra (371 BC) Epaminondas defeated the Spartans. In 379 BC Pelopidas led the conspiracy that freed Thebes from its Spartan garrison.
12 The Morea is the medieval and later name for the Peloponnese.

FRENCH	ENGLISH
	died when he died, as it had been born through him.

II.37 Of the Resemblance of Children to Their Fathers

De la ressemblance des enfans aux peres
Suffering from kidney stones like his father, Montaigne marvels at inherited traits and mounts a long, mocking attack on medicine and doctors.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
2.37.1	CE fagotage de tant de diuerses pieces, se faict en cette condition, que ie n'y mets la main, que lors qu'vne trop lasche oysiueté me presse, et non ailleurs que chez moy. Ainsin il s'est basty à diuerses poses et interualles, comme les occasions me detiennent ailleurs par fois plusieurs moys. Au demeurant, ie ne corrige point mes premieres imaginations par les secondes, ouy à l'auenture quelque mot: mais pour diuersifier, non pour oster. Ie veux representer le progrez de mes humeurs, et qu'on voye chasque piece en sa naissance. Ie prendrois plaisir d'auoir commencé plustost, et à recognoistre le train de mes mutations.	This bundle of so many different pieces is made on this condition: I set my hand to it only when too slack an idleness presses me, and nowhere but at home. So it has been built up in various stages and intervals, as occasions sometimes keep me elsewhere for several months. For the rest, I do not correct my first notions by my second ones—well, perhaps a word here and there, but to vary, not to remove. I want to show the progress of my moods, and to let each piece be seen as it was born. I would have liked to have begun sooner, so as to recognize the course of my changes.
	Vn valet qui me seruoit à les escrire soubs moy, pensa faire vn grand butin de m'en desrober plusieurs pieces choisies à sa poste. Cela me console, qu'il n'y fera pas plus de gain, que i'y ay fait de perte.	A servant who used to write them down at my dictation thought he had made a fine haul by stealing several pieces from me, picked as he pleased. It consoles me that he will gain no more from it than I have lost.

THE STONE ARRIVES

Montaigne describes his kidney stone and how he is learning to live with the pain.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
2.37.2	Ie me suis enuieilly de sept ou huict ans depuis que ie commençay. Ce n'a pas esté sans quelque nouuel acquest. I'y ay pratiqué la colique, par la liberalité des ans: leur commerce et longue conuersation, ne se passe aysément sans quelque tel fruit. Ie voudroy bien, de plusieurs autres presens, qu'ils ont à faire, à ceux qui les hantent long temps, qu'ils en eussent choisi quelqu'vn qui m'eust esté plus acceptable: car ils ne m'en eussent sçeu faire, que i'eusse en plus grande horreur, des mon enfance. C'estoit à poinct nommé, de tous les accidens de la vieillesse, celuy que ie craignois le plus.	I have grown older by seven or eight years since I began. It has not been without some new acquisition. Through the liberality of the years I have made the acquaintance of the colic: their company and long familiarity seldom pass without some such fruit. Of the many other presents they have to give to those who keep company with them long, I could wish they had chosen one more acceptable to me; for they could not have given me any that I had held in greater horror since my childhood. Of all the accidents of old age, it was precisely the one I feared most.[1]
2.37.3	I'auoy pensé mainte-fois à part moy, que i'alloy trop auant: et qu'à faire vn si long chemin, ie ne faudroy pas	I had often thought to myself that I was going too far, and that on so long a road I would not fail to

1 By "the colic" Montaigne means the kidney stone and its attacks, from which he suffered from about 1578.

FRENCH

de m'engager en fin, en quelque malplaisant rencontre. Ie sentois et protestois assez, qu'il estoit heure de partir, et qu'il falloit trencher la vie dans le vif, et dans le sein, suyuant la regle des chirurgiens, quand ils ont à coupper quelque membre. Qu'à celuy, qui ne la rendoit à temps, Nature auoit accoustumé de faire payer de bien rudes vsures. Il s'en faloit tant, que i'en fusse prest lors, qu'en dix-huict mois ou enuiron qu'il y a que ie suis en ce malplaisant estat, i'ay desia appris à m'y accommoder.

I'entre desia en composition de ce viure coliqueux: i'y trouue dequoy me consoler, et dequoy esperer. Tant les hommes sont accoquinez à leur estre miserable, qu'il n'est si rude condition qu'ils n'acceptent pour s'y conseruer. Oyez Mæcenas. *Debilem facito manu,*
Debilem pede, coxa,
Lubricos quate dentes:
Vita dum superest, bene est. Et couuroit Tamburlan d'vne sotte humanité, la cruauté fantastique qu'il exerçoit contre les ladres, en faisant mettre à mort autant qu'il en venoit à sa coignoissance, pour, disoit-il, les deliurer de la vie qu'ils viuoient si penible. Car il n'y auoit nul d'eux, qui n'eust mieux aymé estre trois fois ladre, que de n'estre pas. Et Antisthenes le Stoïcien, estant fort malade, et s'escriant: Qui me deliurera de ces maux?

Diogenes, qui l'estoit venu veoir, luy presentant vn couteau: Cestuy-cy, si tu veux, bien tost: Ie ne dy pas de la vie, repliqua il, ie dy des maux. Les souffrances qui me touchent simplement par l'ame, m'affligent beaucoup moins qu'elles ne font la pluspart des autres hommes: partie par iugement: car le monde estime plusieurs choses horribles, ou euitables au prix de la vie, qui me sont à peu pres indifferentes: partie, par vne complexion stupide et insensible, que i'ay aux accidents qui ne donnent à moy de droit fil: laquelle complexion i'estime l'vne des meilleures pieces de ma naturelle condition. Mais les souffrances vrayment essentielles et corporelles, ie les gouste bien vifuement.

Si est-ce pourtant, que les preuoyant autrefois d'vne veuë foible, delicate, et amollie par la iouyssance de cette longue et heureuse santé et repos, que Dieu m'a presté, la meilleure part de mon aage: ie les auoy couceuës par

ENGLISH

run at last into some unpleasant encounter. I felt and declared often enough that it was time to leave, and that life should be cut off in the living and sound flesh, following the rule surgeons observe when they have to amputate a limb; and that from the man who did not give it back in time, Nature was accustomed to exact very harsh interest. So far was I from being ready then, that in the eighteen months or so that I have been in this unpleasant state, I have already learned to adapt myself to it.

I am already coming to terms with this colicky life; I find in it something to console me and something to hope for. So firmly are men attached to their miserable existence that there is no condition so harsh that they will not accept it in order to stay alive. Listen to Maecenas: *Make me maimed in the hand,*
Lame in the foot and hip,
Shake my loosened teeth:
So long as life remains, all is well. And Tamburlaine cloaked in a foolish humanity the fantastic cruelty he practiced on lepers, having as many put to death as came to his knowledge, in order, he said, to deliver them from the painful life they were living. For there was not one of them who would not rather have been a leper three times over than not be at all. And Antisthenes the Stoic, being very ill, cried out: "Who will deliver me from these ills?"[2]

Diogenes, who had come to see him, held out a knife: "This will do it, if you like, and soon." "I don't mean from life," he replied, "I mean from my ills." Sufferings that touch me only through the soul afflict me much less than they do most other men. Partly this comes from judgment: the world thinks many things horrible, or to be avoided at the cost of life, that are almost indifferent to me. Partly it comes from a dull and insensible constitution I have toward accidents that do not strike me head-on—a constitution I consider one of the best parts of my natural condition. But sufferings that are truly essential and bodily I feel very keenly.

And yet, foreseeing them in the past with a weak and delicate sight, softened by the enjoyment of the long and happy health and repose that God lent me for the better part of my life, I had ima-

2 Maecenas, Augustus's minister and patron of Virgil and Horace; his lines are quoted by Seneca, Letters 101.

FRENCH

imagination, si insupportables, qu'à la verité i'en auois plus de peur, que ie n'y ay trouué de mal. Par où i'augmente tousiours cette creance, que la pluspart des facultez de nostre ame, comme nous les employons, troublent plus le repos de la vie, qu'elles n'y seruent.

2.37.4 Ie suis aux prises auec la pire de toutes les maladies, la plus soudaine, la plus douloureuse, la plus mortelle, et la plus irremediable. I'en ay desia essayé cinq ou six bien longs accez et penibles: toutesfois ou ie me flatte, ou encores y a-t-il en cet estat, dequoy se soustenir, à qui a l'ame deschargée de la crainte de la mort, et deschargée des menasses, conclusions et consequences, dequoy la medecine nous enteste. Mais l'effect mesme de la douleur, n'a pas cette aigreur si aspre et si poignante, qu'vn homme rassis en doiue entrer en rage et en desespoir.

I'ay aumoins ce profit de la cholique, que ce que ie n'auoy encore peu sur moy, pour me concilier du tout, et m'accointer à la mort, elle le parfera: car d'autant plus elle me pressera, et importunera, d'autant moins me sera la mort à craindre. I'auoy desia gaigné cela, de ne tenir à la vie, que par la vie seulement: elle desnouëra encore cette intelligence. Et Dieu vueille qu'en fin, si son aspreté vient à surmonter mes forces, elle ne me reiette à l'autre extremité non moins vitieuse, d'aymer et desirer mourir. *Summum nec metuas diem, nec optes.* Ce sont deux passions à craindre, mais l'vne a son remede bien plus prest que l'autre.

2.37.5 Au demeurant, i'ay tousiours trouué ce precepte ceremonieux, qui ordonne si exactement de tenir bonne contenance et vn maintien desdaigneux, et posé, à la souffrance des maux. Pourquoy la philosophie, qui ne regarde que le vif, et les effects, se va elle amusant à ces apparences externes? Qu'elle laisse ce soing aux farceurs et maistres de rhetorique, qui font tant d'estat de nos gestes. Qu'elle condone hardiment au mal, cette lascheté voyelle, si elle n'est ny cordiale, ny stomacale: et preste ses pleintes volontaires au genre des souspirs, sanglots, palpitations, pallissements, que Nature a mis hors de nostre puissance. Pourueu que le courage soit sans effroy, les parolles sans desespoir, qu'elle se contente.

ENGLISH

gined them so unbearable that in truth I was more afraid of them than I have found them painful. This keeps strengthening my belief that most of the faculties of our soul, as we use them, disturb the repose of life more than they serve it.

I am grappling with the worst of all diseases: the most sudden, the most painful, the most deadly, and the most incurable. I have already gone through five or six very long and painful bouts of it. Yet either I flatter myself, or there is still something in this state to hold a man up, if his soul is freed from the fear of death, and freed from the threats, conclusions and consequences that medicine stuffs into our heads. And even the actual effect of the pain does not have so harsh and piercing a sting that a settled man should be driven by it to rage and despair.

I gain at least this profit from the colic: what I had not yet managed to do with myself, to reconcile myself wholly to death and become familiar with it, the colic will complete. For the more it presses and harasses me, the less I shall have to fear death. I had already gained this much: to hold on to life only by life itself. The colic will untie even this bond. And God grant that in the end, if its harshness comes to overpower my strength, it does not throw me to the other extreme, no less vicious: loving and desiring to die. *Neither fear your last day nor long for it.* These are two passions to be feared, but one has its remedy much closer to hand than the other.[3]

For the rest, I have always found that precept merely ceremonious which so strictly orders us to keep a good face and a disdainful, composed bearing when we suffer pain. Why does philosophy, which looks only at the living substance and at effects, waste its time on these external appearances? Let it leave that care to actors and teachers of rhetoric, who set such store by our gestures. Let it boldly grant to pain this cowardice of the voice, if it is neither of the heart nor of the stomach; and let it count our voluntary complaints among the sighs, sobs, palpitations and pallors that Nature has put beyond our control. Provided the heart is without fright and the words without despair, let it be content.

3 Martial, Epigrams.

FRENCH

Qu'importe que nous tordions nos bras, pourueu que nous ne tordions nos pensées? elle nous dresse pour nous, non pour autruy, pour estre, non pour sembler. Qu'elle s'arreste à gouuerner nostre entendement, qu'elle a pris à instruire. Qu'aux efforts de la cholique, elle maintienne l'ame capable de se recognoistre, de suyure son train accoustumé: combatant la douleur et la soustenant, non se prosternant honteusement à ses pieds: esmeuë et eschauffée du combat, non abatue et renuersée: capable d'entretien et d'autre occupation, iusques à certaine mesure. En accidents si extremes, c'est cruauté de requerir de nous vne démarche si composée. Si nous auons beau ieu, c'est peu que nous ayons mauuaise mine.

Si le corps se soulage en se plaignant, qu'il le face; si l'agitation luy plaist, qu'il se tourneboule et tracasse à sa fantasie: s'il luy semble que le mal s'euapore aucunement (comme aucuns medecins disent que cela aide à la deliurance des femmes enceintes) pour pousser hors la voix auec plus grande violence: ou s'il en amuse son tourment, qu'il crie tout à faict. Ne commandons point à cette voix, qu'elle aille, mais permettons le luy. Epicurus ne pardonne pas seulement à son sage de crier aux tourments, mais il le luy conseille. *Pugiles etiam quum feriunt, in iactandis cæstibus ingemiscunt, quia profundenda voce omne corpus intenditur, venitque plaga vehementior.* Nous auons assez de travail du mal, sans nous trauailler à ces regles superflues.

2.37.6 Ce que ie dis pour excuser ceux, qu'on voit ordinairement se tempester, aux secousses et assaux de cette maladie: car pour moy, ie l'ay passée iusques à cette heure auec vn peu meilleure contenance et me contente de gemir sans brailler. Non pourtant que ie me mette en peine, pour maintenir cette decence exterieure: car ie fay peu de compte d'vn tel aduantage. Ie preste en cela au mal autant qu'il veut: mais ou mes douleurs ne sont pas si excessiues, ou i'y apporte plus de fermeté que le commun.

Ie me plains, Ie me despite, quand les aigres pointures me pressent, mais ie n'en viens point au desespoir, comme celuy là: *Eiulatu, questu, gemitu, fremitibus / Resonando multum flebiles voces refert.* Ie me taste au plus espais du mal: et ay tousiours trouué que i'estoy capable de dire, de penser, de respondre aussi sainement qu'en vne autre

ENGLISH

What does it matter if we twist our arms, provided we do not twist our thoughts? Philosophy trains us for ourselves, not for others; to be, not to seem. Let it confine itself to governing our understanding, which it has undertaken to instruct. In the onslaughts of the colic, let it keep the soul able to know itself and to follow its accustomed course: fighting the pain and bearing up under it, not prostrating itself shamefully at its feet; stirred and heated by the combat, not beaten down and overthrown; capable of conversation and other occupation, up to a certain point. In accidents so extreme, it is cruelty to require of us so composed a bearing. If we hold a good hand, it matters little that we pull a long face.

If the body finds relief in complaining, let it complain. If agitation pleases it, let it toss and thrash about as it likes. If it seems that the pain somehow evaporates when the voice is forced out more violently (as some physicians say this helps pregnant women in delivery), or if the body distracts its torment that way, let it shout outright. Let us not order this voice to come out, but let us allow it. Epicurus not only forgives his wise man for crying out under torture; he advises him to. *Boxers too, when they strike, groan as they swing their gauntlets, because in letting out the voice the whole body is braced and the blow lands harder.* We have labor enough from the pain without laboring over these superfluous rules.[4]

I say this to excuse those we commonly see raging under the shocks and assaults of this disease. For my part, I have so far gone through it with a somewhat better countenance, and I content myself with groaning without bawling. Not that I take any pains to maintain this outward decency, for I set little store by such an advantage. In this I give the pain as much as it wants; but either my pains are not so extreme, or I bring more firmness to them than most people.

I complain, I fret, when the sharp stabs press me, but I do not come to despair, like that man: *With wailing, lament, groaning and roaring, / Making all resound, he utters doleful cries.* I sound myself out in the thick of the pain, and I have always found that I could speak, think and answer as sanely as at any

4 Cicero, Tusculan Disputations.

FRENCH

heure, mais non si constamment: la douleur me troublant et destournant. Quand on me tient le plus atterré, et que les assistans m'espargnent, i'essaye souuent mes forces et leur entame moy-mesme des propos les plus esloignez de mon estat. Ie puis tout par vn soudain effort: mais ostez en la durée.

O que n'ay ie la faculté de ce songeur de Cicero, qui, songeant embrasser vne garse, trouua qu'il s'estoit deschargé de sa pierre emmy ses draps! Les miennes me desgarsent estrangement. Aux interualles de cette douleur excessiue lors que mes vreteres languissent sans me ronger, ie me remets soudain en ma forme ordinaire: d'autant que mon ame ne prend autre alarme, que la sensible et corporelle.

Ce que ie doy certainement au soing que i'ay eu à me preparer par discours à tels accidens: *Laborum*
Nulla mihi noua nunc facies inopináque surgit;
Omnia præcepi, atque animo mecum antè peregi. Ie suis essayé pourtant vn peu bien rudement pour vn apprenti, et d'vn changement bien soudain et bien rude: estant cheu tout à coup, d'vne tres-douce condition de vie, et tres-heureuse, à la plus douloureuse, et penible, qui se puisse imaginer. Car outre ce que c'est vne maladie bien fort à craindre d'elle mesme, elle fait en moy ses commencemens beaucoup plus aspres et difficiles qu'elle n'a accoustumé.

Les accés me reprennent si souuent, que ie ne sens quasi plus d'entiere santé: ie maintien toutesfois, iusques à cette heure, mon esprit en telle assiette, que pourueu que i'y puisse apporter de la constance, ie me treuue en assez meilleure condition de vie, que mille autres, qui n'ont ny fiéure, ny mal, que celuy qu'ils se donnent eux mesmes, par la faute de leurs discours.

ENGLISH

other time, but not as steadily, for the pain disturbs and distracts me. When I am thought to be most crushed and those around me spare me, I often test my strength and myself start them on subjects as remote as can be from my condition. I can do anything by a sudden effort; but don't ask it to last.[5]

Oh, why don't I have the gift of that dreamer in Cicero who, dreaming he was embracing a girl, found he had passed his stone among his sheets! Mine cure me of girls wonderfully. In the intervals of this excessive pain, when my ureters slacken without gnawing at me, I at once return to my ordinary form, since my soul takes no alarm but the physical, bodily one.[6]

This I certainly owe to the care I have taken to prepare myself by reasoning for such accidents: *No new or unexpected face of hardship*
Rises before me now; I have foreseen everything
And gone through it all in my mind beforehand. All the same, I am being tried rather roughly for an apprentice, and by a very sudden and harsh change, having fallen all at once from a very sweet and happy condition of life into the most painful and wretched one imaginable. For besides being a disease much to be feared in itself, in me it makes its beginnings far harsher and more difficult than usual.[7]

The attacks return so often that I hardly ever feel completely healthy any more. Yet so far I keep my mind in such a state that, provided I can bring constancy to it, I find myself in a much better condition of life than a thousand others who have no fever or ill but what they give themselves through the fault of their own reasoning.

THE MYSTERY OF HEREDITY

How a drop of seed carries a father's traits, including the stone, across many years.

FRENCH

2.37.7 Il est certaine façon d'humilité subtile, qui naist de la presomption: comme ceste-cy: Que nous recognoissons nostre ignorance, en plusieurs choses, et sommes si courtois d'auoüer, qu'il y ait és ouurages de Nature, aucunes qualitez et conditions, qui nous sont

ENGLISH

There is a certain kind of subtle humility that springs from presumption, such as this: we acknowledge our ignorance in many things, and are courteous enough to admit that in the works of Nature there are some qualities and conditions

5 Lines from Accius's tragedy Philoctetes, quoted by Cicero.
6 The anecdote is in Cicero, On Divination.
7 Virgil, Aeneid (Aeneas to the Sibyl).

FRENCH

imperceptibles, et desquelles nostre suffisance ne peut descouurir les moyens et les causes. Par cette honneste et conscientieuse declaration, nous esperons gaigner qu'on nous croira aussi de celles, que nous dirons, entendre. Nous n'auons que faire d'aller trier des miracles et des difficultez estrangeres: il me semble que parmy les choses que nous voyons ordinairement, il y a des estrangetez si incomprehensibles, qu'elles surpassent toute la difficulté des miracles.

Quel monstre est-ce, que cette goutte de semence, dequoy nous sommes produits, porte en soy les impressions, non de la forme corporelle seulement, mais des pensemens et des inclinations de nos peres? Cette goutte d'eau, où loge elle ce nombre infiny de formes? et comme portent elles ces ressemblances, d'vn progrez si temeraire et si desreglé, que l'arriere fils respondra à son bisayeul, le nepueu à l'oncle? En la famille de Lepidus à Rome, il y en a eu trois, non de suite, mais par interualles, qui nasquirent vn mesme œuil couuert de cartilage. A Thebes il y auoit vne race qui portoit dés le ventre de la mere, la forme d'vn fer de lance, et qui ne le portoit, estoit tenu illegitime.

Aristote dit qu'en certaine nation, où les femmes estoient communes, on assignoit les enfans à leurs peres, par la ressemblance.

2.37.8 Il est à croire que ie dois à mon pere cette qualité pierreuse: car il mourut merueilleusement affligé d'vne grosse pierre, qu'il auoit en la vessie. Il ne s'apperceut de son mal, que le soixante septiesme an de son aage: et auant cela il n'en auoit eu aucune menasse ou ressentiment, aux reins, aux costez, ny ailleurs: et auoit vescu iusques lors, en vne heureuse santé, et bien peu subiette à maladies, et dura encores sept ans en ce mal, trainant vne fin de vie bien douloureuse. I'estoy nay vingt cinq ans et plus, auant sa maladie, et durant le cours de son meilleur estat, le troisiesme de ses enfans en rang de naissance. Où se couuoit tant de temps, la propension à ce defaut?

Et lors qu'il estoit si loing du mal, cette legere piece de sa substance, dequoy il me bastit, comment en portoit elle pour sa part, vne si grande impression? Et comment encore si couuerte, que quarante cinq ans apres, i'aye commencé à m'en ressentir? seul iusques à cette heure, entre tant de freres, et de sœurs, et tous d'vne mere. Qui m'esclaircira de ce progrez, ie le croiray d'autant d'autres miracles qu'il voudra: pourueu que, comme ils font, il ne

ENGLISH

that we cannot perceive, and whose means and causes our ability cannot discover. By this honest and conscientious declaration we hope to be believed about those we say we do understand. We have no need to go picking out miracles and remote difficulties. It seems to me that among the things we see every day there are oddities so incomprehensible that they surpass all the difficulty of miracles.

What a prodigy it is that this drop of seed from which we are produced carries in itself the impressions not only of bodily form but of the thoughts and inclinations of our fathers! This drop of water—where does it lodge that infinite number of forms? And how does it carry these resemblances by a course so random and irregular that the great-grandson will take after his great-grandfather, the nephew after his uncle? In the family of Lepidus at Rome there were three, not one after another but at intervals, who were born with the same eye covered with cartilage. At Thebes there was a family whose members bore from their mother's womb the shape of a spearhead, and anyone who did not bear it was held to be illegitimate.

Aristotle says that in a certain nation where women were held in common, children were assigned to their fathers by resemblance.

It is likely that I owe this stony quality to my father, for he died terribly afflicted by a large stone in his bladder. He did not notice his illness until the sixty-seventh year of his age. Before that he had had no threat or twinge of it, in the kidneys, the sides, or anywhere else; he had lived until then in happy health, very little subject to illness; and he lasted another seven years with this disease, dragging out a very painful end of life. I was born more than twenty-five years before his illness, while he was in his best condition, the third of his children in order of birth. Where was the propensity to this defect brooding all that time?

And when he was so far from the disease, how did that slight bit of his substance from which he built me carry so great an impression of it for its share? And how did it keep it so hidden that I began to feel it only forty-five years later—alone so far among so many brothers and sisters, all of one mother? Whoever can enlighten me about this process, I will believe him about as many other

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
	me donne en payement, vne doctrine beaucoup plus difficile et fantastique, que n'est la chose mesme.	miracles as he likes, provided he does not pay me, as they do, with a doctrine far more difficult and fantastic than the thing itself.

A FAMILY WITHOUT DOCTORS

Montaigne's forebears lived long without medicine, and he inherited their distrust of it.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
2.37.9	Que les medecins excusent vn peu ma liberté: car par cette mesme infusion et insinuation fatale, i'ay receu la haine et le mespris de leur doctrine. Cette antipathie, que i'ay à leur art, m'est hereditaire. Mon pere a vescu soixante et quatorze ans, mon ayeul soixante et neuf, mon bisayeul pres de quatre vingts, sans auoir gousté aucune sorte de medecine. Et entre eux, tout ce qui n'estoit de l'vsage ordinaire, tenoit lieu de drogue. La medecine se forme par exemples et experience: aussi fait mon opinion. Voyla pas vne bien expresse experience, et bien aduantageuse? Ie ne sçay s'ils m'en trouueront trois en leurs registres, nais, nourris, et trespassez, en mesme fouïer, mesme toict, ayans autant vescu par leur conduite.	Let the physicians forgive my freedom a little, for by this same fatal infusion and insinuation I have received my hatred and contempt for their doctrine. This antipathy I have for their art is hereditary. My father lived seventy-four years, my grandfather sixty-nine, my great-grandfather nearly eighty, without having tasted any kind of medicine; and among them anything that was not in ordinary use counted as a drug. Medicine is formed by examples and experience; so is my opinion. Is this not a very clear experience, and a very favorable one? I do not know whether they will find me three people in their records, born, raised and dead at the same hearth, under the same roof, who have lived as long under their guidance.
	Il faut qu'ils m'aduoüent en cela, que si ce n'est la raison, aumoins que la Fortune est de mon party: or chez les medecins, Fortune vaut bien mieux que la raison. Qu'ils ne me prennent point à cette heure à leur aduantage, qu'ils ne me menassent point, atterré comme ie suis: ce seroit supercherie. Aussi à dire la verité, i'ay assez gaigné sur eux par mes exemples domestiques, encore qu'ils s'arrestent là. Les choses humaines n'ont pas tant de constance: il y a deux cens ans, il ne s'en faut que dix-huict, que cet essay nous dure: car le premier nasquit l'an mil quatre cens deux. C'est vrayment bien raison, que cette experience commence à nous faillir.	They must admit that in this, if reason is not on my side, at least Fortune is; and with physicians Fortune counts for much more than reason. Let them not take advantage of me now; let them not threaten me, laid low as I am: that would be foul play. Besides, to tell the truth, I have won enough against them with my family examples, even if those stop here. Human things do not have so much constancy: this trial has lasted us two hundred years, all but eighteen, for the first was born in the year 1402. It is quite reasonable, really, that this experience should begin to fail us.[8]
	Qu'ils ne me reprochent point les maux, qui me tiennent asteure à la gorge: d'auoir vescu sain quarante sept ans pour ma part, n'est-ce pas assez? Quand ce sera le bout de ma carriere, elle est des plus longues.	Let them not reproach me with the ills that now have me by the throat. Is it not enough to have lived healthy, for my part, for forty-seven years? Even if this is the end of my course, it is one of the longer ones.
2.37.10	Mes ancestres auoient la medecine à contre-cœur par quelque inclination occulte et naturelle, car la veuë mesme des drogues faisoit horreur à mon pere. Le Seigneur de Gauiac mon oncle paternel, homme d'Eglise, maladif dés sa naissance, et qui fit toutesfois durer cette vie debile, iusques à soixante sept ans, estant tombé	My ancestors disliked medicine through some hidden and natural inclination, for the very sight of drugs horrified my father. The Seigneur de Gaviac, my paternal uncle, a churchman, was sickly from birth and yet made that feeble life last until sixty-seven. Once, when he had fallen into a severe and

8 Montaigne's great-grandfather Ramon Eyquem, the Bordeaux merchant who bought the estate of Montaigne in 1477.

FRENCH

autrefois en vne grosse et vehemente fiéure continue, il fut ordonné par les medecins, qu'on luy declaireroit, s'il ne se vouloit ayder (ils appellent secours ce qui le plus souuent est empeschement) qu'il estoit infailliblement mort. Ce bon homme, tout effrayé comme il fut de cette horrible sentence: Si, respondit-il, ie suis donq mort: mais Dieu rendit tantost apres vain ce prognostique.

Le dernier des freres, ils estoyent quatre, Sieur de Bussaguet, et de bien loing le dernier, se soubmit seul, à cet art: pour le commerce, ce croy-ie, qu'il auoit auec les autres arts: car il estoit conseiller en la cour de parlement: et luy succeda si mal, qu'estant par apparence de plus forte complexion, il mourut pourtant long temps auant les autres, sauf vn, le Sieur de Sainct Michel.

2.37.11 Il est possible que i'ay receu d'eux cette dyspathie naturelle à la medecine: mais s'il n'y eust eu que cette consideration, i'eusse essayé de la forcer. Car toutes ces conditions, qui naissent en nous sans raison, elles sont vitieuses: c'est vne espece de maladie qu'il faut combattre. Il peult estre, que i'y auois cette propension, mais ie l'ay appuyée et fortifiée par les discours, qui m'en ont estably l'opinion que i'en ay. Car ie hay aussi cette consideration de refuser la medecine pour l'aigreur de son goust. Ce ne seroit aysément mon humeur, qui trouue la santé digne d'estre r'achetée, par tous les cauteres et incisions les plus penibles qui se facent.

Et suyuant Epicurus, les voluptez me semblent à euiter, si elles tirent à leurs suittes des douleurs plus grandes: et les douleurs à rechercher, qui tirent à leur suitte des voluptez plus grandes. C'est vne pretieuse chose, que la santé: et la seule qui merite à la verité qu'on y employe, non le temps seulement, la sueur, la peine, les biens, mais encore la vie à sa poursuite: d'autant que sans elle, la vie nous vient à estre iniurieuse. La volupté, la sagesse, la science et la vertu, sans elle se ternissent et esuanouyssent.

Et aux plus fermes et tendus discours, que la philosophie nous veuille imprimer au contraire, nous n'auons qu'à opposer l'image de Platon, estant frappé du haut mal, ou d'vne apoplexie: et en cette presupposition le deffier d'appeller à son secours les riches facultez de son ame. Toute voye qui nous meneroit à la santé, ne se peut dire pour moy ny aspre, ny chere. Mais i'ay quelques autres apparences, qui me font estrangement deffier de toute cette marchandise. Ie ne dy pas qu'il n'y en puisse auoir quelque art: qu'il n'y ait parmy tant d'ouurages de

ENGLISH

violent continuous fever, the physicians ordered that he be told that if he would not let himself be helped (they call "help" what is most often a hindrance) he was a dead man for certain. The good man, terrified as he was by this horrible sentence, answered: "Then I'm dead." But God soon after made this prognosis vain.

The youngest of the brothers—there were four—the Sieur de Bussaguet, younger by a long way, alone submitted to this art, because of his dealings, I believe, with the other arts, for he was a counselor in the court of Parlement. It turned out so badly for him that, though to all appearances of stronger constitution, he died long before the others, except one, the Sieur de Saint-Michel.

It is possible that I received from them this natural dislike of medicine; but if there had been only that consideration, I would have tried to overcome it. For all those dispositions that arise in us without reason are vicious; they are a kind of disease that must be fought. It may be that I had this propensity, but I have supported and strengthened it by the reasonings that have established in me the opinion I hold. For I also hate the attitude of refusing medicine because of its bitter taste. That would hardly be my temperament, which finds health worth buying back by all the most painful cauteries and incisions there are.

And following Epicurus, I think pleasures should be avoided if they bring greater pains in their train, and pains sought if they bring greater pleasures in their train. Health is a precious thing, and in truth the only one that deserves our spending on its pursuit not only time, sweat, trouble and goods, but even life itself; for without it life becomes a burden and an injury to us. Pleasure, wisdom, knowledge and virtue tarnish and vanish without it.

And to the firmest and most strenuous arguments that philosophy may try to impress on us to the contrary, we need only oppose the image of Plato struck down by epilepsy or apoplexy, and on that supposition challenge him to call on the rich faculties of his soul for help. To me, no road that would lead us to health can be called either harsh or costly. But I have some other indications that make me strangely distrustful of all this merchandise. I do not say there cannot be some art in

FRENCH

Nature, des choses propres à la conseruation de nostre santé, cela est certain.

I'entends bien, qu'il y a quelque simple qui humecte, quelque autre qui asseche: ie sçay par experience, et que les refforts produisent des vents, et que les feuilles du sené laschent le ventre: ie sçay plusieurs telles experiences: comme ie sçay que le mouton me nourrit, et que le vin m'eschauffe. Et disoit Solon, que le manger estoit, comme les autres drogues, vne medecine contre la maladie de la faim. Ie ne desaduouë pas l'vsage, que nous tirons du monde, ny ne doubte de la puissance et vberté de Nature, et de son application à nostre besoing. Ie vois bien que les brochets, et les arondes se trouuent bien d'elle.

Ie me deffie des inuentions de nostre esprit: de nostre science et art: en faueur duquel nous l'auons abandonnée, et ses regles: et auquel nous ne sçauons tenir moderation, ny limite. Comme nous appellons iustice, le pastissage des premieres loix qui nous tombent en main, et leur dispensation et pratique, tres inepte souuent et tres inique. Et comme ceux, qui s'en moquent, et qui l'accusent, n'entendent pas pourtant iniurier cette noble vertu: ains condamner seulement l'abus et profanation de ce sacré titre. De mesme, en la medecine, i'honore bien ce glorieux nom, sa proposition, sa promesse, si vtile au genre humain: mais ce qu'il designe entre nous, ie ne l'honore, ny l'estime

ENGLISH

it. That there are, among so many works of Nature, things suited to preserving our health—that is certain.

I quite understand that there is some herb that moistens and some other that dries. I know by experience that horseradish produces wind and that senna leaves loosen the bowels; I know several such experiences, just as I know that mutton nourishes me and wine warms me. And Solon said that eating was, like other drugs, a medicine against the disease of hunger. I do not disown the use we make of the world, nor do I doubt the power and fertility of Nature and its fitness for our needs. I can see that pikes and swallows do well by it.

What I distrust are the inventions of our mind, of our science and art, for whose sake we have abandoned Nature and her rules, and in which we cannot keep to any moderation or limit. We call justice the hodgepodge of the first laws that fall into our hands, and their administration and practice, which are often very inept and very unjust; and those who mock it and accuse it do not mean to insult that noble virtue, but only to condemn the abuse and profanation of that sacred title. In the same way, with medicine, I do honor that glorious name, its aim, and its promise, so useful to mankind; but what the name stands for among us I neither honor nor esteem.

AGAINST THE PHYSICIANS

Doctors make the healthy sick, claim nature's cures as their own and blame their failures on patients.

FRENCH

2.37.12 En premier lieu l'experience me le fait craindre: car de ce que i'ay de cognoissance, ie ne voy nulle race de gens si tost malade, et si tard guerie, que celle qui est soubs la iurisdiction de la medecine. Leur santé mesme est alterée et corrompue, par la contrainte des regimes. Les medecins ne se contentent point d'auoir la maladie en gouuernement, ils rendent la santé malade, pour garder qu'on ne puisse en aucune saison eschapper leur authorité. D'vne santé constante et entiere, n'en tirent ils pas l'argument d'vne grande maladie future?

I'ay esté assez souuent malade: i'ay trouué sans leurs secours, mes maladies aussi douces à supporter (et en ay essayé quasi de toutes les sortes) et aussi courtes, qu'à nul autre: et si n'y ay point meslé l'amertume de leurs

ENGLISH

In the first place, experience makes me fear it; for as far as my knowledge goes, I see no kind of people so soon sick and so slow to be cured as those under the jurisdiction of medicine. Their very health is altered and corrupted by the constraint of regimens. Physicians are not content to have illness under their governance; they make health sick, to make sure that no one can escape their authority at any season. From steady and complete health, do they not draw the argument for a great illness to come?

I have been ill often enough. Without their help I have found my illnesses (and I have tried almost every kind) as easy to bear and as short as anyone's, and I have not mixed into them the bitter-

FRENCH

ordonnances. La santé, ie l'ay libre et entiere, sans regle, et sans autre discipline, que de ma coustume et de mon plaisir. Tout lieu m'est bon à m'arrester: car il ne me faut autres commoditez estant malade, que celles qu'il me faut estant sain. Ie ne me passionne point d'estre sans medecin, sans apotiquaire, et sans secours: dequoy i'en voy la plus part plus affligez que du mal. Quoy?

eux mesmes nous font ils voir de l'heur et de la durée en leur vie, qui nous puisse tesmoigner quelque apparent effect de leur science?

2.37.13 Il n'est nation qui n'ait esté plusieurs siecles sans la medecine: et les premiers siecles, c'est à dire les meilleurs et les plus heureux: et du monde la dixiesme partie ne s'en sert pas encores à cette heure. Infinies nations ne la cognoissent pas, où l'on vit et plus sainement, et plus longuement, qu'on ne fait icy: et parmy nous, le commun peuple s'en passe heureusement.

Les Romains auoyent esté six cens ans, auant que de la receuoir: mais apres l'auoir essayée, ils la chasserent de leur ville, par l'entremise de Caton le Censeur, qui montra combien aysément il s'en pouuoit passer, ayant vescu quatre vingts et cinq ans: et faict viure sa femme iusqu'à l'extreme vieillesse, non pas sans medecine: mais ouy bien sans medecin: car toute chose qui se trouue salubre à nostre vie, se peut nommer medecine. Il entretenoit, ce dit Plutarque, sa famille en santé, par l'vsage, ce me semble, du lieure. Comme les Arcades, dit Pline, guerissent toutes maladies auec du laict de vache.

Et les Lybiens, dit Herodote, iouyssent populairement d'vne rare santé, par cette coustume qu'ils ont: apres que leurs enfants ont atteint quatre ans, de leur causterizer et brusler les veines du chef et des temples: par où ils coupent chemin pour leur vie, à toute defluxion de rheume. Et les gens de village de ce pays, à tous accidens n'employent que du vin le plus fort qu'ils peuuent, meslé à force safran et espice: tout cela auec vne fortune pareille.

2.37.14 Et à dire vray, de toute cette diuersité et confusion d'ordonnances, quelle autre fin et effect apres tout y a il, que de vuider le ventre? ce que mille simples domestiques peuuent faire. Et si ne sçay si c'est si vtilement qu'ils disent: et si nostre nature n'a point besoing de la residence de ses excremens, iusques à certaine mesure, comme le vin a de sa lie pour sa

ENGLISH

ness of their prescriptions. My health I have free and whole, without rules and without any other discipline than my habit and my pleasure. Any place is good for me to stop in, for when I am sick I need no comforts other than those I need when I am well. It does not upset me to be without a physician, without an apothecary, and without help—things I see most people more distressed about than about the illness. What?

Do they themselves show us any happiness or length of life that could bear witness to some visible effect of their science?

There is no nation that has not gone several centuries without medicine—and those the first centuries, that is to say the best and happiest; and even now a tenth of the world does not use it. Countless nations do not know it, where people live both more healthily and longer than they do here; and among us the common people get along happily without it.

The Romans had gone six hundred years before accepting it. But after trying it, they drove it out of their city through the agency of Cato the Censor, who showed how easily he could do without it: he lived eighty-five years and kept his wife alive to extreme old age—not without medicine, but certainly without a physician, for anything found healthful to our life can be called medicine. He kept his household in health, Plutarch says, by the use, if I remember rightly, of hare. Just as the Arcadians, says Pliny, cure all illnesses with cow's milk.

And the Libyans, says Herodotus, generally enjoy rare health thanks to a custom of theirs: when their children reach the age of four, they cauterize and burn the veins of their heads and temples, thereby blocking for life the way to any flow of catarrh. And the village people of this country use nothing for every ailment but the strongest wine they can get, mixed with plenty of saffron and spice—all with the same success.

And to tell the truth, from all this variety and confusion of prescriptions, what other end and effect is there, after all, than emptying the belly? A thousand household herbs can do that. And I do not even know whether it is as useful as they say, or whether our nature does not need its excrements to stay in it up to a point, as wine needs its lees to

FRENCH

conseruation. Vous voyez souuent des hommes sains, tomber en vomissemens, ou flux de ventre par accident estranger, et faire vn grand vuidange d'excremens sans besoin aucun precedent, et sans aucune vtilité suyuante, voire auec empirement et dommage.

C'est du grand Platon, que i'apprins n'agueres, que de trois sortes de mouuements, qui nous appartiennent, le dernier et le pire est celuy des purgations: que nul homme, s'il n'est fol, ne doit entreprendre, qu'à l'extreme necessité. On va troublant et esueillant le mal par oppositions contraires. Il faut que ce soit la forme de viure, qui doucement l'allanguisse et reconduise à sa fin. Les violentes harpades de la drogue et du mal, sont tousiours à nostre perte, puis que la querelle se desmesle chez nous, et que la drogue est vn secours infiable: de sa nature ennemy à nostre santé, et qui n'a accez en nostre estat que par le trouble. Laissons vn peu faire.

L'ordre qui pouruoid aux puces et aux taulpes, pouruoid aussi aux hommes, qui ont la patience pareille, à se laisser gouuerner, que les puces et les taulpes. Nous auons beau crier bihore: c'est bien pour nous enroüer, mais non pour l'auancer. C'est vn ordre superbe et impiteux. Nostre crainte, nostre desespoir, le desgouste et retarde de nostre ayde, au lieu de l'y conuier. Il doibt au mal son cours, comme à la santé. De se laisser corrompre en faueur de l'vn, au preiudice des droits de l'autre, il ne le fera pas: il tomberoit en desordre. Suyuons de par Dieu, suyuons. Il meine ceux qui suyuent: ceux qui ne le suyuent pas, il les entraine, et leur rage, et leur medecine ensemble.

Faittes ordonner vne purgation à vostre ceruelle. Elle y sera mieux employée, qu'à vostre estomach.

2.37.15 On demandoit à vn Lacedemonien, qui l'auoit fait viure sain si long temps: L'ignorance de la medecine, respondit-il. Et Adrian l'Empereur crioit sans cesse en mourant, que la presse des medecins l'auoit tué. Vn mauuais luicteur se fit medecin: Courage, luy dit Diogenes, tu as raison, tu mettras à cette heure en terre ceux qui t'y ont mis autresfois. Mais ils ont cet heur, selon Nicocles, que le soleil esclaire leur succez, et la terre cache leur faute.

2.37.16

ENGLISH

keep. You often see healthy men fall into vomiting or diarrhea from some accident from outside and make a great discharge of excrement without any previous need and without any benefit afterward—indeed, to their harm and detriment.

It was from the great Plato that I learned not long ago that of the three kinds of movement proper to us, the last and worst is that of purgations, which no man, unless he is a fool, should undertake except in extreme necessity. We go on stirring up and rousing the illness by opposing it with contraries. It must be our way of life that gently weakens it and brings it to its end. The violent grapplings between drug and disease are always at our expense, since the quarrel is fought out inside us, and the drug is an ally not to be trusted: by its nature an enemy to our health, with no access to our system except through disturbance. Let us leave things alone a little.[9]

The order that provides for fleas and moles provides also for men who have the same patience as fleas and moles in letting themselves be governed. We may shout "Gee up!" all we like: it will make us hoarse, but it will not hurry it on. It is a proud and pitiless order. Our fear and our despair disgust it and slow its help, instead of inviting it. It owes its course to illness as much as to health. It will not let itself be bribed in favor of the one to the prejudice of the other's rights; that would throw it into disorder. Let us follow, in God's name, let us follow! It leads those who follow; those who do not, it drags along, rage, medicine and all.

Have a purge prescribed for your brain. It will be better spent there than on your stomach.

A Spartan was asked what had kept him healthy so long. "Ignorance of medicine," he replied. And the Emperor Hadrian kept crying out as he was dying that the crowd of physicians had killed him. A bad wrestler became a physician. "Well done," Diogenes told him, "you're right: now you will put into the ground those who once put you there." But they have this good luck, according to Nicocles, that the sun shines on their successes and the earth hides their mistakes.

FRENCH

Et outre cela, ils ont vne façon bien auantageuse, à se seruir de toutes sortes d'euenemens: car ce que la Fortune, ce que la Nature, ou quelque autre cause estrangere, desquelles le nombre est infini, produit en nous de bon et de salutaire, c'est le priuilege de la medecine de se l'attribuer. Tous les heureux succez qui arriuent au patient, qui est soubs son regime, c'est d'elle qu'il les tient. Les occasions qui m'ont guery moy, et qui guerissent mille autres, qui n'appellent point les medecins à leurs secours, ils les vsurpent en leurs subiects.

Et quant aux mauuais accidens, ou ils les desaduoüent tout à fait, en attribuant la coulpe au patient, par des raisons si vaines, qu'ils n'ont garde de faillir d'en trouuer tousiours assez bon nombre de telles: Il a descouuert son bras, il a ouy le bruit d'vn coche: *Rhedarum transitus arcto / Vicorum inflexu:* on a entrouuert sa fenestre, il s'est couché sur le costé gauche, ou passé par sa teste quelque pensement penible. Somme vne parolle, vn songe, vne œuillade, leur semble suffisante excuse pour se descharger de faute.

Ou, s'il leur plaist, ils se seruent encore de cet empirement, et en font leurs affaires, par cet autre moyen qui ne leur peut iamais faillir: c'est de nous payer lors que la maladie se trouue reschaufee par leurs applications, de l'asseurance qu'ils nous donnent, qu'elle seroit bien autrement empirée sans leurs remedes. Celuy qu'ils ont ietté d'vn morfondement en vne fieure quotidienne, il eust eu sans eux, la continue. Ils n'ont garde de faire mal leurs besongnes, puis que le dommage leur reuient à profit. Vrayement ils ont raison de requerir du malade, vne application de creance fauorable: il faut qu'elle le soit à la verité en bon escient, et bien souple, pour s'appliquer à des imaginations si mal aisées à croire.

Platon disoit bien à propos, qu'il n'appartenoit qu'aux medecins de mentir en toute liberté, puis que nostre salut despend de la vanité, et fauceté de leurs promesses. Æsope autheur de tres-rare excellence, et duquel peu de gens descouurent toutes les graces, est plaisant à nous representer cette authorité tyrannique, qu'ils vsurpent sur ces pauures ames affoiblies et abatuës par le mal, et la crainte: car il conte, qu'un malade estant interrogé par son medecin, quelle operation il sentoit des medicamens, qu'il luy auoit donnez: I'ay fort sué, respondit-il. Cela est bon, dit le medecin. Vne autre fois il luy demanda encore, comme il s'estoit porté depuis: I'ay eu vn froid extreme, fit-il, et si ay fort tremblé.

ENGLISH

Besides that, they have a very advantageous way of making use of every kind of outcome. Whatever good and healthful effect Fortune, Nature, or some other outside cause (and there are infinitely many) produces in us, it is the privilege of medicine to take credit for it. All the happy successes that befall the patient under its regimen, he owes to medicine. The causes that have cured me, and that cure a thousand others who never call in physicians, they appropriate in their own patients.

As for bad outcomes, either they disown them entirely and put the blame on the patient, with reasons so empty that they never run any risk of failing to find plenty of them: he uncovered his arm; he heard the noise of a coach—*carriages passing / In the narrow bend of the streets*; someone opened his window a crack; he lay on his left side; or some painful thought passed through his head. In short, a word, a dream, a glance seems to them excuse enough to clear themselves of blame.[10]

Or, if they please, they use even the worsening and turn it to account by another means that can never fail them: when the illness is found to be inflamed by their treatments, they pay us with the assurance that it would have been far worse without their remedies. The man they have thrown from a chill into a daily fever would have had the continuous fever without them. They have no fear of doing their work badly, since the damage turns to their profit. Truly they are right to require of the patient a favorable disposition to believe; it must indeed be favorable in earnest, and very supple, to bend itself to notions so hard to believe.

Plato said very aptly that only physicians had the right to lie with complete freedom, since our health depends on the vanity and falseness of their promises. Aesop, an author of very rare excellence, whose graces few people discover in full, is amusing in the way he shows us the tyrannical authority they usurp over these poor souls weakened and cast down by illness and fear. He tells how a sick man, asked by his physician what effect he felt from the medicines he had given him, answered: "I have sweated a great deal." "That is good," said the physician. Another time

9 Plato, Timaeus.
10 Juvenal, Satires.

FRENCH

ENGLISH

the physician asked him again how he had been since. "I have been extremely cold," he said, "and I shivered a lot."

Cela est bon, suyuit le medecin: à la troisieme fois, il luy demanda de rechef, comment il se portoit: Ie me sens, dit-il, enfler et bouffir comme d'hydropisie. Voyla qui va bien, adiousta le medecin. L'vn de ses domestiques venant apres à s'enquerir à luy de son estat: Certes mon amy, respond-il, à force de bien estre, ie me meurs.

"That is good," the physician went on. The third time he asked him once more how he was. "I feel myself swelling and puffing up," he said, "as if with dropsy." "That is going well," added the physician. Afterward one of his household came to ask him how he was. "Truly, my friend," he replies, "I am dying of being so well."

2.37.17 Il y auoit en Ægypte vne loy plus iuste, par laquelle le medecin prenoit son patient en charge les trois premiers iours, aux perils et fortunes du patient: mais les trois iours passez, c'estoit aux siens propres. Car quelle raison y a-il, qu'Æsculapius leur patron ait esté frappé du foudre, pour auoir r'amené Hypolitus de mort à vie, *Nam Pater omnipotens aliquem indignatus ab vmbris*
Mortalem infernis, ad lumina surgere vitæ,
Ipse repertorem medicinæ talis et artis,
Fulmine Phœbigenam Stygias detrusit ad vndas: et ses suyuans soyent absous, qui enuoyent tant d'ames de la vie à la mort? Vn medecin vantoit à Nicoclés, son art estre de grande auctorité: Vrayement c'est mon, dit Nicoclés, qui peut impunement tuer tant de gens.

In Egypt there was a juster law, by which the physician took charge of his patient for the first three days at the patient's risk and peril, but once the three days were past, at his own. For what reason is there that Aesculapius, their patron, should have been struck by lightning for bringing Hippolytus back from death to life, *For the almighty Father, indignant that any mortal*
Should rise from the shades below to the light of life,
Himself hurled down with his thunderbolt to the Stygian waters
The son of Phoebus, discoverer of such healing and such skill, while his followers, who send so many souls from life to death, go free? A physician was boasting to Nicocles that his art carried great authority. "Indeed it does," said Nicocles, "since it can kill so many people with impunity."[11]

2.37.18 Au demeurant, si i'eusse esté de leur conseil, i'eusse rendu ma discipline plus sacrée et mysterieuse: ils auoyent assez bien commencé, mais ils n'ont pas acheué de mesme. C'estoit vn bon commencement, d'auoir fait des dieux et des dæmons autheurs de leur science, d'auoir pris vn langage à part, vne escriture à part. Quoy qu'en sente la philosophie, que c'est folie de conseiller vn homme pour son profit, par maniere non intelligible: *Vt sî quis medicus imperet vt sumat Terrigenam, herbigradam, domiportam, sanguine cassam.* C'estoit vne bonne regle en leur art, et qui accompagne toutes les arts fanatiques, vaines, et supernaturelles, qu'il faut que la foy du patient, preoccupe par bonne esperance et asseurance, leur effect et operation.

For the rest, if I had been in their counsels, I would have made my discipline more sacred and mysterious. They had made a fairly good start, but they did not finish in the same way. It was a good beginning to have made gods and daemons the authors of their science, and to have adopted a language of its own and a script of its own—whatever philosophy may think of it, holding that it is folly to advise a man for his own good in a way he cannot understand: *As if a physician were to order a patient to take an earth-born, grass-walking, house-carrying, bloodless creature.* It was a good rule in their art, and one that goes with all fanatical, vain and supernatural arts, that the patient's faith must anticipate their effect and operation with good hope and assurance.[12]

Laquelle regle ils tiennent iusques là, que le plus ignorant et grossier medecin, ils le trouuent plus propre à celuy,

They keep to this rule so far that they consider the most ignorant and crude physician better suited to

11 Aesculapius, son of Apollo (Phoebus), was the god of medicine. The lines are from Virgil, Aeneid.
12 A riddling description of a snail, from the poet Pacuvius, quoted by Cicero, On Divination.

FRENCH

qui a fiance en luy, que le plus experimenté, et incognu. Le choix mesmes de la plus part de leurs drogues est aucunement mysterieux et diuin. Le pied gauche d'vne tortue, l'vrine d'vn lezart, la fiante d'vn elephant, le foye d'vne taupe, du sang tiré soubs l'aile droite d'vn pigeon blanc: et pour nous autres coliqueux (tant ils abusent desdaigneusement de nostre misere) des crottes de rat puluerisées, et telles autres singeries, qui ont plus le visage d'vn enchantement magicien, que de science solide.

Ie laisse à part le nombre imper de leurs pillules: la destination de certains iours et festes de l'année: la distinction des heures, à cueillir les herbes de leurs ingrediens: et cette grimace rebarbatiue et prudente, de leur port et contenance, dequoy Pline mesme se mocque. Mais ils ont failly, veux-ie dire, de ce qu'à ce beau commencement, ils n'ont adiousté cecy, de rendre leurs assemblées et consultations plus religieuses et secretes: aucun homme profane n'y deuoit auoir accez, non plus qu'aux secretes ceremonies d'Æsculape.

Car il aduient de cette faute, que leur irresolution, la foiblesse de leurs argumens, diuinations et fondements, l'aspreté de leurs contestations, pleines de haine, de ialousie, et de consideration particuliere, venants à estre descouuertes à vn chacun, il faut estre merueilleusement aueugle, si on ne se sent bien hazardé entre leurs mains. Qui vid iamais medecin se seruir de la recepte de son compagnon, sans y retrancher ou adiouster quelque chose? Ils trahissent assez par là leur art: et nous font voir qu'ils y considerent plus leur reputation, et par consequent leur profit, que l'interest de leurs patiens.

Celuy là de leurs docteurs est plus sage, qui leur a anciennement prescript, qu'vn seul se mesle de traiter vn malade: car s'il ne fait rien qui vaille, le reproche à l'art de la medecine, n'en sera pas fort grand pour la faute d'vn homme seul: et au rebours, la gloire en sera grande, s'il vient à bien rencontrer: là où quand ils sont beaucoup, ils descrient à tous les coups le mestier: d'autant qu'il leur aduient de faire plus souuent mal que bien.

Ils se deuoient contenter du perpetuel desaccord, qui se trouue és opinions des principaux maistres et autheurs anciens de cette science, lequel n'est cogneu que des hommes versez aux liures, sans faire voir encore au

ENGLISH

a patient who trusts him than the most experienced one whom he does not know. Even the choice of most of their drugs is somewhat mysterious and divine: the left foot of a tortoise, the urine of a lizard, elephant dung, the liver of a mole, blood drawn from under the right wing of a white pigeon; and for us colic sufferers (so disdainfully do they abuse our misery), powdered rat droppings, and other such monkey tricks that look more like a magic spell than solid science.

I leave aside the odd number of their pills, the assigning of certain days and feasts of the year, the distinguishing of hours for gathering the herbs for their ingredients, and that forbidding, knowing grimace of their bearing and countenance, which even Pliny mocks. But where they failed, I mean, was in not adding to this fine beginning one more thing: making their meetings and consultations more religious and secret. No profane man should have been admitted to them, any more than to the secret ceremonies of Aesculapius.

For from this fault it comes about that their irresolution, the weakness of their arguments, divinations and foundations, and the bitterness of their disputes, full of hatred, jealousy and private interest, are laid open to everyone. And then one must be wonderfully blind not to feel oneself in great danger in their hands. Who ever saw a physician use a colleague's prescription without taking something out or putting something in? By this they give their art away plainly enough, and show us that they care more about their reputation, and therefore their profit, than about the interest of their patients.

Wiser was that one of their teachers who long ago laid down for them that only one physician should take charge of treating a patient. For if he does nothing worthwhile, the reproach to the art of medicine will not be very great for one man's fault; and conversely, the glory will be great if he happens to hit the mark. Whereas when there are many of them, they discredit the profession every time, since they happen to do harm more often than good.

They should have been content with the perpetual disagreement found in the opinions of the chief masters and ancient authors of this science, which is known only to men versed in books, without also showing the common people the controver-

FRENCH	ENGLISH
peuple les controuerses et inconstances de iugement, qu'ils nourrissent et continuent entre eux	sies and inconsistencies of judgment that they nourish and keep up among themselves.

A SCIENCE AT WAR WITH ITSELF

Ancient and modern physicians overturn one another's doctrines, and the patient pays.

FRENCH	ENGLISH
2.37.19 Voulons nous vn exemple de l'ancien debat de la medecine? Hierophilus loge la cause originelle des maladies aux humeurs: Erasistratus, au sang des arteres: Asclepiades, aux atomes inuisibles s'escoulants en noz pores: Alcmæon, en l'exuperance ou deffaut des forces corporelles: Diocles, en l'inequalité des elemens du corps, et en la qualité de l'air, que nous respirons: Strato, en l'abondance, crudité, et corruption de l'alimant que nous prenons: Hippocrates la loge aux esprits. Il y a l'vn de leurs amis, qu'ils cognoissent mieux que moy, qui s'escrie à ce propos, que la science la plus importante qui soit en nostre vsage, comme celle qui a charge de nostre conseruation et santé, c'est de mal'heur, la plus incertaine, la plus trouble, et agitée de plus de changemens.	Do we want an example of the ancient debate in medicine? Herophilus places the original cause of diseases in the humors; Erasistratus, in the blood of the arteries; Asclepiades, in invisible atoms flowing through our pores; Alcmaeon, in the excess or deficiency of bodily strength; Diocles, in the imbalance of the body's elements and in the quality of the air we breathe; Strato, in the abundance, crudeness and corruption of the food we eat; Hippocrates places it in the spirits. One of their friends, whom they know better than I do, exclaims on this subject that the most important science we have in use, since it has charge of our preservation and health, is unfortunately the most uncertain, the most confused, and the most shaken by changes.[13]
Il n'y a pas grand danger de nous mescomter à la hauteur du soleil, ou en la fraction de quelque supputation astronomique: mais icy, où il va de tout nostre estre, ce n'est pas sagesse, de nous abandonner à la mercy de l'agitation de tant de vents contraires.	There is no great danger if we miscalculate the height of the sun, or a fraction in some astronomical computation. But here, where our whole being is at stake, it is not wisdom to abandon ourselves to the mercy of so many contrary winds.
2.37.20 Auant la guerre Peloponnesiaque, il n'estoit pas grands nouuelles de cette science: Hippocrates la mit en credit: tout ce que cettuy-cy auoit estably, Chrysippus le renuersa: depuis Erasistratus petit fils d'Aristote, tout ce que Chrysippus en auoit escrit. Apres ceux-cy, suruindrent les Empiriques, qui prindrent vne voye toute diuerse des anciens, au maniement de cet art. Quand le credit de ces derniers commença à s'enuieillir, Herophilus mit en vsage vne autre sorte de medecine, qu'Asclepiades vint à combattre et aneantir à son tour. A leur reng gaignerent authorité les opinions de Themison, et depuis de Musa, et encore apres celles de Vexius Valens, medecin fameux par l'intelligence qu'il auoit auec Messalina.	Before the Peloponnesian War there was little news of this science. Hippocrates brought it into repute. Everything he had established, Chrysippus overturned; then Erasistratus, Aristotle's grandson, overturned everything Chrysippus had written on it. After these came the Empirics, who took a path quite different from the ancients' in practicing this art. When the credit of these last began to grow old, Herophilus brought another kind of medicine into use, which Asclepiades in turn came to attack and destroy. Next the opinions of Themison gained authority, then those of Musa, and after that those of Vettius Valens, a physician famous for his intimacy with Messalina.[14]
L'empire de la medecine tomba du temps de Neron à Thessalus, qui abolit et condamna tout ce qui en auoit esté tenu iusques à luy. La doctrine de cettuy-cy fut	In Nero's time the empire of medicine fell to Thessalus, who abolished and condemned everything

13 These are Greek physicians and natural philosophers of the 6th–3rd centuries BC. The "friend" is Pliny the Elder, in his Natural History, book 29.

14 Messalina was the wife of the emperor Claudius; Vettius Valens was one of her lovers.

FRENCH

abbattue par Crinas de Marseille, qui apporta de nouueau, de regler toutes les operations medecinales, aux ephemerides et mouuemens des astres, manger, dormir, et boire à l'heure qu'il plairoit à la lune et à Mercure. Son authorité fut bien tost apres supplantée par Charinus, medecin de cette mesme ville de Marseille. Cettuy-cy combattoit non seulement la medecine ancienne, mais encore l'vsage des bains chauds, public, et tant de siecles auparauant accoustumé. Il faisoit baigner les hommes dans l'eau froide, en hyuer mesme, et plongeoit les malades dans l'eau naturelle des ruisseaux.

Iusques au temps de Pline aucun Romain n'auoit encore daigné exercer la medecine: elle se faisoit par des estrangers, et Grecs: comme elle se fait entre nous François, par des Latineurs. Car comme dit vn tres-grand medecin, nous ne receuons pas aisément la medecine que nous entendons; non plus que la drogue que nous cueillons. Si les nations, desquelles nous retirons le gayac, la salseperille, et le bois d'esquine, ont des medecins, combien pensons nous par cette mesme recommendation de l'estrangeté, la rareté, et la cherté, qu'ils façent feste de noz choulx, et de nostre persil? car qui oseroit mespriser les choses recherchées de si loing, au hazard d'vne si longue peregrination et si perilleuse?

Depuis ces anciennes mutations de la medecine, il y en a eu infinies autres iusques à nous; et le plus souuent mutations entieres et vniuerselles; comme sont celles que produisent de nostre temps, Paracelse, Fiorauanti et Argenterius: car ils ne changent pas seulement vne recepte, mais, à ce qu'on me dit, toute la contexture et police du corps de la medecine, accusans d'ignorance et de pipperie, ceux qui en ont faict profession iusques à eux. Ie vous laisse à penser où en est le pauure patient.

2.37.21 Si encor nous estions asseurez, quand ils se mescontent, qu'il ne nous nuisist pas, s'il ne nous profite; ce seroit vne bien raisonnable composition, de se hazarder d'acquerir du bien, sans se mettre en danger de perte. Æsope faict ce comte, qu'vn qui auoit acheté vn More esclaue, estimant que cette couleur luy fust venue par accident, et mauuais

ENGLISH

that had been held about it until his day. His doctrine was overthrown by Crinas of Marseille, who brought in the novelty of regulating all medical operations by the ephemerides and movements of the stars: eating, sleeping and drinking at whatever hour pleased the moon and Mercury. His authority was soon afterward supplanted by Charinus, a physician of that same city of Marseille. This man attacked not only the old medicine but also the use of hot baths, which was public and had been customary for so many centuries before. He had men bathe in cold water, even in winter, and plunged the sick into the natural water of streams.[15]

Until Pliny's time no Roman had yet deigned to practice medicine. It was done by foreigners and Greeks, just as among us French it is done by people who talk Latin. For, as a very great physician says, we do not readily accept a medicine we understand, any more than a drug we gather ourselves. If the nations from which we bring guaiacum, sarsaparilla and chinaroot have physicians, how highly must they prize our cabbages and our parsley, do we suppose, on the same recommendation of strangeness, rarity and costliness? For who would dare scorn things sought from so far away, at the risk of so long and so perilous a journey?[16]

Since these ancient changes in medicine there have been countless others down to our own day, and most often complete and universal changes, such as those produced in our time by Paracelsus, Fioravanti and Argenterius. For they change not merely a prescription but, so I am told, the whole structure and government of the body of medicine, accusing of ignorance and fraud all who practiced it before them. I leave you to imagine where that leaves the poor patient.[17]

If at least we were sure that, when they make a mistake, it would not harm us even if it did not help us, that would be a very reasonable bargain: to risk gaining some good without putting ourselves in danger of loss. Aesop tells the story of a man who had bought a dark-skinned slave and,

15 Ephemerides are astronomical tables giving the daily positions of the heavenly bodies.
16 Guaiacum, sarsaparilla and chinaroot were costly imported remedies, used chiefly against syphilis.
17 Leonardo Fioravanti and Giovanni Argenterio were Italian physicians who, like Paracelsus, attacked the established medicine of Galen.

FRENCH

traictement de son premier maistre, le fit medeciner de plusieurs bains et breuuages, auec grand soing: il aduint, que le More n'en amenda aucunement sa couleur basanee, mais qu'il en perdit entierement sa premiere santé. Combien de fois nous aduient-il, de voir les medecins imputans les vns aux autres, la mort de leurs patiens?

Il me souuient d'vne maladie populaire, qui fut aux villes de mon voisinage, il y a quelques années, mortelle et tres-dangereuse: cet orage estant passé, qui auoit emporté vn nombre infiny d'hommes; l'vn des plus fameux medecins de toute la contrée, vint à publier vn liuret, touchant cette matiere, par lequel il se rauise, de ce qu'ils auoyent vsé de la saignée, et confesse que c'est l'vne des causes principales du dommage, qui en estoit aduenu. Dauantage leurs autheurs tiennent, qu'il n'y a aucune medecine, qui n'ait quelque partie nuisible. Et si celles mesmes qui nous seruent, nous offencent aucunement, que doiuent faire celles qu'on nous applique du tout hors de propos?

De moy, quand il n'y auroit autre chose, i'estime qu'à ceux qui hayssent le goust de la medecine, ce soit vn dangereux effort, et de preiudice, de l'aller aualler à vne heure si incommode, auec tant de contre-cœur: et croy que cela essaye merueilleusement le malade, en vne saison, où il a tant besoin de repos. Outre ce, qu'à considerer les occasions, surquoy ils fondent ordinairement la cause de noz maladies, elles sont si legeres et si delicates, que i'argumente par là, qu'vne bien petite erreur en la dispensation de leurs drogues, peut nous apporter beaucoup de nuisance.

Or si le mescomte du medecin est dangereux, il nous va bien mal: car il est bien mal-aisé qu'il n'y retombe souuent: il a besoin de trop de pieces, considerations, et circonstances, pour affuster iustement son dessein. Il faut qu'il cognoisse la complexion du malade, sa temperature, ses humeurs, ses inclinations, ses actions, ses pensements mesmes, et ses imaginations.

Il faut qu'il se responde des circonstances externes, de la nature du lieu, condition de l'air et du temps, assiette des planetes, et leurs influances: qu'il sçache en la maladie les causes, les signes, les affections, les iours critiques: en la drogue, le poix, la force, le pays, la figure, l'aage, la dispensation: et faut que toutes ces pieces, il les sçache proportionner et rapporter l'vne à l'autre, pour en engendrer vne parfaicte symmetrie. A quoy s'il faut tant soit peu, si de tant de ressorts, il y en a vn tout seul, qui tire à gauche, en voyla assez pour nous perdre.

ENGLISH

thinking that his color had come to him by accident and from ill treatment by his first master, had him doctored with great care with many baths and potions. It turned out that the slave's dark complexion was not improved in the least, but he entirely lost the good health he had had before. How often do we see physicians blaming one another for the death of their patients?

I remember an epidemic that struck the towns in my neighborhood some years ago, deadly and very dangerous. When this storm had passed, after carrying off countless people, one of the most famous physicians in the whole region published a little book on the subject, in which he has second thoughts about their having used bloodletting, and admits that it was one of the chief causes of the harm that resulted. Moreover their authors hold that there is no medicine without some harmful part. And if even those that help us do us some harm, what must those do that are applied to us quite wrongly?

For my part, even if there were nothing else, I think that for those who hate the taste of medicine it is a dangerous and damaging strain to have to swallow it at such an inconvenient hour and with such loathing; and I believe it tries the patient terribly, at a time when he so needs rest. Besides, if we consider the occasions on which they usually ground the cause of our illnesses, they are so slight and so delicate that I conclude from this that a very small error in dispensing their drugs can do us a great deal of harm.

Now if the physician's mistake is dangerous, we are in a bad way, for it is very hard for him not to fall into it often: he needs too many pieces, considerations and circumstances to aim his plan accurately. He must know the patient's constitution, his temperament, his humors, his inclinations, his actions, even his thoughts and his fancies.

He must take account of external circumstances: the nature of the place, the condition of the air and the weather, the position of the planets and their influences. He must know, in the disease, its causes, its symptoms, its effects, its critical days; in the drug, its weight, strength, country, shape, age and dispensing. And he must know how to proportion all these pieces and relate them to one another so as to produce a perfect symmetry. If he falls short in this in the slightest, if out of so many

FRENCH

ENGLISH

springs one single one pulls the wrong way, that is enough to finish us.

Dieu sçait, de quelle difficulté est la cognoissance de la pluspart de ces parties: car pour exemple, comment trouuera-il le signe propre de la maladie; chacune estant capable d'vn infiny nombre de signes? Combien ont ils de debats entr'eux et de doubtes, sur l'interpretation des vrines? Autrement d'où viendroit cette altercation continuelle que nous voyons entr'eux sur la cognoissance du mal? Comment excuserions nous cette faute, où ils tombent si souuent, de prendre martre pour renard? Aux maux, que i'ay eu, pour peu qu'il y eust de difficulté, ie n'en ay iamais trouué trois d'accord. Ie remarque plus volontiers les exemples qui me touchent.

God knows how hard it is to know most of these parts. For example, how will he find the proper symptom of the disease, when each one admits of an infinite number of symptoms? How many disputes and doubts do they have among themselves over the reading of urine? Otherwise where would it come from, this continual wrangling we see among them over identifying the illness? How could we excuse the mistake they so often fall into, of taking a marten for a fox? In the illnesses I have had, if there was the least difficulty, I have never found three of them in agreement. I note most readily the examples that concern me.

Dernierement à Paris vn Gentil-homme fut taillé par l'ordonnance des medecins, auquel on ne trouua de pierre non plus à la vessie, qu'à la main; et là mesmes, vn Euesque qui m'estoit fort amy, auoit esté instamment sollicité par la pluspart des medecins, qu'il appelloit à son conseil, de se faire tailler: i'aydoy moy mesme soubs la foy d'autruy, à le luy suader: quand il fut trespassé, et qu'il fut ouuert, on trouua qu'il n'auoit mal qu'aux reins. Ils sont moins excusables en cette maladie, d'autant qu'elle est aucunement palpable. C'est par là que la chirurgie me semble beaucoup plus certaine, par ce qu'elle voit et manie ce qu'elle fait; il y a moins à coniecturer et à deuiner.

Recently in Paris a gentleman was cut for the stone on the physicians' orders, and no more stone was found in his bladder than in his hand. And in the same city a bishop who was a close friend of mine had been urgently pressed by most of the physicians he called into consultation to have himself cut; I myself, trusting others' word, helped persuade him. When he had died and was opened, it was found that his trouble was only in the kidneys. They are less excusable with this disease in that it is to some extent palpable. That is why surgery seems to me much more certain: it sees and handles what it is doing; there is less to conjecture and guess.[18]

Là où les medecins n'ont point de *speculum matricis,* qui leur descouure nostre cerueau, nostre poulmon, et nostre foye.

Whereas physicians have no *speculum for the womb* to show them our brain, our lungs and our liver.[19]

2.37.22 Les promesses mesmes de la medecine sont incroyables. Car ayant à prouuoir à diuers accidents et contraires, qui nous pressent souuent ensemble, et qui ont vne relation quasi necessaire, comme la chaleur du foye, et froideur de l'estomach, ils nous vont persuadant que de leurs ingrediens, cettuy-cy eschauffera l'estomach, cet autre refraichira le foye: l'vn a sa charge d'aller droit aux reins, voire iusques à la vessie, sans estaler ailleurs ses operations; et conseruant ses forces et sa vertu, en ce long chemin et plein de destourbiers, iusques au lieu, au seruice duquel il est destiné, par sa proprieté occulte: l'autre assechera le cerueau: celuy là humectera le poulmon.

Even the promises of medicine are incredible. They have to provide against various and contrary ailments that often press on us together and are almost necessarily linked, such as heat in the liver and coldness in the stomach. So they try to persuade us that, of their ingredients, this one will warm the stomach and that one will cool the liver; one has the task of going straight to the kidneys, or even to the bladder, without spreading its effects anywhere else, keeping its strength and virtue along that long road full of obstacles until it reaches the place it is destined to serve by its occult property; another will dry the brain; that one will moisten the lungs.

18 To be "cut" was to undergo lithotomy, the surgical removal of a stone from the bladder.
19 Montaigne's Latin, *speculum matricis,* names the surgeon's instrument for looking inside the womb.

FRENCH

De tout cet amas, ayant fait vne mixtion de breuuage, n'est-ce pas quelque espece de resuerie, d'esperer que ces vertus s'aillent diuisant, et triant de cette confusion et meslange, pour courir à charges si diuerses? Ie craindrois infiniement qu'elles perdissent, ou eschangeassent leurs ethiquettes, et troublassent leurs quartiers. Et qui pourroit imaginer, qu'en cette confusion liquide, ces facultez ne se corrompent, confondent, et alterent l'vne l'autre? Quoy, que l'execution de cette ordonnance despend d'vn autre officier, à la foy et mercy duquel nous abandonnons encore vn coup nostre vie?

2.37.23 Comme nous auons des pourpointiers, des chaussetiers pour nous vestir; et en sommes d'autant mieux seruis, que chacun ne se mesle que de son subiect, et a sa science plus restreinte et plus courte, que n'a vn tailleur, qui embrasse tout. Et comme, à nous nourrir, les grands, pour plus de commodité ont des offices distinguez de potagers et de rostisseurs, dequoy vn cuisinier, qui prend la charge vniuerselle, ne peut si exquisement venir à bout. De mesme à nous guairir, les Ægyptiens auoient raison de reiecter ce general mestier de medecin, et descoupper cette profession à chasque maladie, à chasque partie du corps son œuurier.

Car cette partie en estoit bien plus proprement et moins confusement traictée, de ce qu'on ne regardoit qu'à elle specialement. Les nostres ne s'aduisent pas, que, qui pouruoid à tout, ne pouruoid à rien: que la totale police de ce petit monde, leur est indigestible. Cependant qu'ils craignent d'arrester le cours d'vn dysenterique, pour ne luy causer la fieure, ils me tuerent vn amy, qui valoit mieux, que tout tant qu'ils sont. Ils mettent leurs diuinations au poids, à l'encontre des maux presents: et pour ne guarir le cerueau au preiudice de l'estomach, offencent l'estomach, et empirent le cerueau, par ces drogues tumultuaires et dissentieuses.

2.37.24 Quant à la varieté et foiblesse des raisons de cet' art, elle est plus apparente qu'en aucun' autre art. Les choses aperitiues sont vtiles à vn homme coliqueux, d'autant qu'ouurans les passages et les dilatans, elles acheminent cette matiere gluante, de laquelle se bastit la graue, et la pierre, et conduisent contre-bas, ce qui se commence à

ENGLISH

When they have made a single potion out of this whole heap, is it not a kind of madness to hope that these virtues will divide and sort themselves out of this confusion and mixture, to run off on such different errands? I should be terribly afraid that they might lose or swap their labels and mix up their quarters. And who could imagine that in this liquid confusion these faculties do not corrupt, confound and alter one another? And what of the fact that carrying out this prescription depends on yet another officer, to whose good faith and mercy we once again abandon our life?

We have doublet-makers and hose-makers to clothe us, and we are all the better served because each deals only with his own subject and has a narrower and shorter range of knowledge than a tailor who takes in everything. And to feed us, great people have, for greater convenience, separate offices of soup-cooks and roasters, which a cook who takes on the whole charge cannot manage so exquisitely. In the same way, for curing us, the Egyptians were right to reject the general trade of physician and to cut the profession up: for each disease, for each part of the body, its own workman.[20]

For that part was treated much more properly and less confusedly because it alone received special attention. Ours do not realize that he who provides for everything provides for nothing; that the total government of this little world is more than they can digest. While they were afraid to stop the flux of a man with dysentery, so as not to give him a fever, they killed a friend of mine who was worth more than the whole lot of them put together. They weigh their guesses against the present ills; and so as not to cure the brain at the expense of the stomach, they injure the stomach and make the brain worse with these turbulent and quarrelsome drugs.[21]

As for the variety and weakness of the reasoning of this art, it is more obvious than in any other art. Aperients are useful to a man with colic, because by opening and dilating the passages they move along that sticky matter from which gravel and stone are built, and carry downward what is be-

20 Montaigne follows Herodotus, Histories 2.84.
21 Probably La Boétie, who died of dysentery in 1563.

FRENCH

durcir et amasser aux reins. Les choses aperitiues sont dangereuses à vn homme coliqueux, d'autant qu'ouurans les passages et les dilatans, elles acheminent vers les reins, la matiere propre à bastir la graue, lesquels s'en saisissans volontiers pour cette propension qu'ils y ont, il est mal aisé qu'ils n'en arrestent beaucoup de ce qu'on y aura charrié.

D'auantage, si de fortune il s'y rencontre quelque corps, vn peu plus grosset qu'il ne faut pour passer tous ces destroicts, qui restent à franchir pour l'expeller au dehors, ce corps estant esbranlé par ces choses aperitiues, et ietté dans ces canaux estroits, venant à les boucher, acheminera vne certaine mort et tres-douloureuse.

Ils ont vne pareille fermeté aux conseils qu'ils nous donnent de nostre regime de viure: il est bon de tomber souuent de l'eau, car nous voyons par experience, qu'en la laissant croupir, nous luy donnons loisir de se descharger de ses excremens, et de sa lye, qui seruira de matiere à bastir la pierre en la vessie: il est bon de ne tomber point souuent de l'eau, car les poisans excrements qu'elle traine quant et elle, ne s'emporteront point, s'il n'y a de la violence, comme on void par experience, qu'vn torrent qui roule auecques roideur, baloye bien plus nettement le lieu où il passe, que ne fait le cours d'vn ruisseau mol et lasche.

Pareillement, il est bon d'auoir souuent affaire aux femmes, car cela ouure les passages, et achemine la graue et le sable. Il est bien aussi mauuais, car cela eschauffe les reins, les lasse et affoiblit. Il est bon de se baigner aux eaux chaudes, d'autant que cela relasche et amollit les lieux, où se croupit le sable et la pierre. Mauuais aussi est-il, d'autant que cette application de chaleur externe, aide les reins à cuire, durcir, et petrifier la matiere qui y est disposée. A ceux qui sont aux bains, il est plus salubre de manger peu le soir, affin que le breuuage des eaux qu'ils ont à prendre lendemain matin, face plus d'operation, rencontrant l'estomach vuide, et non empesché.

Au rebours, il est meilleur de manger peu au disner, pour ne troubler l'operation de l'eau, qui n'est pas encore parfaite, et ne charger l'estomach si soudain, apres cet autre trauail, et pour laisser l'office de digerer, à la nuict, qui le sçait mieux faire que ne fait le iour, où le corps et

ENGLISH

ginning to harden and collect in the kidneys. Aperients are dangerous to a man with colic, because by opening and dilating the passages they move toward the kidneys the matter suited to building gravel; and since the kidneys readily seize on it, from the propensity they have for it, they can hardly fail to keep back much of what has been carried there.[22]

Moreover, if by chance some body is lodged there that is a little too large to pass through all the narrows still to be crossed before it is expelled, this body, set moving by these aperients and thrown into those narrow channels, will block them and bring on a certain and very painful death.

They show the same firmness in the advice they give us about our way of life. It is good to pass water often, for we see by experience that by letting it stagnate we give it leisure to deposit its sediment and dregs, which will serve as material for building a stone in the bladder. It is good not to pass water often, for the heavy sediment it carries with it will not be swept away without some force; as we see by experience that a torrent rushing down vigorously sweeps the place it passes over much cleaner than the course of a soft and sluggish brook.

Likewise, it is good to have frequent intercourse with women, for that opens the passages and moves the gravel and sand along. It is also very bad, for it heats the kidneys, tires them and weakens them. It is good to bathe in hot springs, because that relaxes and softens the places where the sand and stone lie stagnating. It is also bad, because this application of external heat helps the kidneys bake, harden and petrify the matter lying ready in them. For those taking the waters, it is healthier to eat little in the evening, so that the water they are to drink the next morning may work better, finding the stomach empty and unencumbered.

On the contrary, it is better to eat little at the midday meal, so as not to disturb the working of the water, which is not yet complete, and not to burden the stomach so soon after that other labor, and to leave the task of digesting to the night, which

22 Aperients are medicines that "open" the body's passages, as laxatives or diuretics; Montaigne's colic was caused by kidney stones.

FRENCH

l'esprit, sont en perpetuel mouuement et action. Voila comment ils vont bastelant, et baguenaudant à noz despens en tous leurs discours, et ne me sçauroient fournir proposition, à laquelle ie n'en rebastisse vne contraire, de pareille force. Qu'on ne crie donc plus apres ceux qui en ce trouble, se laissent doucement conduire à leur appetit et au conseil de Nature, et se remettent à la fortune commune.

ENGLISH

does it better than the day, when body and mind are in perpetual movement and action. That is how they juggle and trifle at our expense in all their reasoning; and they could not offer me a single proposition against which I could not build a contrary one of equal force. So let no one rail any more at those who, in this confusion, let themselves be gently led by their appetite and the counsel of Nature, and commit themselves to common fortune.

TAKING THE WATERS

Montaigne's experience of the spas of Europe: harmless, pleasant, and of uncertain effect.

FRENCH

2.37.25 I'ay veu par occasion de mes voyages, quasi tous les bains fameux de Chrestienté; et depuis quelques années ay commencé à m'en seruir. Car en general i'estime le baigner salubre, et croy que nous encourons non legeres incommoditez, en nostre santé, pour auoir perdu cette coustume, qui estoit generalement obseruée au temps passé, quasi en toutes les nations, et est encores en plusieurs, de se lauer le corps tous les iours: et ne puis pas imaginer que nous ne vaillions beaucoup moins de tenir ainsi noz membres encroustez, et noz pores estouppez de crasse.

Et quant à leur boisson, la Fortune a faict premierement, qu'elle ne soit aucunement ennemie de mon goust: secondement elle est naturelle et simple, qui aumoins n'est pas dangereuse, si elle est vaine. Dequoy ie prens pour respondant, cette infinité de peuples de toutes sortes et complexions, qui s'y assemble.

Et encores que ie n'y aye apperceu aucun effect extraordinaire et miraculeux: ains que m'en informant vn peu plus curieusement qu'il ne se faict, i'aye trouué mal fondez et faux, tous les bruits de telles operations, qui se sement en ces lieux là, et qui s'y croyent (comme le monde va se pippant aisément de ce qu'il desire) toutesfois aussi, n'ay-ie veu guere de personnes que ces eaux ayent empiré; et ne leur peut-on sans malice refuser cela, qu'elles n'esueillent l'appetit, facilitent la digestion, et nous prestent quelque nouuelle allegresse, si on n'y va par trop abbatu de forces; ce que ie desconseille de faire.

Elles ne sont pas pour releuer vne poisante ruyne: elles peuuent appuyer vne inclination legere, ou prouuoir à la menace de quelque alteration. Qui n'y apporte assez d'allegresse, pour pouuoir iouyr le plaisir des compagnies

ENGLISH

In the course of my travels I have seen almost all the famous baths of Christendom, and for some years now I have begun to use them. For in general I consider bathing healthy, and I believe we incur no slight harm to our health from having lost this custom of washing the body every day, which was generally observed in times past in almost all nations and still is in many. And I cannot imagine that we are not much the worse for keeping our limbs encrusted like this and our pores stopped up with dirt.

And as for drinking the waters, Fortune has arranged, first, that it is not at all disagreeable to my taste; second, it is natural and simple, and so at least not dangerous, even if it is useless. As guarantee of this I take the countless people of every sort and constitution who gather there.

And yet I have not noticed any extraordinary or miraculous effect there. On the contrary, inquiring into it a little more carefully than people usually do, I have found ill-founded and false all the reports of such cures that are spread about in those places and believed there (as the world easily deceives itself about what it desires). Still, I have also seen hardly anyone whom these waters have made worse; and one cannot without malice deny them this: that they awaken the appetite, aid digestion and lend us some fresh liveliness, provided one does not go there too worn down in strength, which I advise against.

They are not meant to raise up a heavy ruin; they can prop up a slight decline or ward off the threat of some disorder. Whoever does not bring enough

FRENCH

qui s'y trouuent, et des promenades et exercices, à quoy nous conuie la beauté des lieux, où sont communément assises ces eaux, il perd sans doubte la meilleure piece et plus asseurée de leur effect.

A cette cause i'ay choisi iusques à cette heure, à m'arrester et à me seruir de celles, où il y auoit plus d'amœnité de lieu, commodité de logis, de viures et de compagnies, comme sont en France, les bains de Banieres: en la frontiere d'Allemaigne, et de Lorraine, ceux de Plombieres: en Souysse, ceux de Bade: en la Toscane, ceux de Lucques; et specialement ceux *della Villa*, desquels i'ay vsé plus souuent, et à diuerses saisons.

2.37.26 Chasque nation a des opinions particulieres, touchant leur vsage, et des loix et formes de s'en seruir, toutes diuerses: et selon mon experience l'effect quasi pareil. Le boire n'est aucunement receu en Allemaigne. Pour toutes maladies, ils se baignent, et sont à grenouiller dans l'eau, quasi d'vn soleil à l'autre. En Italie, quand ils boiuent neuf iours, ils s'en baignent pour le moins trente; et communément boiuent l'eau mixtionnée d'autres drogues, pour secourir son operation. On nous ordonne icy, de nous promener pour la digerer: là on les arreste au lict, où ils l'ont prise, iusques à ce qu'ils l'ayent vuidée, leur eschauffant continuellement l'estomach, et les pieds.

Comme les Allemans ont de particulier, de se faire generalement tous corneter et vantouser, auec scarification dans le bain: ainsin ont les Italiens leurs *doccie*, qui sont certaines gouttieres de cette eau chaude, qu'ils conduisent par des cannes, et vont baignant vne heure le matin, et autant l'apres disnée, par l'espace d'vn mois, ou la teste, ou l'estomach, ou autre partie du corps, à laquelle ils ont affaire. Il y a infinies autres differences de coustumes, en chasque contrée: ou pour mieux dire, il n'y a quasi aucune ressemblance des vnes aux autres.

Voylà comment cette partie de medecine, à laquelle seule ie me suis laissé aller, quoy qu'elle soit la moins artificielle, si a elle sa bonne part de la confusion et incertitude, qui se voit par tout ailleurs en cet art.

2.37.27 Les poëtes disent tout ce qu'ils veulent, auec plus d'emphase et de grace; tesmoing ces deux epigrammes. *Alcon hesterno signum Iouis attigit. Ille,*

ENGLISH

liveliness to enjoy the pleasure of the company found there, and of the walks and exercise to which we are invited by the beauty of the places where these waters usually lie, undoubtedly loses the best and surest part of their effect.

For this reason I have so far chosen to stop at and use those where there was the greatest pleasantness of setting and convenience of lodging, food and company: in France, the baths of Bagnères; on the border of Germany and Lorraine, those of Plombières; in Switzerland, those of Baden; in Tuscany, those of Lucca, and especially those *at La Villa*, which I have used most often and in different seasons.[23]

Each nation has its own opinions about using them, and its own laws and ways of taking them, all different; and in my experience the effect is about the same. Drinking is not accepted at all in Germany. For every illness they bathe, and stay paddling about in the water like frogs almost from sunrise to sunset. In Italy, when they drink for nine days, they bathe for at least thirty; and they usually drink the water mixed with other drugs to assist its working. Here we are told to walk about to digest it; there they keep people in bed, where they drank it, until they have voided it, keeping their stomachs and feet continually warmed.

Just as the Germans have the peculiarity of having themselves almost all cupped and bled, with scarification, in the bath, so the Italians have their *doccie*, which are certain streams of this hot water that they bring through pipes; with them, for a month, they bathe for an hour in the morning and as long in the afternoon either the head, or the stomach, or whatever other part of the body they are dealing with. There are countless other differences of custom in each region; or, to put it better, there is almost no resemblance between them.

So you see how this branch of medicine, the only one I have let myself go along with, though it is the least artificial, still has its fair share of the confusion and uncertainty seen everywhere else in this art.

The poets say whatever they please with more emphasis and grace: witness these two epigrams. *Yesterday Alcon touched the statue of Jove. It,*

23 La Villa is one of the spa villages of Bagni di Lucca, where Montaigne took the waters in 1581, as his Travel Journal records.

FRENCH

Quamuis marmoreus, vim patitur medici.
Ecce hodie iussus transferri ex æde vetusta,
Effertur, quamuis sit Deus atque lapis. Et l'autre, *Lotus*
nobiscum est, hilaris cænauit, et idem
Inuentus mane est mortuus Andragoras.
Tam subitæ mortis causam, Faustine, requiris?
In somnis medicum viderat Hermocratem. Sur quoy ie veux faire deux comtes.

ENGLISH

Though marble, suffers the physician's power.
Look: today, ordered moved from its ancient temple,
It is carried out for burial, though it is a god and a stone. And the other: *Andragoras bathed with us, dined merrily, and yet*
In the morning he was found dead.
You ask, Faustinus, the cause of so sudden a death?
In his sleep he had seen the doctor Hermocrates. On this subject I want to tell two stories.[24]

TWO STORIES

A mountain village loses its health with its first doctor, and a goat bred for its blood turns out to have stones.

FRENCH

2.37.28 Le Baron de Caupene en Chalosse, et moy, auons en commun le droit de patronage d'vn benefice, qui est de grande estenduë, au pied de noz montaignes, qui se nomme Lahontan. Il est des habitans de ce coin, ce qu'on dit de ceux de la valée d'Angrougne; ils auoient vne vie à part, les façons, les vestemens, et les mœurs à part: regis et gouuernez par certaines polices et coustumes particulieres, receuës de pere en filz, ausquelles ils s'obligeoient sans autre contrainte, que de la reuerence de leur vsage.

Ce petit estat s'estoit continué de toute ancienneté en vne condition si heureuse, qu'aucun iuge voisin n'auoit esté en peine de s'informer de leur affaire; aucun aduocat employé à leur donner aduis, ny estranger appellé pour esteindre leurs querelles; et n'auoit on iamais veu aucun de ce destroit à l'aumosne.

Ils fuyoient les alliances et le commerce de l'autre monde, pour n'alterer la pureté de leur police: iusques à ce, comme ils recitent, que l'vn d'entre eux, de la memoire de leurs peres, ayant l'ame espoinçonnée d'vne noble ambition, alla s'aduiser pour mettre son nom en credit et reputation, de faire l'vn de ses enfans maistre Iean, ou maistre Pierre: et l'ayant faict instruire à escrire en quelque ville voisine, en rendit en fin vn beau notaire de village. Cettuy-cy, deuenu grand, commença à desdaigner leurs anciennes coustumes, et à leur mettre en teste la pompe des regions de deça.

Le premier de ses comperes, à qui on escorna vne cheure, il luy conseilla d'en demander raison aux iuges Royaux

ENGLISH

The Baron de Caupène in Chalosse and I share the right of patronage of a benefice of wide extent at the foot of our mountains, called Lahontan. It is with the inhabitants of this corner as is said of those of the valley of Angrogna: they had a life of their own, their own ways, dress and manners, ruled and governed by certain particular laws and customs handed down from father to son, which they bound themselves to obey with no other constraint than reverence for their own practice.[25]

This little state had continued since time immemorial in so happy a condition that no neighboring judge had ever had to trouble himself to inquire into their business, no lawyer had been employed to advise them, no outsider called in to settle their quarrels; and no one from that district had ever been seen begging.

They shunned marriages and dealings with the outside world so as not to alter the purity of their way of governing themselves. Then, as they tell it, one of them, within their fathers' memory, his soul spurred by a noble ambition, took it into his head, in order to bring his name into credit and repute, to make one of his children Master John or Master Peter; and having had him taught to write in some neighboring town, he at last made him a fine village notary. This man, once grown up, began to scorn their ancient customs and to fill their heads with the pomp of the regions on our side.[26]

The first of his fellow villagers who had a horn knocked off his goat, he advised to seek redress

24 The first epigram is by Ausonius; the second is Martial, Epigrams 6.53.
25 Lahontan is a parish in Béarn, near the Pyrenees; the valley of Angrogna in Piedmont was a stronghold of the Waldensians.

FRENCH

d'autour de là; et de cettuy-cy à vn autre, iusques à ce qu'il eust tout abastardy. A la suitte de cette corruption, ils disent, qu'il y en suruint incontinent vn' autre, de pire consequence, par le moyen d'vn medecin, à qui il print enuie d'espouser vne de leurs filles, et de s'habituer parmy eux.

Cettuy-cy commença à leur apprendre premierement le nom des fiebures, des rheumes, et des apostemes, la situation du cœur, du foye, et des intestins, qui estoit vne science iusques lors tres esloignée de leur cognoissance: et au lieu de l'ail, dequoy ils auoyent apris à chasser toutes sortes de maux, pour aspres et extremes qu'ils fussent, il les accoustuma pour vne toux, ou pour vn morfondement, à prendre les mixtions estrangeres, et commença à faire trafique, non de leur santé seulement, mais aussi de leur mort.

Ils iurent que depuis lors seulement, ils ont apperçeu que le serain leur appesantissoit la teste, que le boire ayant chault apportoit nuisance, et que les vents de l'automne estoyent plus griefs que ceux du printemps: que depuis l'vsage de cette medecine, ils se trouuent accablez d'vne legion de maladies inaccoustumées, et qu'ils apperçoiuent vn general deschet, en leur ancienne vigueur, et leurs vies de moitié raccourcies. Voyla le premier de mes comtes.

2.37.29 L'autre est, qu'auant ma subiection graueleuse, oyant faire cas du sang de bouc à plusieurs, comme d'vne manne celeste enuoyée en ces derniers siecles, pour la tutelle et conseruation de la vie humaine; et en oyant parler à des gens d'entendement comme d'vne drogue admirable, et d'vne operation infaillible: moy qui ay tousiours pensé estre en bute à tous les accidens, qui peuuent toucher tout autre homme, prins plaisir en pleine santé à me prouuoir de ce miracle; et commanday chez moy qu'on me nourrist vn bouc selon la recepte. Car il faut que ce soit aux mois les plus chaleureux de l'esté, qu'on le retire: et qu'on ne luy donne à manger que des herbes aperitiues, et à boire que du vin blanc.

Ie me rendis de fortune chez moy le iour qu'il deuoit estre tué: on me vint dire que mon cuysinier trouuoit dans la panse deux ou trois grosses boules, qui se chocquoient l'vne l'autre parmy sa mangeaille. Ie fus curieux de faire apporter toute cette tripaille en ma presence, et fis ouurir cette grosse et large peau: il en sortit trois gros corps, legers comme des esponges, de façon qu'il semble qu'ils soyent creuz, durs au demeurant

ENGLISH

from the royal judges thereabouts; and so from one to another, until he had corrupted everything. Following this corruption, they say, another soon came of worse consequence, by means of a physician who took a fancy to marry one of their daughters and settle among them.

This man began by teaching them the names of fevers, colds and abscesses, and the location of the heart, the liver and the intestines, a science until then very remote from their knowledge. And instead of garlic, with which they had learned to drive out all sorts of ills, however harsh and extreme, he got them used to taking foreign mixtures for a cough or a chill, and began to traffic not only in their health but also in their death.

They swear that only since then have they noticed that the evening dew made their heads heavy, that drinking when hot did harm, and that the autumn winds were more harmful than those of spring; that since they began using this medicine they find themselves overwhelmed by a legion of unaccustomed diseases, and notice a general decline in their old vigor and their lives cut short by half. That is the first of my stories.

The other is this. Before I was subject to the gravel, I heard many people prize goat's blood as a heavenly manna sent in these latter centuries for the protection and preservation of human life, and heard men of good understanding speak of it as an admirable drug of infallible effect. I, who have always thought myself exposed to all the accidents that can befall any other man, took pleasure, while in perfect health, in providing myself with this miracle, and ordered a goat to be raised for me at home according to the recipe. For it must be shut away in the hottest months of summer, and given nothing to eat but aperient herbs and nothing to drink but white wine.

I happened to come home on the day it was to be killed. They came to tell me that my cook was finding in its paunch two or three large balls knocking against each other among its food. I was curious enough to have all these tripes brought before me, and had that big, broad skin opened. Out came three large bodies, light as sponges, so that they seemed hollow, but otherwise hard and firm on

26 "Master" was the title given to lawyers and men of letters.

FRENCH

par le dessus et fermes, bigarrez de plusieurs couleurs mortes: l'vn parfaict en rondeur, à la mesure d'vne courte boule: les autres deux, vn peu moindres, ausquels l'arrondissement est imparfaict, et semble qu'il s'y acheminast.

I'ai trouué, m'en estant faict enquerir à ceux, qui ont accoustumé d'ouurir de ces animaux, que c'est vn accident rare et inusité. Il est vray-semblable que ce sont des pierres cousines des nostres. Et s'il est ainsi, c'est vne esperance bien vaine aux graueleux, de tirer leur guerison du sang d'vne beste, qui s'en alloit elle mesme mourir d'vn pareil mal. Car de dire que le sang ne se sent pas de cette contagion, et n'en altere sa vertu accoustumée, il est plustost à croire, qu'il ne s'engendre rien en vn corps que par la conspiration et communication de toutes les parties: la masse agist tout' entiere, quoy que l'vne piece y contribue plus que l'autre, selon la diuersité des operations.

Parquoy il y a grande apparence qu'en toutes les parties de ce bouc, il y auoit quelque qualité petrifiante. Ce n'estoit pas tant pour la crainte de l'aduenir, et pour moy, que i'estoy curieux de cette experience: comme c'estoit, qu'il aduient chez moy, ainsi qu'en plusieurs maisons, que les femmes y font amas de telles menues drogueries, pour en secourir le peuple: vsant de mesme recepte à cinquante maladies, et de telle recepte, qu'elles ne prennent pas pour elles, et si triomphent en bons euenemens.

2.37.30 Au demeurant, i'honore les medecins, non pas suiuant le precepte, pour la necessité (car à ce passage on en oppose vn autre du prophete, reprenant le Roy Asa d'auoir eu recours au medecin) mais pour l'amour d'eux mesmes, en ayant veu beaucoup d'honnestes hommes et dignes d'estre aymez. Ce n'est pas à eux que i'en veux, c'est à leur art, et ne leur donne pas grand blasme de faire leur profit de nostre sottise, car la plus part du monde faict ainsi. Plusieurs vacations et moindres et plus dignes que la leur, n'ont fondement, et appuy qu'aux abuz publiques.

Ie les appelle en ma compagnie, quand ie suis malade, s'ils se rencontrent à propos, et demande à en estre entretenu, et les paye comme les autres. Ie leur donne loy, de me commander de m'abrier chauldement, si ie l'ayme mieux ainsi, que d'autre sorte: ils peuuent choisir

ENGLISH

the surface, mottled with several dull colors: one perfectly round, the size of a ball for short bowls; the other two a little smaller, imperfectly rounded, as though they were on their way to it.

Having had inquiries made of those who are used to opening up these animals, I found that it is a rare and unusual occurrence. It is likely that these are stones, cousins to ours. And if so, it is a very vain hope for sufferers from the gravel to draw their cure from the blood of a beast that was itself about to die of a similar disease. For as to saying that the blood is not touched by this contagion and does not have its usual virtue altered, it is rather to be believed that nothing is produced in a body except by the conspiracy and communication of all the parts: the mass acts as a whole, though one piece contributes more than another, according to the diversity of operations.

Therefore it is very likely that in all the parts of this goat there was some petrifying quality. It was not so much out of fear for the future, and for myself, that I was curious about this experiment, as because in my house, as in many others, the women gather a store of such petty drugs to help the common people. They use the same recipe for fifty diseases, and a recipe they do not take themselves; and yet they triumph in good results.

For the rest, I honor physicians—not according to the precept, out of necessity (for against that passage another is set, from the prophet reproving King Asa for having had recourse to the physician), but for their own sake, having seen many of them who were decent men and worthy of being loved. It is not them I have a quarrel with; it is their art. And I do not much blame them for profiting from our folly, for most of the world does the same. Many callings, both lesser and worthier than theirs, have no foundation or support but public deception.[27]

I call them in to keep me company when I am ill, if they happen to be at hand; I ask to be entertained by them, and I pay them as others do. I give them leave to order me to cover up warmly, if I prefer that to the alternative. They can choose between

27 The precept is Ecclesiasticus 38:1, which bids us honor the physician because we need him; 2 Chronicles 16:12 blames King Asa for seeking physicians rather than God.

FRENCH

d'entre les porreaux et les laictues, dequoy il leur plaira que mon bouillon se face, et m'ordonner le blanc ou le clairet: et ainsi de toutes autres choses, qui sont indifferentes à mon appetit et vsage. I'entens bien que ce n'est rien faire pour eux, d'autant que l'aigreur et l'estrangeté sont accidens de l'essence propre de la medecine. Lycurgus ordonnoit le vin aux Spartiates malades. Pourquoy? par ce qu'ils en haissoyent l'vsage, sains.

Tout ainsi qu'vn Gentil-homme mon voisin s'en sert pour drogue tressalutaire à ses fiebures, par ce que de sa nature il en hait mortellement le goust. Combien en voyons nous d'entr' eux, estre de mon humeur? desdaigner la medecine pour leur seruice, et prendre vne forme de vie libre, et toute contraire à celle qu'ils ordonnent à autruy? Qu'est-ce cela, si ce n'est abuser tout destroussément de nostre simplicité? Car ils n'ont pas leur vie et leur santé moins chere que nous; et accommoderoient leurs effects à leur doctrine, s'ils n'en cognoissoyent eux mesmes la faulceté.

2.37.31 C'est la crainte de la mort et de la douleur, l'impatience du mal, vne furieuse et indiscrete soif de la guerison, qui nous aueugle ainsi. C'est pure lascheté qui nous rend nostre croyance si molle et maniable. La plus part pourtant ne croyent pas tant, comme ils endurent et laissent faire: car ie les oy se plaindre et en parler, comme nous. Mais ils se resoluent en fin: Que feroy-ie donc? Comme si l'impatience estoit de soy quelque meilleur remede, que la patience. Y a il aucun de ceux qui se sont laissez aller à cette miserable subiection, qui ne se rende esgalement à toute sorte d'impostures?

qui ne se mette à la mercy de quiconque a cette impudence, de luy donner promesse de sa guerison? Les Babyloniens portoyent leurs malades en la place: le medecin c'estoit le peuple: chacun des passants ayant par humanité et ciuilité à s'enquerir de leur estat: et, selon son experience, leur donner quelque aduis salutaire. Nous n'en faisons guere autrement: il n'est pas vne simple femmelette, de qui nous n'employons les barbottages et les breuets: et selon mon humeur, si i'auoy à en accepter quelqu'vne, i'accepterois plus volontiers cette medecine qu'aucune autre: d'autant qu'aumoins il n'y a nul dommage à craindre. Ce qu'Homere et Platon disoyent des Ægyptiens, qu'ils estoyent tous medecins, il se doit dire de tous peuples.

ENGLISH

leeks and lettuce for what my broth is to be made of, and prescribe white wine or claret; and so with all other things that are indifferent to my appetite and habits. I fully understand that this is doing nothing for them, since bitterness and strangeness are accidents of the very essence of medicine. Lycurgus prescribed wine for sick Spartans. Why? Because when healthy they hated drinking it.

In just the same way a gentleman, a neighbor of mine, uses it as a most beneficial drug for his fevers, because by nature he mortally hates its taste. How many of them do we see who are of my temperament? who scorn medicine for their own use, and adopt a free way of life, quite contrary to the one they prescribe for others? What is that but brazenly abusing our simplicity? For they hold their life and health no less dear than we do, and would match their actions to their doctrine if they did not themselves know its falsity.

It is fear of death and of pain, impatience with illness, a furious and reckless thirst for cure, that blinds us so. It is pure cowardice that makes our belief so soft and pliable. Most people, however, do not so much believe as endure and let things be done; for I hear them complain and talk about it as we do. But in the end they make up their minds: "What else am I to do?" As if impatience were in itself a better remedy than patience. Is there anyone who has let himself fall into this miserable subjection who does not surrender equally to every kind of imposture?

who does not put himself at the mercy of anyone with the impudence to promise him a cure? The Babylonians carried their sick into the public square: the physician was the people, each passer-by being bound by humanity and civility to ask about their condition and, according to his experience, give them some healthy advice. We do hardly otherwise. There is not a simple little woman whose mumbled charms and amulets we do not make use of; and to my mind, if I had to accept any medicine, I would accept this kind more willingly than any other, since at least there is no harm to fear from it. What Homer and Plato said of the Egyptians, that they were all physicians, ought to be said of every people.[28]

FRENCH

Il n'est personne, qui ne se vante de quelque recepte, et qui ne la hazarde sur son voisin, s'il l'en veut croire. I'estoy l'autre iour en vne compagnie, où ie ne sçay qui, de ma confrairie, apporta la nouuelle d'vne sorte de pillules compilées de cent, et tant d'ingrediens de comte fait: il s'en esmeut vne feste et vne consolation singuliere: car quel rocher soustiendroit l'effort d'vne si nombreuse batterie? I'entens toutesfois par ceux qui l'essayerent, que la moindre petite graue ne daigna s'en esmouuoir.

ENGLISH

There is no one who does not boast of some recipe and try it out on his neighbor, if he will believe him. The other day I was in a gathering where someone or other of my fraternity brought news of a kind of pill compounded of a hundred-odd ingredients, duly counted. It set off a celebration and a singular comfort: for what rock could withstand the force of so numerous a battery? I hear, however, from those who tried it, that not the smallest grain of gravel deigned to stir for it.[29]

HOW REMEDIES ARE FOUND

Montaigne doubts that chance experiments could ever establish a reliable cure.

FRENCH

2.37.32 Ie ne me puis desprendre de ce papier, que ie n'en die encore ce mot, sur ce qu'ils nous donnent pour respondant de la certitude de leurs drogues, l'experience qu'ils ont faicte. La plus part, et ce croy-ie, plus des deux tiers des vertus medecinales, consistent en la quinte essence, ou proprieté occulte des simples; de laquelle nous ne pouuons auoir autre instruction que l'vsage. Car quinte essence, n'est autre chose qu'vne qualité, de laquelle par nostre raison nous ne sçauons trouuer la cause.

En telles preuues, celles qu'ils disent auoir acquises par l'inspiration de quelque dæmon, ie suis content de les receuoir, (car quant aux miracles, ie n'y touche iamais) ou bien encore les preuues qui se tirent des choses, qui pour autre consideration tombent souuent en nostre vsage: comme si en la laine, dequoy nous auons accoustumé de nous vestir, il s'est trouué par accident, quelque occulte proprieté desiccatiue, qui guerisse les mules au talon; et si au reffort, que nous mangeons pour la nourriture, il s'est rencontré quelque operation aperitiue. Galen recite, qu'il aduint à vn ladre de receuoir guerison par le moyen du vin qu'il beut, d'autant que de fortune, vne vipere s'estoit coulée dans le vaisseau.

Nous trouuons en cet exemple le moyen, et vne conduitte vray-semblable à cette experience. Comme aussi en celles, ausquelles les medecins disent, auoir esté acheminez par l'exemple d'aucunes bestes. Mais en la plus part des autres experiences, à quoy ils disent auoir esté conduis par la fortune, et n'auoir eu autre guide que le hazard, ie trouue le progrez de cette information incroyable. I'imagine l'homme, regardant au tour de luy le nombre infiny des choses, plantes, animaux, metaulx.

ENGLISH

I cannot leave this paper without saying one more word about this: that as guarantee of the certainty of their drugs they offer us the experiments they have made. Most medicinal virtues, and I believe more than two-thirds of them, consist in the quintessence or occult property of medicinal plants, about which we can learn nothing except by use. For quintessence is nothing but a quality whose cause we cannot find by our reason.

Among such proofs, those they say they have acquired by the inspiration of some daemon I am content to accept (for as to miracles, I never touch them); or again the proofs drawn from things that for other reasons often come into our use: as when some occult drying property is found by accident in the wool we usually wear, which cures chilblains on the heel; or when some aperient effect turns up in the horseradish we eat as food. Galen tells how a leper happened to be cured by the wine he drank, because by chance a viper had crept into the jar.

In this example we find the means and a likely path to the discovery; as also in those to which physicians say they were led by the example of certain animals. But in most other experiments, to which they say they were led by fortune, with no other guide than chance, I find the progress of this discovery incredible. I imagine a man looking around him at the infinite number of things—

28 The Babylonian custom is from Herodotus, Histories 1.197; Homer speaks of the Egyptians in the Odyssey, book 4.
29 His "fraternity" are his fellow sufferers from the stone.

FRENCH

Ie ne sçay par où luy faire commencer son essay: et quand sa premiere fantasie se iettera sur la corne d'vn elan, à quoy il faut prester vne creance bien molle et aisée: il se trouue encore autant empesché en sa seconde operation.

Il luy est proposé tant de maladies, et tant de circonstances, qu'auant qu'il soit venu à la certitude de ce poinct, où doit ioindre la perfection de son experience, le sens humain y perd son Latin: et auant qu'il ait trouué parmy cette infinité de choses, que c'est cette corne: parmy cette infinité de maladies, l'epilepsie: tant de complexions, au melancholique: tant de saisons, en hyuer: tant de nations, au François: tant d'aages, en la vieillesse: tant de mutations celestes, en la conionction de Venus et de Saturne: tant de parties du corps au doigt.

A tout cela n'estant guidé ny d'argument, ny de coniecture, ny d'exemple, ny d'inspiration diuine, ains du seul mouuement de la fortune, il faudroit que ce fust par vne fortune, parfaictement artificielle, reglée et methodique. Et puis, quand la guerison fut faicte, comment se peut il asseurer, que ce ne fust, que le mal estoit arriué à sa periode; ou vn effect du hazard? ou l'operation de quelque autre chose, qu'il eust ou mangé, ou beu, ou touché ce iour là? ou le merite des prieres de sa mere-grand? Dauantage, quand cette preuue auroit esté parfaicte, combien de fois fut elle reiterée? et cette longue cordée de fortunes et de rencontres, r'enfilée, pour en conclure vne regle? Quand elle sera conclue, par qui est-ce?

de tant de millions, il n'y a que trois hommes qui se meslent d'enregistrer leurs experiences. Le sort aura il r'encontré à poinct nommé l'vn de ceux-cy? Quoy si vn autre, et si cent autres, ont faict des experiences contraires? A l'aduanture y verrions nous quelque lumiere, si tous les iugements, et raisonnements des hommes, nous estoyent cogneuz. Mais que trois tesmoings et trois docteurs, regentent l'humain genre, ce n'est pas la raison: il faudroit que l'humaine nature les eust deputez et choisis, et qu'ils fussent declarez nos syndics par expresse procuration.

ENGLISH

plants, animals, metals. I do not know where to have him begin his trial. And when his first fancy lights on an elk's horn, which requires a very soft and easy belief, he finds himself just as perplexed in his second step.

He is faced with so many diseases and so many circumstances that, before he has reached certainty on the point where his experiment must come to completion, human sense is at its wits' end. And before he has found, among this infinity of things, that it is this horn; among this infinity of diseases, epilepsy; among so many constitutions, the melancholic; among so many seasons, winter; among so many nations, the French; among so many ages, old age; among so many celestial changes, the conjunction of Venus and Saturn; among so many parts of the body, the finger.

Since in all this he is guided neither by argument, nor conjecture, nor example, nor divine inspiration, but only by the movement of fortune, it would have to happen by a fortune perfectly skillful, regular and methodical. And then, when the cure was done, how can he be sure that it was not because the illness had reached its term? or an effect of chance? or the working of something else he had eaten, drunk or touched that day? or the merit of his grandmother's prayers? Moreover, even if this proof had been perfect, how many times was it repeated? and this long string of chances and coincidences strung together again, to conclude a rule from it? When it is concluded, by whom?

Out of so many millions there are only three men who take the trouble to record their experiments. Will chance have hit exactly on one of these? What if another, and a hundred others, have made contrary experiments? We might perhaps see some light if all the judgments and reasonings of men were known to us. But that three witnesses and three doctors should rule the human race is not reasonable: human nature would have had to depute and choose them, and declare them our representatives by express power of attorney.

TO MADAME DE DURAS

An address to a friend: he wants his book to show him as he naturally is.

FRENCH

2.37.33 A Madame de Dvras.

2.37.34 Madame, vous me trouuastes sur ce pas dernierement, que vous me vinstes voir. Par ce qu'il pourra estre, que ces inepties se rencontreront quelque fois entre vos mains: ie veux aussi qu'elles portent tesmoignage, que l'autheur se sent bien fort honoré de la faueur que vous leur ferez. Vous y recognoistrez ce mesme port, et ce mesme air, que vous auez veu en sa conuersation. Quand i'eusse peu prendre quelque autre façon que la mienne ordinaire, et quelque autre forme plus honorable et meilleure, ie ne l'eusse pas faict: car ie ne veux tirer de ces escrits, sinon qu'ils me representent à vostre memoire, au naturel.

Ces mesmes conditions et facultez, que vous auez pratiquées et recueillies, Madame, auec beaucoup plus d'honneur et de courtoisie qu'elles ne meritent, ie les veux loger, mais sans alteration et changement, en vn corps solide, qui puisse durer quelques années, ou quelques iours apres moy, où vous les retrouuerez, quand il vous plaira vous en refreschir la memoire, sans prendre autrement la peine de vous en souuenir: aussi ne le vallent elles pas. Ie desire que vous continuez en moy, la faueur de vostre amitié, par ces mesmes qualitez, par le moyen desquelles, elle a esté produite.

2.37.35 Ie ne cherche aucunement qu'on m'ayme et estime mieux, mort, que viuant. L'humeur de Tybere est ridicule, et commune pourtant, qui auoit plus de soin d'estendre sa renommée à l'aduenir, qu'il n'auoit de se rendre estimable et aggreable aux hommes de son temps. Si i'estoy de ceux, à qui le monde peut deuoir loüange, ie l'en quitteroy pour la moitié, et qu'il me la payast d'auance. Qu'elle se hastast et ammoncelast tout autour de moy, plus espesse qu'alongée, plus pleine que durable. Et qu'elle s'euanouit hardiment, quand et ma cognoissance, et quand ce doux son ne touchera plus mes oreilles. Ce seroit vne sotte humeur, d'aller à cet'heure, que ie suis prest d'abandonner le commerce des hommes, me produire à eux, par vne nouuelle recommandation.

Ie ne fay nulle recepte des biens que ie n'ay peu employer à l'vsage de ma vie. Quel que ie soye, ie le veux estre ailleurs qu'en papier. Mon art et mon industrie ont esté

ENGLISH

To Madame de Duras.[30]

Madame, you found me at this very point the last time you came to see me. Since these absurdities may perhaps fall into your hands some day, I want them also to bear witness that their author feels very greatly honored by the favor you will show them. You will recognize in them the same bearing and the same air you have seen in his conversation. Even if I could have adopted some manner other than my usual one, and some other, more honorable and better form, I would not have done so; for all I want from these writings is that they bring me back to your memory as I naturally am.

These same qualities and faculties that you have known and welcomed, Madame, with much more honor and courtesy than they deserve, I want to lodge—but without alteration or change—in a solid body that may last a few years, or a few days, after me, where you will find them again whenever you please to refresh your memory of them, without otherwise taking the trouble to remember them; nor indeed are they worth it. I wish you to continue the favor of your friendship toward me by means of the same qualities that brought it about.

I do not in the least seek to be loved and esteemed more dead than alive. The temperament of Tiberius is ridiculous, and yet common: he cared more about extending his fame into the future than about making himself esteemed and agreeable to the men of his own time. If I were one of those to whom the world may owe praise, I would let it off for half, provided it paid me in advance. Let the praise hurry and pile up all around me, thicker rather than longer, fuller rather than lasting. And let it boldly vanish along with my awareness of it, when that sweet sound no longer reaches my ears. It would be a silly whim, now that I am about to give up the company of men, to go and present myself to them with a new recommendation.

I set no store by goods I have not been able to put to use in my life. Whatever I am, I want to be it elsewhere than on paper. My skill and my industry

30 Marguerite de Gramont, wife of Jean de Durfort, lord of Duras, and a friend of Montaigne.

FRENCH

employez à me faire valoir moy-mesme. Mes estudes, à m'apprendre à faire, non pas à escrire. I'ay mis tous mes efforts à former ma vie. Voyla mon mestier et mon ouurage. Ie suis moins faiseur de liures, que de nulle autre besongne. I'ay desiré de la suffisance, pour le seruice de mes commoditez presentes et essentielles, non pour en faire magasin, et reserue à mes heritiers.

Qui a de la valeur, si le face cognoistre en ses mœurs, en ses propos ordinaires: à traicter l'amour, ou des querelles, au ieu, au lict, à la table, à la conduicte de ses affaires, à son œconomie. Ceux que ie voy faire des bons liures sous des meschantes chausses, eussent premierement faict leurs chausses, s'ils m'en eussent creu. Demandez à vn Spartiate, s'il ayme mieux estre bon rhetoricien que bon soldat: non pas moy, que bon cuisinier, si ie n'auoy qui m'en seruist. Mon Dieu, Madame, que ie haïrois vne telle recommandation, d'estre habile homme par escrit, et estre vn homme de neant, et vn sot, ailleurs.

I'ayme mieux encore estre vn sot, et icy, et là, que d'auoir si mal choisi, où employer ma valeur. Aussi il s'en faut tant que i'attende à me faire quelque nouuel honneur par ces sottises, que ie feray beaucoup, si ie n'y en pers point, de ce peu que i'en auois aquis. Car, outre ce que cette peinture morte, et muete, desrobera à mon estre naturel, elle ne se raporte pas à mon meilleur estat, mais beaucoup descheu de ma premiere vigueur et allegresse, tirant sur le flestry et le rance. Ie suis sur le fond du vaisseau, qui sent tantost le bas et la lye.

2.37.36 Au demeurant, Madame, ie n'eusse pas osé remuer si hardiment les mysteres de la medecine, attendu le credit que vous et tant d'autres luy donnez, si ie n'y eusse esté acheminé par ses autheurs mesmes. Ie croy qu'ils n'en n'ont que deux anciens Latins, Pline, et Celsus. Si vous les voyez quelque iour, vous trouuerez qu'ils parlent bien plus rudement à leur art, que ie ne fay: ie ne fay que la pincer, ils l'esgorgent. Pline se mocque entre autres choses, dequoy quand ils sont au bout de leur corde, ils ont inuenté cette belle deffaite, de r'enuoyer les malades qu'ils ont agitez et tormentez pour neant, de leurs drogues et regimes, les vns, au secours des vœuz, et miracles, les autres aux eaux chaudes.

ENGLISH

have been employed in making myself worth something; my studies, in teaching me to do, not to write. I have put all my efforts into shaping my life. That is my trade and my work. I am less a maker of books than of anything else. I have wanted ability for the service of my present and essential needs, not to lay it up in store as a reserve for my heirs.

Whoever has worth, let him show it in his conduct and his ordinary talk: in making love or in quarrels, at play, in bed, at table, in managing his affairs, in running his household. Those I see writing good books in shabby breeches would have seen to their breeches first, if they had listened to me. Ask a Spartan whether he would rather be a good rhetorician than a good soldier; ask me whether I would rather be one than a good cook, if I had no one to cook for me—I would not. My God, Madame, how I would hate such a reputation: to be an able man on paper, and a nobody and a fool everywhere else.

I would still rather be a fool both here and there than have chosen so badly where to employ my worth. And so far am I from expecting to win any new honor by these follies that I shall do well if I lose none of the little I had acquired. For besides what this dead and mute painting will steal from my natural being, it does not correspond to my best condition, but to one much fallen from my former vigor and liveliness, turning withered and stale. I am at the bottom of the cask, which will soon taste of the dregs and lees.

For the rest, Madame, I would not have dared stir up the mysteries of medicine so boldly, given the credit you and so many others give it, if I had not been led to it by its own authors. I believe they have only two among the ancient Latins, Pliny and Celsus. If you look at them some day, you will find that they speak much more harshly to their art than I do: I only pinch it; they cut its throat. Pliny mocks, among other things, the fine way out they have invented when they are at the end of their rope: sending the patients they have harassed and tormented for nothing with their drugs and regimens, some to the help of vows and miracles, others to the hot springs.[31]

31 Celsus (1st century AD) wrote On Medicine; Pliny the Elder attacks physicians in book 29 of his Natural History.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
	Ne vous courroussez pas, Madame, il ne parle pas de celles de deça, qui sont soubs la protection de vostre maison, et toutes Gramontoises. Ils ont vne tierce sorte de deffaite, pour nous chasser d'aupres d'eux, et se descharger des reproches, que nous leur pouuons faire du peu d'amendement, à noz maux, qu'ils ont eu si long temps en gouuernement, qu'il ne leur reste plus aucune inuention à nous amuser: c'est de nous enuoyer chercher la bonté de l'air de quelque autre contrée.	Do not be angry, Madame: he is not speaking of those on this side, which are under the protection of your house and all belong to the Gramonts. They have a third sort of way out, to drive us away from them and clear themselves of the reproaches we can make them for the little improvement in our ills, which they have had in their charge so long that they have no device left to keep us amused: it is to send us off to seek the good air of some other region.[32]
2.37.37	Madame en voyla assez: vous me donnez bien congé de reprendre le fil de mon propos, duquel ie m'estoy destourné, pour vous entretenir.	Madame, that is enough. You will surely give me leave to pick up the thread of my subject again, which I had left in order to talk with you.
2.37.38	Ce fut ce me semble, Pericles, lequel estant enquis, comme il se portoit: Vous le pouuez, dit-il, iuger par là: montrant des breuets, qu'il auoit attachez au col et au bras. Il vouloit inferer, qu'il estoit bien malade, puis qu'il en estoit venu iusques-là, d'auoir recours à choses si vaines, et de s'estre laissé equipper en cette façon.	It was Pericles, I think, who, when asked how he was, said: "You can judge by this," showing the amulets he had tied around his neck and arm. He meant that he must be very ill, since he had come to the point of turning to such empty things and letting himself be rigged out in that way.
	Ie ne dy pas que ie ne puisse estre emporté vn iour à cette opinion ridicule, de remettre ma vie, et ma santé, à la mercy et gouuernement des medecins: ie pourray tomber en cette resuerie: ie ne me puis respondre de ma fermeté future: mais lors aussi si quelqu'vn s'enquiert à moy, comment ie me porte, ie luy pourray dire, comme Pericles: Vous le pouuez iuger par là, montrant ma main chargée de six dragmes d'opiate: ce sera vn bien euident signe d'vne maladie violente: i'auray mon iugement merueilleusement desmanché. Si l'impatience et la frayeur gaignent cela sur moy, on en pourra conclure vne bien aspre fiéure en mon ame.	I do not say that I may not one day be carried away into this ridiculous notion of putting my life and health at the mercy and under the rule of doctors. I may fall into that delusion; I cannot answer for my future firmness. But then, if someone asks me how I am, I too can tell him, like Pericles: "You can judge by this," showing my hand loaded with six drams of medicinal paste. That will be a very clear sign of a violent illness: my judgment will be wonderfully unhinged. If impatience and fear win that much ground over me, people may conclude that there is a very sharp fever in my soul.
2.37.39	I'ay pris la peine de plaider cette cause, que i'entens assez mal, pour appuyer vn peu et conforter la propension naturelle, contre les drogues, et pratique de nostre medecine: qui s'est deriuée en moy, par mes ancestres: à fin que ce ne fust pas seulement vne inclination stupide et temeraire, et qu'elle eust vn peu plus de forme. Aussi que ceux qui me voyent si ferme contre les exhortemens et menaces, qu'on me fait, quand mes maladies me pressent, ne pensent pas que ce soit simple opiniastreté: qu'il y ait quelqu'vn si fascheux, qui iuge encore, que ce soit quelque esguillon de gloire. Ce seroit vn desir bien assené, de vouloir tirer honneur d'vne action, qui m'est commune, auec mon iardinier et mon muletier.	I have taken the trouble to plead this cause, which I understand rather poorly, in order to prop up and strengthen a little the natural bent against the drugs and practice of our medicine that has come down to me from my ancestors. I wanted it to be not merely a dull and rash inclination, but to have a little more shape. I also wanted those who see me so firm against the urgings and threats I receive when my illnesses press me hard not to think it simple obstinacy—or anyone to be so disagreeable as to judge that it is some spur of glory. That would be a fine target to aim at: to want to win honor from an action I share with my gardener and my muleteer.

32 Madame de Duras was born into the Gramont family, whose lands in the Pyrenean foothills included hot springs.

FRENCH

Certes ie n'ay point le cœur si enflé, ny si venteux, qu'vn plaisir solide, charnu, et moëlleux, comme la santé, ie l'allasse eschanger, pour vn plaisir imaginaire, spirituel, et aëré. La gloire, voire celle des quatre fils Aymon, est trop cher achetée à vn homme de mon humeur, si elle luy couste trois bons accez de colique. La santé de par Dieu! Ceux qui ayment nostre medecine, peuuent auoir aussi leurs considerations bonnes, grandes, et fortes: ie ne hay point les fantasies contraires aux miennes.

Il s'en faut tant que ie m'effarouche, de voir de la discordance de mes iugemens à ceux d'autruy, et que ie me rende incompatible à la société des hommes, pour estre d'autre sens et party que le mien: qu'au rebours, (comme c'est la plus generale façon que Nature aye suiuy, que la varieté, et plus aux esprits, qu'aux corps: d'autant qu'ils sont de substance plus souple et susceptible de formes) ie trouue bien plus rare, de voir conuenir nos humeurs, et nos desseins. Et ne fut iamais au monde, deux opinions pareilles, non plus que deux poils, ou deux grains. Leur plus vniuerselle qualité, c'est la diuersité.

ENGLISH

Truly, my heart is not so puffed up or so windy that I would go and exchange a solid, fleshy, marrowy pleasure like health for an imaginary, spiritual, airy one. Glory, even the glory of the four sons of Aymon, is too dearly bought by a man of my temperament if it costs him three good bouts of colic. Health, in God's name! Those who love our medicine may also have their own reasons, good, great and strong. I do not hate notions contrary to my own.[33]

I am so far from being startled to see my judgments at odds with other people's, or from making myself unfit for the company of men because they hold another opinion and party than mine, that on the contrary I find it much rarer to see our temperaments and our designs agree. For variety is the most general pattern Nature has followed, and more in minds than in bodies, since minds are of a more supple substance and more receptive to forms. There never were in the world two identical opinions, any more than two hairs or two grains. Their most universal quality is diversity.

33 The four sons of Aymon, led by Renaud de Montauban, are the heroes of a popular medieval French epic.

III.1 Of the Useful and the Honorable

De l'vtile et de l'honeste

Montaigne asks whether private morality yields to public expediency and refuses treachery, keeping his own dealings open and honest.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
3.1.1	PERSONNE n'est exempt de dire des fadaises: le malheur est, de les dire curieusement: *Næ iste magno conatu magnas nugas dixerit.*	No one is exempt from talking nonsense; the misfortune is to talk it with great care: *Indeed, this man will have taken great pains to say great trifles.*[1]
3.1.2	Cela ne me touche pas; les miennes m'eschappent aussi nonchallamment qu'elles le valent. D'où bien leur prend. Ie les quitterois soudain, à peu de coust qu'il y eust. Et ne les achette, ny ne les vends, que ce qu'elles poisent. Ie parle au papier, comme ie parle au premier que ie rencontre. Qu'il soit vray, voicy dequoy.	That does not concern me. My trifles slip out of me as carelessly as they deserve, which is lucky for them. I would drop them at once if they cost me anything at all. I neither buy nor sell them for more than they weigh. I speak to paper as I speak to the first person I meet. To prove this is true, here is an example.
3.1.3	A qui ne doit estre la perfidie detestable, puis que Tybere la refusa à si grand interest? On luy manda d'Allemaigne, que s'il le trouuoit bon, on le defferoit d'Arminius par poison. C'estoit le plus puissant ennemy que les Romains eussent, qui les auoit si vilainement traictez soubs Varus, et qui seul empeschoit l'accroissement de sa domination en ces contrees là. Il fit responce, que le peuple Romain auoit accoustumé de se venger de ses ennemis par voye ouuerte, les armes en main, non par fraude, et en cachette: il quitta l'vtile pour l'honeste. C'estoit, me direz-vous, vn affronteur. Ie le croy: ce n'est pas grand miracle, à gens de sa profession.	Who could fail to find treachery detestable, since Tiberius refused it when so much was at stake? Word was sent to him from Germany that, if he approved, Arminius could be got rid of for him by poison. Arminius was the most powerful enemy the Romans had; he had treated them so shamefully under Varus, and he alone was blocking the growth of Tiberius's dominion in those regions. Tiberius replied that the Roman people were accustomed to take vengeance on their enemies openly, weapons in hand, not by fraud and in secret: he gave up the useful for the honorable. He was a hypocrite, you will tell me. I believe it: that is no great miracle in people of his profession.[2]
	Mais la confession de la vertu, ne porte pas moins en la bouche de celuy qui la hayt: d'autant que la verité la luy arrache par force, et que s'il ne la veult receuoir en soy, aumoins il s'en couure, pour s'en parer.	But the confession of virtue carries no less weight in the mouth of one who hates it, since truth wrests it from him by force, and if he will not take virtue into himself, at least he cloaks himself in it as an ornament.

1 Terence, The Self-Tormentor.

2 Arminius was the German chief who destroyed Varus's legions in AD 9.

NECESSARY VICES

Society needs treachery and lying, but those tasks should be left to others more pliable.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
3.1.4	Nostre bastiment et public et priué, est plein d'imperfection: mais il n'y a rien d'inutile en Nature, non pas l'inutilité mesmes, rien ne s'est ingeré en cet vniuers, qui n'y tienne place opportune. Nostre estre est simenté de qualitez maladiues: l'ambition, la ialousie, l'enuie, la vengeance, la superstition, le desespoir, logent en nous, d'vne si naturelle possession, que l'image s'en recognoist aussi aux bestes.	Our structure, both public and private, is full of imperfection. But there is nothing useless in nature, not even uselessness itself. Nothing has worked its way into this universe that does not hold a fitting place in it. Our being is cemented with sickly qualities: ambition, jealousy, envy, vengeance, superstition, despair dwell in us with so natural a possession that their image can be recognized in the beasts as well.
	Voire et la cruauté, vice si desnaturé: car au milieu de la compassion, nous sentons dedans, ie ne sçay quelle aigre-douce poincte de volupté maligne, à voir souffrir autruy: et les enfans la sentent: *Suaue, mari magno, turbantibus æquora ventis, / E terra magnum alterius spectare laborem.* Desquelles qualitez, qui osteroit les semences en l'homme, destruiroit les fondamentales conditions de nostre vie. De mesme, en toute police: il y a des offices necessaires, non seulement abiects, mais encores vicieux. Les vices y trouuent leur rang, et s'employent à la cousture de nostre liaison: comme les venins à la conseruation de nostre santé.	Even cruelty, so unnatural a vice: for in the midst of compassion we feel within us some bittersweet prick of malicious pleasure at seeing others suffer, and children feel it too: *It is sweet, when the winds are churning the waters of the great sea, / To watch from land another's great struggle.* Whoever removed the seeds of these qualities from man would destroy the fundamental conditions of our life. Likewise, in every government there are necessary offices that are not only abject but even vicious. Vices find their place there and are put to work stitching our society together, as poisons are used to preserve our health.[3]
	S'ils deuiennent excusables, d'autant qu'ils nous font besoing, et que la necessité commune efface leur vraye qualité: il faut laisser iouer cette partie, aux citoyens plus vigoureux, et moins craintifs, qui sacrifient leur honneur et leur conscience, comme ces autres anciens sacrifierent leur vie, pour le salut de leur pays. Nous autres plus foibles prenons des rolles et plus aysez et moins hazardeux. Le bien public requiert qu'on trahisse, et qu'on mente, et qu'on massacre: resignons cette commission à gens plus obeissans et plus soupples.	If they become excusable because we need them and common necessity wipes out their true quality, we must leave this part to be played by the more vigorous and less fearful citizens, who sacrifice their honor and their conscience as those men of old sacrificed their lives for the safety of their country. We weaker ones take roles that are both easier and less risky. The public good requires that men betray, and lie, and massacre: let us hand over that commission to people more obedient and more pliable.
3.1.5	Certes i'ay eu souuent despit, de voir des iuges, attirer par fraude et fauces esperances de faueur ou pardon, le criminel à descouurir son fait, et y employer la piperie et l'impudence. Il seruiroit bien à la iustice, et à Platon mesme, qui fauorise cet vsage, de me fournir d'autres moyens plus selon moy. C'est vne iustice malicieuse: et ne l'estime pas moins blessee par soy-mesme, que par autruy.	Truly, I have often been vexed to see judges lure a criminal into revealing his deed by fraud and false hopes of favor or pardon, using trickery and impudence to do it. It would be of good service to justice, and to Plato himself, who favors this practice, to supply me with other means more to my liking. It is a malicious kind of justice, and I consider it no less wounded by itself than by others.

3 Lucretius, On the Nature of Things.

AN HONEST NEGOTIATOR

Montaigne describes his own open, uncommitted way of dealing between hostile princes.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
3.1.6	Ie respondy, n'y a pas long temps, qu'à peine trahirois-ie le Prince pour vn particulier, qui serois tres-marry de trahir aucun particulier, pour le Prince. Et ne hay pas seulement à piper, mais ie hay aussi qu'on se pipe en moy: ie n'y veux pas seulement fournir de matiere et d'occasion. En ce peu que i'ay eu à negocier entre nos Princes, en ces diuisions, et subdiuisions, qui nous deschirent auiourd'huy: i'ay curieusement euité, qu'ils se mesprinssent en moy, et s'enferrassent en mon masque. Les gens du mestier se tiennent les plus couuerts, et se presentent et contrefont les plus moyens, et les plus voysins qu'ils peuuent: moy, ie m'offre par mes opinions les plus viues, et par la forme plus mienne.	Not long ago I answered that I would hardly betray my prince for a private individual, I who would be very sorry to betray any private individual for my prince. And I do not only hate deceiving; I also hate people deceiving themselves about me. I do not want even to supply the material or the occasion for it. In the little I have had to negotiate between our princes, in these divisions and subdivisions that are tearing us apart today, I have carefully avoided letting them be mistaken about me and impale themselves on my mask. People in the trade keep themselves as covered as they can, and present and disguise themselves as being as moderate and as close to the other side's views as possible. I offer myself with my most lively opinions and in the form most my own.
	Tendre negotiateur et nouice: qui ayme mieux faillir à l'affaire, qu'à moy. Ç'a esté pourtant iusques à cette heure, auec tel heur, car certes Fortune y a la principalle part, que peu ont passé de main à autre, auec moins de soupçon, plus de faueur et de priuauté. I'ay vne façon ouuerte, aisee à s'insinuer, et à se donner credit, aux premieres accointances. La naifueté et la verité pure, en quelque siecle que ce soit, trouuent encore leur opportunité et leur mise. Et puis de ceux-là est la liberté peu suspecte, et peu odieuse, qui besongnent sans aucun leur interest.	A tender and novice negotiator, who would rather fail in the business than fail myself! Yet up to now it has gone with such luck (for Fortune certainly has the principal share in it) that few have passed from one side to the other with less suspicion, and with more favor and intimacy. I have an open manner, quick to make its way in and win trust at first acquaintance. Naturalness and pure truth, in whatever century, still find their opening and their currency. And then, the freedom of those who work with no interest of their own is little suspected and little resented.
	Et peuuent veritablement employer la responce de Hipperides aux Atheniens, se plaignans de l'aspreté de son parler: Messieurs, ne considerez pas si ie suis libre, mais si ie le suis, sans rien prendre, et sans amender par là mes affaires. Ma liberté m'a aussi aiséement deschargé du soupçon de faintise, par sa vigueur (n'espargnant rien à dire pour poisant et cuisant qu'il fust: ie n'eusse peu dire pis absent) et en ce, qu'elle a vne montre apparente de simplesse et de nonchalance. Ie ne pretens autre fruict en agissant, que d'agir, et n'y attache longues suittes et propositions. Chasque action fait particulierement son ieu: porte s'il peut.	They can truly use the reply of Hyperides to the Athenians, who complained of the harshness of his speech: "Gentlemen, do not consider whether I am outspoken, but whether I am so without taking anything and without bettering my own affairs by it." My outspokenness has also easily cleared me of any suspicion of pretense, by its vigor (I spared nothing I had to say, however weighty and stinging; I could not have said worse behind their backs) and by its evident look of simplicity and nonchalance. I seek no other fruit from acting than the acting itself, and I attach no long sequels and proposals to it. Each action plays its own game separately: let it hit home if it can.[4]

4 Hyperides was an Athenian orator and statesman of the 4th century BC.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
3.1.7	Au demeurant, ie ne suis pressé de passion, ou hayneuse, ou amoureuse, enuers les grands: ny n'ay ma volonté garrotee d'offence, ou d'obligation particuliere. Ie regarde nos Roys d'vne affection simplement legitime et ciuile, ny emeuë ny demeuë par interest priué, dequoy ie me sçay bon gré. La cause generale et iuste ne m'attache non plus, que moderément et sans fiéure. Ie ne suis pas subiet à ces hypoteques et engagemens penetrans et intimes. La cholere et la hayne sont au delà du deuoir de la iustice: et sont passions seruans seulement à ceux, qui ne tiennent pas assez à leur deuoir, par la raison simple: *Vtatur motu animi, qui vti ratione non potest*.	For the rest, I am not driven by any passion, either of hatred or of love, toward the great, nor is my will tied by any particular offense or obligation. I regard our kings with an affection that is simply lawful and civil, neither moved toward them nor moved away by private interest, and I am pleased with myself for it. Nor does the general and just cause bind me except moderately and without fever. I am not subject to those penetrating and intimate mortgages and pledges. Anger and hatred go beyond the duty of justice; they are passions useful only to those who are not held firmly enough to their duty by plain reason: *Let him use the impulse of passion who cannot use reason.*[5]
	Toutes intentions legitimes sont d'elles mesmes temperees: sinon, elles s'alterent en seditieuses et illegitimes. C'est ce qui me faict marcher par tout, la teste haute, le visage, et le cœur ouuert. A la verité, et ne crains point de l'aduouer, ie porterois facilement au besoing, vne chandelle à Sainct Michel, l'autre à son serpent, suiuant le dessein de la vieille. Ie suiuray le bon party iusques au feu, mais exclusiuement si ie puis. Que Montaigne s'engouffre quant et la ruyne publique, si besoing est: mais s'il n'est pas besoing, ie sçauray bon gré à la Fortune qu'il se sauue: et autant que mon deuoir me donne de corde, ie l'employe à sa conseruation.	All legitimate intentions are temperate in themselves; otherwise they turn seditious and illegitimate. That is what makes me walk everywhere with my head high, my face and my heart open. In truth—and I am not afraid to admit it—I would readily, if need be, carry one candle to Saint Michael and the other to his serpent, like the old woman in the story. I will follow the right side up to the fire, but not into it, if I can. Let Montaigne be swallowed up along with the public ruin, if need be; but if there is no need, I will be grateful to Fortune for saving him, and all the rope my duty allows me I use to preserve him.[6]
	Fut-ce pas Atticus, lequel se tenant au iuste party, et au party qui perdit, se sauua par sa moderation, en cet vniuersel naufrage du monde, parmy tant de mutations et diuersitez? Aux hommes, comme luy priuez, il est plus aisé. Et en telle sorte de besongne, ie trouue qu'on peut iustement n'estre pas ambitieux à s'ingerer et conuier soy-mesmes.	Was it not Atticus who, holding to the just side, and to the side that lost, saved himself by his moderation in that universal shipwreck of the world, amid so many changes and upheavals? For men who, like him, are private persons, it is easier. And in that kind of business I find that one may rightly lack the ambition to thrust oneself forward and invite oneself in.[7]
3.1.8	De se tenir chancelant et mestis, de tenir son affection immobile, et sans inclination aux troubles de son pays, et en vne diuision publique, ie ne le trouue ny beau, ny honneste: *Ea non media, sed nulla via est, velut euentum expectantium, quò fortunæ consilia sua applicent.* Cela peut estre permis enuers les affaires des voysins: et Gelon tyran de Syracuse, suspendoit ainsi son inclination en la guerre des Barbares contre les Grecs, tenant vne Ambassade à Delphes, auec des presents pour estre en	To stay wavering and half-and-half, to keep one's affection unmoved and leaning nowhere in the troubles of one's country and in a public division—this I find neither handsome nor honorable: *That is not a middle way, but no way at all, like those who wait on the outcome in order to fit their plans to fortune.* That may be permitted in the affairs of neighbors. Gelon, tyrant of Syracuse, thus held back his

5 Cicero, Tusculan Disputations.
6 The proverbial old woman lit one candle to Saint Michael and another to the devil, shown as a serpent or dragon at his feet, to be safe either way.
7 Atticus survived the Roman civil wars of the 1st century BC by staying on good terms with all sides.

FRENCH	ENGLISH
eschauguette, à veoir de quel costé tomberoit la fortune, et prendre l'occasion à poinct, pour le concilier aux victorieux.	leanings in the war of the barbarians against the Greeks: he kept an embassy at Delphi with presents, to be on the lookout to see which way fortune would fall, and to seize the right moment to win the victors over to him.[8]
Ce seroit vne espece de trahison, de le faire aux propres et domestiques affaires, ausquels necessairement il faut prendre party: mais de ne s'embesongner point, à homme qui n'a ny charge, ny commandement exprez qui le presse, ie le trouue plus excusable (et si ne practique pour moy cette excuse) qu'aux guerres estrangeres: desquelles pourtant, selon nos loix, ne s'empesche qui ne veut. Toutesfois ceux encore qui s'y engagent tout à faict, le peuuent, auec tel ordre et attrempance, que l'orage debura couler par dessus leur teste, sans offence. N'auions nous pas raison de l'esperer ainsi du feu Euesque d'Orleans, sieur de Moruilliers?	It would be a kind of treason to do this in one's own domestic affairs, in which one must necessarily take sides. But for a man who has no office or express command pressing him, staying out of it I find more excusable (though I do not use this excuse for myself) than in foreign wars—in which, however, by our laws, no one need take part who does not wish to. Yet even those who commit themselves wholly can do so with such order and moderation that the storm will pass over their heads without harm. Were we not right to hope so in the case of the late Bishop of Orléans, the sieur de Morvilliers?[9]
Et i'en cognois entre ceux qui y ouurent valeureusement à cette heure, de mœurs ou si equables, ou si douces, qu'ils seront, pour demeurer debout, quelque iniurieuse mutation et cheute que le ciel nous appreste. Ie tiens que c'est aux Roys proprement, de s'animer contre les Roys: et me moque de ces esprits, qui de gayeté de cœur se presentent à querelles si disproportionnees. Car on ne prend pas querelle particuliere auec vn Prince, pour marcher contre luy ouuertement et courageusement, pour son honneur, et selon son deuoir: s'il n'aime vn tel personnage, il fait mieux, il l'estime.	And I know some of those working valiantly at it now whose characters are so even or so gentle that they will remain standing, whatever damaging upheaval and fall heaven may be preparing for us. I hold that it is properly for kings to take up arms against kings, and I laugh at those minds who light-heartedly throw themselves into such disproportionate quarrels. For marching against a prince openly and courageously, for one's honor and according to one's duty, is not picking a private quarrel with him. If he does not love such a man, he does better: he esteems him.
Et notamment la cause des loix, et defence de l'ancien estat, a tousiours cela, que ceux mesmes qui pour leur dessein particulier le troublent, en excusent les defenseurs, s'ils ne les honorent.	In particular, the cause of the laws and the defense of the established order always have this about them: even those who disturb that order for their own designs excuse its defenders, if they do not honor them.
3.1.9 Mais il ne faut pas appeller deuoir, comme nous faisons tous les iours, vne aigreur et vne intestine aspreté, qui naist de l'interest et passion priuee, ny courage, vne conduitte traistresse et malitieuse. Ils nomment zele, leur propension vers la malignité, et violence. Ce n'est pas la cause qui les eschauffe, c'est leur interest. Ils attisent la guerre, non par ce qu'elle est iuste: mais par ce que c'est guerre.	But we must not call duty, as we do every day, a sourness and inner harshness born of private interest and passion; nor call courage a treacherous and malicious way of acting. They call their propensity to malice and violence zeal. It is not the cause that inflames them, it is their interest. They stir up war not because it is just but because it is war.
3.1.10 Rien n'empesche qu'on ne se puisse comporter commodément entre des hommes qui se sont ennemis, et	Nothing prevents one from conducting oneself agreeably and loyally among men who are en-

8 Livy. The war is Xerxes' Persian invasion of Greece in 480 BC.
9 Jean de Morvillier (1506–1577), bishop of Orléans and keeper of the seals, a moderate royal statesman during the Wars of Religion.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
	loyalement: conduisez vous y d'vne, sinon par tout esgale affection (car elle peut souffrir differentes mesures) au moins temperee, et qui ne vous engage tant à l'vn, qu'il puisse tout requerir de vous. Et vous contentez aussi d'vne moienne mesure de leur grace: et de couler en eau trouble, sans y vouloir pescher.	emies to one another. Conduct yourself there with an affection which, if not equal everywhere (for it can admit different measures), is at least temperate, and does not commit you so much to one side that he can demand everything of you. Content yourself, too, with a moderate measure of their favor, and with gliding through troubled waters without trying to fish in them.
3.1.11	L'autre maniere de s'offrir de toute sa force aux vns et aux autres, a encore moins de prudence que de conscience. Celuy enuers qui vous en trahissez vn, duquel vous estes pareillement bien venu: sçait-il pas, que de soy vous en faites autant à son tour? Il vous tient pour vn meschant homme: ce pendant il vous oit, et tire de vous, et fait ses affaires de vostre desloyauté. Car les hommes doubles sont vtiles, en ce qu'ils apportent: mais il se faut garder, qu'ils n'emportent que le moins qu'on peut.	The other way, offering oneself with all one's strength to both sides, shows even less prudence than conscience. The man for whom you betray another, by whom you are equally welcome—does he not know that you do as much to him in his turn? He holds you for a wicked man; meanwhile he listens to you, draws information from you, and does his business by your disloyalty. For double-dealers are useful in what they bring, but one must take care that they carry away as little as possible.
3.1.12	Ie ne dis rien à l'vn, que ie ne puisse dire à l'autre, à son heure, l'accent seulement vn peu changé: et ne rapporte que les choses ou indifferentes, ou cogneuës, ou qui seruent en commun. Il n'y a point d'vtilité, pour laquelle ie me permette de leur mentir. Ce qui a esté fié à mon silence, ie le cele religieusement: mais ie prens à celer le moins que ie puis. C'est vne importune garde, du secret des Princes, à qui n'en a que faire. Ie presente volontiers ce marché, qu'ils me fient peu: mais qu'ils se fient hardiment, de ce que ie leur apporte. I'en ay tousiours plus sceu que ie n'ay voulu.	I say nothing to one side that I could not say to the other at the proper time, with only the tone a little changed; and I report only things that are either indifferent, or already known, or of common use. There is no advantage for which I allow myself to lie to them. What has been entrusted to my silence I keep religiously hidden; but I take on as little to hide as I can. Guarding the secrets of princes is a tiresome duty for someone who has no use for them. I readily offer this bargain: let them confide little to me, but let them boldly trust what I bring them. I have always known more than I wanted to.
	Vn parler ouuert, ouure vn autre parler, et le tire hors, comme fait le vin et l'amour. Philippides respondit sagement à mon gré, au Roy Lysimachus, qui luy disoit, Que veux-tu que ie te communique de mes biens? Ce que tu voudras, pourueu que ce ne soit de tes secrets. Ie voy que chacun se mutine, si on luy cache le fonds des affaires ausquels on l'employe, et si on luy en a desrobé quelque arriere-sens. Pour moy, ie suis content qu'on ne m'en die non plus, qu'on veut que i'en mette en besoigne: et ne desire pas, que ma science outrepasse et contraigne ma parole. Si ie dois seruir d'instrument de tromperie, que ce soit aumoins sauue ma conscience.	Open speech opens up another's speech and draws it out, as wine and love do. Philippides, to my mind, answered wisely when King Lysimachus asked him, "What would you like me to share with you of my possessions?" "Whatever you like, so long as it is not your secrets." I see that everyone bristles if the heart of the business he is employed in is hidden from him, and if some ulterior meaning has been kept from him. For my part, I am content to be told no more than they want me to put to use, and I do not want my knowledge to outrun and constrain my speech. If I must serve as an instrument of deception, let it at least be with my conscience safe.[10]
	Ie ne veux estre tenu seruiteur, ny si affectionné, ny si loyal, qu'on me treuue bon à trahir personne. Qui est	I do not want to be thought a servant so devoted or so loyal that I would be found fit to betray anyone.

FRENCH

infidelle à soy-mesme, l'est excusablement à son maistre. Mais ce sont Princes, qui n'acceptent pas les hommes à moytié, et mesprisent les seruices limitez et conditionnez. Il n'y a remede: ie leur dis franchement mes bornes: car esclaue, ie ne le doibs estre que de la raison, encore n'en puis-ie bien venir à bout. Et eux aussi ont tort, d'exiger d'vn homme libre, telle subiection à leur seruice, et telle obligation, que de celuy, qu'ils ont faict et achetté: ou duquel la fortune tient particulierement et expressement à la leur.

Les loix m'ont osté de grand peine, elles m'ont choisi party, et donné vn maistre: toute autre superiorité et obligation doibt estre relatiue à celle-là, et retranchee. Si n'est-ce pas à dire, quand mon affection me porteroit autrement, qu'incontinent i'y portasse la main: la volonté et les desirs se font loy eux mesmes, les actions ont à la receuoir de l'ordonnance publique.

3.1.13 Tout ce mien proceder, est vn peu bien dissonant à nos formes: ce ne seroit pas pour produire grands effets, ny pour y durer: l'innocence mesme ne sçauroit à cette heure ny negotier sans dissimulation, ny marchander sans menterie. Aussi ne sont aucunement de mon gibier, les occupations publiques: ce que ma profession en requiert, ie l'y fournis, en la forme que ie puis la plus priuee. Enfant, on m'y plongea iusques aux oreilles, et il succedoit: si m'en desprins ie de belle heure.

I'ay souuent depuis éuité de m'en mesler, rarement accepte, iamais requis, tenant le dos tourné à l'ambition: mais sinon comme les tireurs d'auiron, qui s'auancent ainsin à reculons: tellement toutesfois, que de ne m'y estre poinct embarqué, i'en suis moins obligé à ma resolution, qu'à ma bonne fortune. Car il y a des voyes moins ennemyes de mon goust, et plus conformes à ma portee, par lesquelles si elle m'eust appellé autrefois au seruice public, et à mon auancement vers le credit du monde, ie sçay que i'eusse passé par dessus la raison de mes discours, pour la suyure.

Ceux qui disent communement contre ma profession, que ce que i'appelle franchise, simplesse, et naifueté, en mes mœurs, c'est art et finesse: et plustost prudence, que bonté: industrie, que nature: bon sens, que bonheur: me font plus d'honneur qu'ils ne m'en ostent.

ENGLISH

A man who is unfaithful to himself is excusably so to his master. But these are princes who do not accept men by halves and who despise limited and conditional services. There is no help for it: I tell them frankly where my limits lie. For a slave I should be only to reason, and even that I cannot quite manage. And they too are wrong to demand of a free man the same subjection to their service, and the same obligation, as of a man they have made and bought, or whose fortune is particularly and expressly bound up with theirs.

The laws have relieved me of great trouble: they have chosen my side for me and given me a master. Every other authority and obligation must be relative to that one and subordinate to it. That is not to say that if my affection carried me another way, I would at once lend a hand to it. Will and desires make a law for themselves; actions must receive theirs from public ordinance.

All this way of proceeding of mine is rather out of tune with our customs. It would not be the way to produce great effects, nor to last long: innocence itself could not today negotiate without dissimulation or bargain without lying. So public occupations are by no means my game. What my profession requires of them I supply, in the most private form I can. As a youth I was plunged into them up to my ears, and it was going well; yet I got myself out of them early.

Since then I have often avoided getting involved, rarely accepted, never asked, keeping my back turned to ambition—if not exactly like rowers, who move forward that way, backwards—yet in such a way that for not having embarked on it I owe less to my resolution than to my good luck. For there are paths less hostile to my taste and better suited to my capacity by which, had fortune once called me to public service and to advancement in the world's esteem, I know I would have overridden the reasoning of my reflections to follow it.

Those who commonly say, against what I profess, that what I call frankness, simplicity and naturalness in my ways is art and cunning—prudence rather than goodness, contrivance rather than

10 Philippides was an Athenian comic poet.

FRENCH

ENGLISH

nature, good sense rather than good luck—do me more honor than they take away.

3.1.14 Mais certes ils font ma finesse trop fine. Et qui m'aura suyui et espié de pres, ie luy donray gaigné, s'il ne confesse, qu'il n'y a point de regle en leur escole, qui sçeust rapporter ce naturel mouuement, et maintenir vne apparence de liberté, et de licence, si pareille, et inflexible, parmy des routes si tortues et diuerses: et que toute leur attention et engin, ne les y sçauroit conduire. La voye de la verité est vne et simple, celle du profit particulier, et de la commodité des affaires, qu'on a en charge, double, inegale, et fortuite. I'ay veu souuent en vsage, ces libertez contrefaites, et artificielles, mais le plus souuent, sans succez.

But they certainly make my cunning too cunning. Whoever has followed me and watched me closely, I will grant him the game if he does not admit that there is no rule in their school that could reproduce this natural movement, and keep up an appearance of freedom and license so consistent and so unbending along such twisting and varied paths; and that all their attention and ingenuity could not bring them to it. The way of truth is one and simple; the way of private profit and of convenience in the affairs one has in hand is double, uneven and haphazard. I have often seen these counterfeit and artificial freedoms in use, but most often without success.

Elles sentent volontiers leur asne d'Esope: lequel par emulation du chien, vint à se ietter tout gayement, à deux pieds, sur les espaules de son maistre: mais autant que le chien receuoit de caresses, de pareille feste, le pauure asne, en reçeut deux fois autant de bastonnades. *Id maximè quemque decet, quod est cuiusque suum maximè.* Ie ne veux pas priuer la tromperie de son rang, ce seroit mal entendre le monde: ie sçay qu'elle a seruy souuent profitablement, et qu'elle maintient et nourrit la plus part des vacations des hommes. Il y a des vices legitimes, comme plusieurs actions, ou bonnes, ou excusables, illegitimes.

They tend to smack of Aesop's ass, which, in emulation of the dog, gaily threw itself with both forefeet onto its master's shoulders; but for the same welcome for which the dog received caresses, the poor ass received twice as many blows of the stick. *What best becomes each man is what is most his own.* I do not want to deprive deception of its rank; that would be to misunderstand the world. I know that it has often served profitably, and that it maintains and feeds most of men's occupations. There are lawful vices, just as there are many actions, either good or excusable, that are unlawful.

3.1.15 La iustice en soy, naturelle et vniuerselle, est autrement reglee, et plus noblement, que n'est cette autre iustice speciale, nationale, contrainte au besoing de nos polices: *Veri iuris germanæque iustitiæ solidam et expressam effigiem nullam tenemus: vmbra et imaginibus vtimur.* Si que le sage Dandamys, oyant reciter les vies de Socrates, Pythagoras, Diogenes, les iugea grands personnages en toute autre chose, mais trop asseruis à la reuerence des loix. Pour lesquelles auctoriser, et seconder, la vraye vertu a beaucoup à se desmettre de sa vigueur originelle: et non seulement par leur permission, plusieurs actions vitieuses ont lieu, mais encores à leur suasion.

Justice in itself, natural and universal, is regulated otherwise, and more nobly, than that other special, national justice, which is bound to the needs of our governments: *We possess no solid and exact likeness of true law and genuine justice; we make use of shadows and images.* So that the sage Dandamis, hearing the lives of Socrates, Pythagoras and Diogenes recounted, judged them great men in every other respect, but too enslaved to reverence for the laws. To give the laws authority and support, true virtue has to give up much of its original vigor; and many vicious actions take place not only with their permission but even at their urging.[11]

Ex Senatusconsultis plebisquescitis scelera exercentur. Ie suy le langage commun, qui fait difference entre les choses vtiles, et les honnestes: si que d'aucunes actions naturelles, non seulement vtiles, mais necessaires, il les nomme deshonnestes et sales.

Crimes are committed by decrees of the Senate and of the people. I follow common language, which distinguishes between useful things and honorable ones, so that some natural actions, not only useful but necessary, it calls dishonorable and dirty.[12]

11 Dandamis was an Indian sage said to have met Alexander the Great.

TRAITORS BETRAYED

Rulers who profit from treachery often punish the traitors they have used.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
3.1.16	Mais continuons nostre exemple de la trahison. Deux pretendans au royaume de Thrace, estoient tombez en debat de leurs droicts, l'Empereur les empescha de venir aux armes: mais l'vn d'eux, sous couleur de conduire vn accord amiable, par leur entreueuë, ayant assigné son compagnon, pour le festoyer en sa maison, le fit emprisonner et tuer. La iustice requeroit, que les Romains eussent raison de ce forfaict: la difficulté en empeschoit les voyes ordinaires. Ce qu'ils ne peurent legitimement, sans guerre, et sans hazard, ils entreprindrent de le faire par trahison: ce qu'ils ne peurent honnestement, ils le firent vtilement. A quoy se trouua propre vn Pomponius Flaccus.	But let us continue with our example of treachery. Two claimants to the kingdom of Thrace had fallen into dispute over their rights. The emperor prevented them from taking up arms; but one of them, under color of arranging a friendly settlement at a meeting, invited his rival to a feast at his house and had him imprisoned and killed. Justice required that the Romans obtain satisfaction for this crime, but the difficulty blocked the ordinary ways. What they could not do lawfully, without war and without risk, they undertook to do by treachery: what they could not do honorably, they did usefully. A certain Pomponius Flaccus proved fit for the job.[13]
	Cettuy-cy, soubs feintes parolles, et asseurances, ayant attiré cest homme dans ses rets: au lieu de l'honneur et faueur qu'il luy promettoit, l'enuoya pieds et poings liez à Rome. Vn traistre y trahit l'autre, contre l'vsage commun. Car ils sont pleins de desfiance, et est mal-aisé de les surprendre par leur art: tesmoing la poisante experience, que nous venons d'en sentir.	By false words and assurances he drew the man into his nets, and instead of the honor and favor he had promised him, sent him to Rome bound hand and foot. Here one traitor betrayed another, contrary to the usual practice; for traitors are full of distrust, and it is hard to catch them by their own art—witness the painful experience we have just had of it.
3.1.17	Sera Pomponius Flaccus qui voudra, et en est assez qui le voudront. Quant à moy, et ma parolle et ma foy, sont, comme le demeurant, pieces de ce commun corps: leur meilleur effect, c'est le seruice public: ie tiens cela pour presupposé. Mais comme si on me commandoit, que ie prinse la charge du Palais, et des plaids, ie respondroy, Ie n'y entens rien: ou la charge de conducteur de pionniers, ie diroy, Ie suis appellé à vn rolle plus digne: de mesmes, qui me voudroit employer, à mentir, à trahir, et à me pariurer, pour quelque seruice notable, non que d'assassiner ou empoisonner: ie diroy, Si i'ay volé ou desrobé quelqu'vn, enuoyez moy plustost en gallere.	Let whoever wants be Pomponius Flaccus, and there are plenty who will want to. As for me, both my word and my faith are, like the rest of me, parts of this common body; their best use is public service; I take that for granted. But if I were ordered to take charge of the law courts and lawsuits, I would reply, "I know nothing about it"; or the post of leader of sappers, I would say, "I am called to a worthier role." In the same way, if someone wanted to employ me to lie, to betray and to perjure myself for some notable service—not to mention assassinating or poisoning—I would say, "If I have robbed or stolen from anyone, send me to the galleys instead."
	Car il est loysible à vn homme d'honneur, de parler ainsi que les Lacedemoniens, ayants esté deffaicts par Antipater, sur le poinct de leurs accords: Vous nous pouuez commander des charges poisantes et dommageables, autant qu'il vous plaira: mais de honteuses, et deshonnestes, vous perdrez vostre temps	For a man of honor may speak as the Spartans did when, defeated by Antipater, they were about to come to terms: "You may impose on us burdens as heavy and damaging as you please; but as for shameful and dishonorable ones, you will be wast-

12 Seneca, Letters.

13 The story is told by Tacitus: Rhescuporis of Thrace murdered his nephew Cotys in AD 19, under Tiberius.

FRENCH

de nous en commander. Chacun doit auoir iuré à soy mesme, ce que les Roys d'Ægypte faisoient solennellement iurer à leurs iuges, qu'ils ne se desuoyeroient de leur conscience, pour quelque commandement qu'eux mesmes leur en fissent. A telles commissions il y a note euidente d'ignominie, et de condemnation. Et qui vous la donne, vous accuse, et vous la donne, si vous l'entendez bien, en charge et en peine.

Autant que les affaires publiques s'amendent de vostre exploict, autant s'en empirent les vostres: vous y faictes d'autant pis, que mieux vous y faictes. Et ne sera pas nouueau, ny à l'auanture sans quelque air de iustice, que celuy mesmes vous ruïne, qui vous aura mis en besongne.

3.1.18 Si la trahison doit estre en quelque cas excusable: lors seulement elle l'est, qu'elle s'employe à chastier et trahir la trahison. Il se trouue assez de perfidies, non seulement refusees, mais punies, par ceux en faueur desquels elles auoient esté entreprises. Qui ne sçait la sentence de Fabritius, à l'encontre du medecin de Pyrrhus?

3.1.19 Mais cecy encore se trouue: que tel l'a commandee, qui par apres l'a vengee rigoureusement, sur celuy qu'il y auoit employé: refusant vn credit et pouuoir si effrené, et desaduouant vn seruage et vne obeïssance si abandonnee, et si lasche. Iaropelc Duc de Russie, practiqua vn Gentil-homme de Hongrie, pour trahir le Roy de Poulongne Boleslaus, en le faisant mourir, ou donnant aux Russiens moyen de luy faire quelque notable dommage. Cettuy-cy s'y porta en galand homme: s'addonna plus que deuant au seruice de ce Roy, obtint d'estre de son conseil, et de ses plus feaux.

Auec ces aduantages, et choisissant à point l'opportunité de l'absence de son maistre, il trahit aux Russiens Visilicie, grande et riche cité: qui fut entierement saccagee, et arse par eux, auec occision totale, non seulement des habitans d'icelle, de tout sexe et aage, mais de grand nombre de noblesse de là autour, qu'il y auoit assemblé à ces fins.

Iaropelc assouuy de sa vengeance, et de son courroux, qui pourtant n'estoit pas sans tiltre, (car Boleslaus l'auoit fort

ENGLISH

ing your time ordering them." Each of us should have sworn to himself what the kings of Egypt made their judges solemnly swear: that they would not stray from their conscience for any command the kings themselves might give them. In such commissions there is an evident mark of ignominy and condemnation. Whoever gives you one is accusing you, and, if you understand it rightly, gives it to you as a burden and a penalty.[14]

As much as public affairs improve through your exploit, so much do your own grow worse: the better you do the job, the worse you do for yourself. And it will be nothing new, nor perhaps without some air of justice, if the very man who put you to work ruins you.

If treachery can be excusable in any case, it is so only when it is used to punish and betray treachery. There are plenty of perfidies that were not only refused but punished by those in whose favor they had been undertaken. Who does not know the sentence Fabricius passed on Pyrrhus's physician?[15]

But this is also found: a man has ordered treachery and afterward avenged it harshly on the one he had used for it, rejecting so unbridled an authority and power, and disowning so abject and abandoned a servitude and obedience. Yaropolk, Duke of Russia, suborned a Hungarian gentleman to betray King Bolesław of Poland, either by having him killed or by giving the Russians the means to do him some notable damage. This fellow went about it like a smart man: he devoted himself more than before to the king's service, and won a place on his council and among his most trusted men.[16]

With these advantages, and choosing just the right moment when his master was away, he betrayed to the Russians Wiślica, a great and rich city, which they sacked and burned completely, slaughtering not only all its inhabitants, of every sex and age, but a great number of the nobility from the surrounding area, whom he had gathered there for that purpose.

Yaropolk had sated his vengeance and his anger, which was not without grounds (for Bolesław had

14 Antipater defeated the Spartans in 331 BC.
15 Fabricius sent back to King Pyrrhus the physician who had offered to poison him (278 BC).

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
	offencé, et en pareille conduitte) et saoul du fruict de cette trahison, venant à en considerer la laideur nuë et seule, et la regarder d'vne veuë saine, et non plus troublee par sa passion, la print à vn tel remors, et contre-cœur, qu'il en fit creuer les yeux, et couper la langue, et les parties honteuses, à son executeur.	greatly offended him, and by similar conduct), and was glutted with the fruit of this treachery. But when he came to consider its ugliness, bare and by itself, and to look at it with a sound eye no longer clouded by passion, he was seized with such remorse and revulsion that he had his agent's eyes put out and his tongue and private parts cut off.
3.1.20	Antigonus persuada les soldats Argyraspides, de luy trahir Eumenes, leur capitaine general, son aduersaire. Mais l'eut-il faict tuer, apres qu'ils le luy eurent liuré, il desira luy mesme estre commissaire de la iustice diuine, pour le chastiment d'vn forfaict si detestable: et les consigna entre les mains du gouuerneur de la prouince, luy donnant tres-expres commandement, de les perdre, et mettre à male fin, en quelque maniere que ce fust. Tellement que de ce grand nombre qu'ils estoient, aucun ne vit onques puis, l'air de Macedoine. Mieux il en auoit esté seruy, d'autant le iugea il auoir esté plus meschamment et punissablement.	Antigonus persuaded the soldiers of the Silver Shields to betray to him Eumenes, their commander-in-chief and his adversary. But no sooner had he had Eumenes killed, after they handed him over, than he wished to act himself as the agent of divine justice in punishing so detestable a crime. He consigned them to the governor of the province, with the most express order to destroy them and bring them to a bad end by any means whatsoever. So that of all their great number, not one ever saw the air of Macedonia again. The better he had been served by them, the more wicked and punishable he judged the service to have been.[17]
3.1.21	L'esclaue qui trahit la cachette de P. Sulpicius son maistre, fut mis en liberté, suiuant la promesse de la proscription de Sylla: mais suiuant la promesse de la raison publique, tout libre, il fut precipité du roc Tarpeien.	The slave who betrayed the hiding place of his master, P. Sulpicius, was set free, in keeping with the promise of Sulla's proscription; but in keeping with the promise of public reason, once free, he was thrown from the Tarpeian Rock.[18]
3.1.22	Et nostre Roy Clouis, au lieu des armes d'or qu'il leur auoit promis, fit pendre les trois seruiteurs de Cannacre, apres qu'ils luy eurent trahy leur maistre, à quoy il les auoit pratiquez. Ils les font pendre auec la bourse de leur payement au col. Ayant satisfaict à leur seconde foy, et speciale, ils satisfont à la generale et premiere.	And our King Clovis, instead of the golden arms he had promised them, had the three servants of Cannacre hanged after they had betrayed their master to him, as he had suborned them to do. They have such men hanged with the purse of their payment around their necks. Having honored their second and special pledge, they honor the general and first one.[19]
3.1.23	Mahomed second, se voulant deffaire de son frere, pour la ialousie de la domination, suiuant le stile de leur race, y employa l'vn de ses officiers: qui le suffoqua, l'engorgeant de quantité d'eau, prinse trop à coup. Cela faict, il liura, pour l'expiation de ce meurtre, le meurtrier entre les mains de la mere du trespassé (car ils n'estoient freres que de pere): elle, en sa presence, ouurit à ce meurtrier l'estomach: et tout chaudement de ses mains,	Mehmed II, wanting to get rid of his brother out of jealousy for power, as is the custom of their dynasty, used one of his officers for the purpose, who suffocated the boy by making him swallow a great quantity of water too fast. That done, to expiate the murder, he delivered the murderer into the hands of the dead boy's mother (for they were brothers only on the father's side). In Mehmed's

16 Yaropolk, a 12th-century Rus' prince, and Bolesław III of Poland; the city in the next passage is Wiślica.
17 The Silver Shields were Alexander's veteran infantry; they handed Eumenes over to Antigonus in 316 BC.
18 Publius Sulpicius Rufus, tribune, was killed in 88 BC; the Tarpeian Rock was the cliff in Rome from which traitors were thrown.
19 Cannacre is Ragnachar, a Frankish king of Cambrai whom Clovis had killed around AD 509, as told by Gregory of Tours.

FRENCH

fouillant et arrachant son cœur, le ietta manger aux chiens.

Et à ceux mesmes qui ne valent rien, il est si doux, ayant tiré l'vsage d'vne action vicieuse, y pouuoir hormais coudre en toute seureté, quelque traict de bonté, et de iustice: comme par compensation, et correction conscientieuse. Ioint qu'ils regardent les ministres de tels horribles malefices, comme gents, qui les leur reprochent: et cherchent par leur mort d'estouffer la cognoissance et tesmoignage de telles menees.

3.1.24 Or si par fortune on vous en recompence, pour ne frustrer la necessité publique, de cet extreme et desesperé remede: celuy qui le fait, ne laisse pas de vous tenir, s'il ne l'est luy-mesme, pour vn homme maudit et execrable: et vous tient plus traistre, que ne faict celuy, contre qui vous l'estes: car il touche la malignité de vostre courage, par voz mains, sans desadueu, sans obiect. Mais il vous employe, tout ainsi qu'on faict les hommes perdus, aux executions de la haute iustice: charge autant vtile, comme elle est peu honneste. Outre la vilité de telles commissions, il y a de la prostitution de conscience.

La fille à Seïanus ne pouuant estre punie à mort, en certaine forme de iugement à Rome, d'autant qu'elle estoit vierge, fut, pour donner passage aux loix, forcee par le bourreau, auant qu'il l'estranglast. Non sa main seulement, mais son ame, est esclaue à la commodité publique.

3.1.25 Quand le premier Amurath, pour aigrir la punition contre ses subiects, qui auoient donné support à la parricide rebellion de son fils, ordonna, que leurs plus proches parents presteroient la main à cette execution: ie trouue tres-honeste à aucuns d'iceux, d'auoir choisi plustost, d'estre iniustement tenus coulpables du parricide d'vn autre, que de seruir la iustice de leur propre parricide. Et où en quelques bicoques forcees de mon temps, i'ay veu des coquins, pour garantir leur vie, accepter de pendre leurs amis et consorts, ie les ay tenus de pire condition que les pendus.

On dit que Vuitolde Prince de Lituanie, introduisit en cette nation, que le criminel condamné à mort, eust luy

ENGLISH

presence she cut open the murderer's belly and, while it was still warm, groped with her hands, tore out his heart and threw it to the dogs to eat.

Even to worthless men it is so sweet, once they have drawn the profit from a vicious action, to be able henceforth to stitch onto it, in complete safety, some touch of goodness and justice, as a kind of compensation and correction of conscience. Besides, they regard the agents of such horrible crimes as people who reproach them with those crimes, and they seek by their death to stifle the knowledge and evidence of such dealings.

Now if by chance you are rewarded for it, so as not to cheat the public need of this extreme and desperate remedy, the man who rewards you still holds you, unless he is one himself, for an accursed and execrable man. He holds you more a traitor than does the man you betray; for he touches the wickedness of your heart with his own hands, with nothing to deny it, nothing to stand in the way. But he employs you just as desperate men are employed to carry out sentences of death: a post as useful as it is dishonorable. Besides the baseness of such commissions, there is a prostitution of conscience in them.

The daughter of Sejanus could not be put to death under a certain form of judgment in Rome, because she was a virgin; so, to let the laws take their course, she was raped by the executioner before he strangled her. Not only his hand but his soul is a slave to public convenience.[20]

When Murad I, to sharpen the punishment of his subjects who had supported his son's parricidal rebellion, ordered that their nearest relatives should lend a hand in the execution, I find it most honorable in some of them to have chosen to be unjustly held guilty of another's parricide rather than serve justice by a parricide of their own. And where, in some small forts taken by storm in my time, I have seen scoundrels agree to hang their friends and comrades to save their own lives, I have held them to be in a worse condition than the men they hanged.[21]

They say that Vytautas, Prince of Lithuania, introduced into that nation the rule that a criminal con-

20 Sejanus, Tiberius's chief minister, was executed in AD 31; Tacitus records his young daughter's fate.

FRENCH	ENGLISH
mesme de sa main, à se deffaire: trouuant estrange, qu'vn tiers innocent de la faute, fust employé et chargé d'vn homicide.	demned to death should do away with himself with his own hand, finding it strange that a third party, innocent of the offense, should be employed and burdened with a homicide.[22]

WHEN NECESSITY OVERRIDES FAITH

A prince forced to break his word acts from misfortune, not virtue, and should grieve over it.

FRENCH	ENGLISH
3.1.26 Le Prince, quand vne vrgente circonstance, et quelque impetueux et inopiné accident, du besoing de son estat, luy fait gauchir sa parolle et sa foy, ou autrement le iette hors de son deuoir ordinaire, doibt attribuer cette necessité, à vn coup de la verge diuine. Vice n'est-ce pas, car il a quitté sa raison, à vne plus vniuerselle et puissante raison: mais certes c'est malheur. De maniere qu'à quelqu'vn qui me demandoit: Quel remede? nul remede, fis-ie, s'il fut veritablement gehenné entre ces deux extremes (*sed videat ne quæratur latebra periurio*) il le falloit faire: mais s'il le fit, sans regret, s'il ne luy greua de le faire, c'est signe que sa conscience est en mauuais termes.	When an urgent circumstance, some violent and unforeseen event arising from the needs of his state, makes a prince bend his word and his faith, or otherwise throws him out of his ordinary duty, he must attribute that necessity to a stroke of the divine rod. It is not vice, for he has given up his own reason for a more universal and powerful reason; but it is certainly misfortune. So when someone asked me, "What remedy?" "No remedy," I said. "If he was truly racked between these two extremes (*but let him take care not to seek a pretext for perjury*), he had to do it. But if he did it without regret, if it did not grieve him to do it, that is a sign that his conscience is in a bad way."
Quand il s'en trouueroit quelqu'vn de si tendre conscience, à qui nulle guarison ne semblast digne d'vn si poisant remede, ie ne l'en estimeroy pas moins. Il ne se sçauroit perdre plus excusablement et decemment. Nous ne pouuons pas tout. Ainsi comme ainsi nous faut-il souuent, comme à la derniere anchre, remettre la protection de nostre vaisseau à la pure conduitte du ciel. A quelle plus iuste necessité se reserue il? Que luy est-il moins possible à faire que ce qu'il ne peut faire, qu'aux despens de sa foy et de son honneur? choses, qui à l'auenture luy doiuent estre plus cheres que son propre salut, et que le salut de son peuple.	If there were someone of so tender a conscience that no cure seemed to him worth so heavy a remedy, I would not esteem him the less for it. He could not be ruined more excusably and decently. We cannot do everything. Be that as it may, we must often, as with our last anchor, commit the protection of our ship to the guidance of heaven alone. For what more just necessity is he saving himself? What is less possible for him to do than what he can do only at the expense of his faith and his honor—things that perhaps ought to be dearer to him than his own safety, and than the safety of his people?
Quand les bras croisez il appellera Dieu simplement à son aide, n'aura-il pas à esperer, que la diuine bonté n'est pour refuser la faueur de sa main extraordinaire à vne main pure et iuste? Ce sont dangereux exemples, rares, et maladifues exceptions, à nos regles naturelles: il y faut ceder, mais auec grande moderation et circonspection. Aucune vtilité priuee, n'est digne pour laquelle nous facions cet effort à nostre conscience: la publique bien, lors qu'elle est et tres-apparente, et tres-importante.	When, with folded arms, he simply calls on God for help, may he not hope that divine goodness will not refuse the favor of its extraordinary hand to a hand that is pure and just? These are dangerous examples, rare and sickly exceptions to our natural rules. We must yield to them, but with great moderation and circumspection. No private advantage is worth our doing this violence to our conscience; the public advantage is, when it is both very evident and very important.

21 Murad I, Ottoman sultan (reigned 1362–1389), put down a revolt by his son Savcı.
22 Vytautas the Great, Grand Duke of Lithuania (died 1430).

FRENCH

ENGLISH

3.1.27 Timoleon se garantit à propos, de l'estrangeté de son exploit, par les larmes qu'il rendit, se souuenant que c'estoit d'vne main fraternelle qu'il auoit tué le tyran. Et cela pinça iustement sa conscience, qu'il eust esté necessité d'achetter l'vtilité publique, à tel prix de l'honnesteté de ses mœurs. Le Senat mesme deliuré de seruitude par son moyen, n'osa rondement decider d'vn si haut faict, et deschiré en deux si poisants et contraires visages.

Timoleon fittingly cleared himself of the strangeness of his deed by the tears he shed, remembering that it was with a brother's hand that he had killed the tyrant. And it rightly pricked his conscience that he had been forced to buy the public good at such a cost to the integrity of his conduct. Even the Senate, freed from servitude by his means, dared not decide outright on so lofty a deed, torn between two such weighty and contrary aspects.

Mais les Syracusains ayans tout à point, à l'heure mesme, enuoyé requerir les Corinthiens de leur protection, et d'vn chef digne de restablir leur ville en sa premiere dignité, et nettoyer la Sicile de plusieurs tyranneaux, qui l'oppressoient: il y deputa Timoleon, auec cette nouuelle deffaitte et declaration: Que selon qu'il se porteroit bien ou mal en sa charge, leur arrest prendroit party, à la faueur du liberateur de son païs, ou à la desfaueur du meurtrier de son frere. Cette fantastique conclusion, a quelque excuse, sur le danger de l'exemple et importance d'vn faict si diuers. Et feirent bien, d'en descharger leur iugement, ou de l'appuier ailleurs, et en des considerations tierces.

But the Syracusans, at that very moment and most opportunely, had sent to ask the Corinthians for their protection and for a leader fit to restore their city to its former dignity and to rid Sicily of several petty tyrants who were oppressing it. The Senate sent Timoleon there, with this novel evasion and declaration: that according to whether he conducted himself well or badly in his charge, their verdict would come down in favor of the liberator of his country or against the murderer of his brother. This fanciful conclusion has some excuse, given the danger of the example and the weight of so ambiguous a deed. And they did well to relieve their judgment of it, or to rest it elsewhere, on outside considerations.

Or les deportements de Timoleon en ce voyage rendirent bien tost sa cause plus claire, tant il s'y porta dignement et vertueusement, en toutes façons. Et le bon heur qui l'accompagna aux aspretez qu'il eut à vaincre en cette noble besongne, sembla luy estre enuoyé par les Dieux conspirants et fauorables à sa iustification.

Now Timoleon's conduct on this expedition soon made his cause clearer, so worthily and virtuously did he bear himself in every way. And the good fortune that attended him through the hardships he had to overcome in this noble task seemed to have been sent to him by the gods, conspiring and favorable to his justification.

3.1.28 La fin de cettuy cy est excusable, si aucune le pouuoit estre. Mais le profit de l'augmentation du reuenu publique, qui seruit de pretexte au Senat Romain à cette orde conclusion, que ie m'en vay reciter, n'est pas assez fort pour mettre à garand vne telle iniustice. Certaines citez s'estoient rachetees à prix d'argent, et remises en liberté, auec l'ordonnance et permission du Senat, des mains de L. Sylla. La chose estant tombee en nouueau iugement, le Senat les condamna à estre taillables comme auparauant: et que l'argent qu'elles auoyent employé pour se rachetter, demeureroit perdu pour elles. Les guerres ciuiles produisent souuent ces vilains exemples: Que nous punissons les priuez, de ce qu'ils nous ont creu, quand nous estions autres.

This man's aim is excusable, if any could be. But the profit of increasing the public revenue, which served the Roman Senate as a pretext for the foul decision I am about to relate, is not strong enough to warrant such an injustice. Certain cities had bought back their freedom for money from L. Sulla, by order and with the permission of the Senate. When the matter came up for judgment again, the Senate condemned them to pay tribute as before, and ruled that the money they had spent to buy themselves back would remain lost to them. Civil wars often produce these vile examples: we punish private persons for having believed us when we were different.

Et vn mesme magistrat fait porter la peine de son changement, à qui n'en peut mais. Le maistre foitte son

And the same magistrate makes those who can do nothing about it bear the penalty for his change.

FRENCH

ENGLISH

disciple de docilité, et la guide son aueugle. Horrible image de iustice.

The master whips his pupil for being docile, and the guide his blind man for following. A horrible image of justice.

3.1.29 Il y a des regles en la philosophie et faulses et molles. L'exemple qu'on nous propose, pour faire preualoir l'vtilité priuee, à la foy donnee, ne reçoit pas assez de poids par la circonstance qu'ils y meslent. Des voleurs vous ont prins, ils vous ont remis en liberté, ayans retiré de vous serment du paiement de certaine somme. On a tort de dire, qu'vn homme de bien, sera quitte de sa foy, sans payer, estant hors de leurs mains. Il n'en est rien. Ce que la crainte m'a fait vne fois vouloir, ie suis tenu de le vouloir encore sans crainte. Et quand elle n'aura forcé que ma langue, sans la volonté: encore suis ie tenu de faire la maille bonne de ma parole.

There are rules in philosophy that are both false and soft. The example put to us to make private advantage prevail over a pledged word does not gain enough weight from the circumstance they mix into it. Robbers have captured you; they have set you free after extracting an oath from you to pay a certain sum. It is wrong to say that a good man will be released from his word without paying, once he is out of their hands. Not at all. What fear once made me will, I am bound to will still without fear. And even if fear forced only my tongue, without my will, I am still bound to make good my word to the last penny.

Pour moy, quand par fois ell'a inconsiderément deuancé ma pensee, i'ay faict conscience de la desaduoüer pourtant. Autrement de degré en degré, nous viendrons à abolir tout le droit qu'vn tiers prend de nos promesses. *Quasi verò forti viro vis possit adhiberi.* En cecy seulement a loy, l'interest priué, de nous excuser de faillir à nostre promesse, si nous auons promis chose meschante, et inique de soy. Car le droit de la vertu doibt preualoir le droit de nostre obligation.

For my part, when my tongue has sometimes thoughtlessly run ahead of my thought, I have still made it a matter of conscience not to disown it. Otherwise, step by step, we will come to abolish all the right a third party gains from our promises. *As if indeed force could be applied to a brave man.* Private interest has the right to excuse us for failing in our promise in this case only: if we have promised something wicked and unjust in itself. For the right of virtue must prevail over the right of our obligation.

EPAMINONDAS AGAIN

Epaminondas shows that even in war some things remain unlawful against an enemy.

FRENCH

ENGLISH

3.1.30 I'ay autrefois logé Epaminondas au premier rang des hommes excellens: et ne m'en desdy pas. Iusques où montoit-il la consideration de son particulier deuoir? qui ne tua iamais homme qu'il eust vaincu: qui pour ce bien inestimable, de rendre la liberté à son païs, faisoit conscience de tuer vn tyran, ou ses complices, sans les formes de la iustice: et qui iugeoit meschant homme, quelque bon citoyen qu'il fust, celuy qui entre les ennemis, et en la bataille, n'espargnoit son amy et son hoste. Voyla vne ame de riche composition. Il marioit aux plus rudes et violentes actions humaines, la bonté et l'humanité, voire la plus delicate, qui se treuue en l'escole de la philosophie.

I once placed Epaminondas in the first rank of excellent men, and I do not take it back. To what heights did he carry his regard for his own personal duty? He never killed a man he had defeated. Even for that inestimable good, giving his country back its freedom, he scrupled to kill a tyrant or his accomplices without the forms of justice. And he judged a wicked man, however good a citizen he might be, anyone who, among the enemy and in battle, did not spare his friend and his host. There is a soul of rich composition. He wedded to the roughest and most violent of human actions goodness and humanity—indeed the most delicate kind to be found in the school of philosophy.

Ce courage si gros, enflé, et obstiné contre la douleur, la mort, la pauureté, estoit-ce nature, ou art, qui l'eust

That courage, so great, so swollen and stubborn against pain, death and poverty—was it nature or

FRENCH

attendry, iusques au poinct d'vne si extreme douceur, et debonnaireté de complexion? Horrible de fer et de sang, il va fracassant et rompant vne nation inuincible contre tout autre, que contre luy seul: et gauchit au milieu d'vne telle meslee, au rencontre de son hoste et de son amy. Vrayment celuy là proprement commandoit bien à la guerre, qui luy faisoit souffrir le mors de la benignité, sur le point de sa plus forte chaleur: ainsin enflammee qu'elle estoit, et toute escumeuse de fureur et de meurtre.

C'est miracle, de pouuoir mesler à telles actions quelque image de iustice: mais il n'appartient qu'à la roideur d'Epaminondas, d'y pouuoir mesler la douceur et la facilité des mœurs les plus molles, et la pure innocence. Et où l'vn dit aux Mammertins, que les statuts n'auoient point de mise enuers les hommes armez: l'autre, au Tribun du peuple, que le temps de la iustice, et de la guerre estoient deux: le tiers, que le bruit des armes l'empeschoit d'entendre la voix des loix: cettuy-cy n'estoit pas seulement empesché d'entendre celles de la ciuilité, et pure courtoisie. Auoit-il pas emprunté de ses ennemis, l'vsage de sacrifier aux Muses, allant à la guerre, pour destremper par leur douceur et gayeté, cette furie et aspreté martiale?

Ne craignons point apres vn si grand precepteur, d'estimer qu'il y a quelque chose illicite contre les ennemys mesmes: que l'interest commun ne doibt pas tout requerir de tous, contre l'interest priué: *manente memoria, etiam in dissidio publicorum fœderum, priuati iuris: Et nulla potentia vires / Præstandi, ne quid peccet amicus, habet:* et que toutes choses ne sont pas loisibles à vn homme de bien, pour le seruice de son Roy, ny de la cause generale et des loix. *Non enim patria præstat omnibus officijs, et ipsi conducit pios habere ciues in parentes.* C'est vne instruction propre au temps.

Nous n'auons que faire de durcir nos courages par ces lames de fer, c'est assez que nos espaules le soyent: c'est assez de tramper nos plumes en ancre, sans les tramper en sang. Si c'est grandeur de courage, et l'effect d'vne vertu rare et singuliere, de mespriser l'amitié, les obligations priuees, sa parolle, et la parenté, pour le bien commun, et obeïssance du magistrat: c'est assez

ENGLISH

art that had softened it to the point of such extreme gentleness and kindness of temperament? Terrible with iron and blood, he goes smashing and shattering a nation invincible against anyone but him alone; and in the midst of such a fray he swerves aside when he meets his host and his friend. Truly, that man was properly in command of war who made it bear the bit of kindness at the moment of its greatest heat, inflamed as it was and all foaming with fury and slaughter.

It is a miracle to be able to mix some image of justice into such actions; but it belongs only to the firmness of Epaminondas to be able to mix into them the gentleness and ease of the mildest manners, and pure innocence. One man told the Mamertines that statutes had no currency with armed men; another told the tribune of the people that the time for justice and the time for war were two different things; a third said that the din of arms kept him from hearing the voice of the laws. This man was not even kept from hearing the voice of civility and pure courtesy. Had he not borrowed from his enemies the custom of sacrificing to the Muses when going to war, to temper that martial fury and harshness with their sweetness and gaiety?[23]

After so great a teacher, let us not be afraid to hold that there is something unlawful even against enemies; that the common interest must not demand everything of everyone against private interest: *the memory of private right remaining even amid the rupture of public treaties: And no power has the strength / To warrant a friend in doing wrong*; and that not everything is permissible to a good man in the service of his king, or of the general cause and of the laws. *For our country does not take precedence over all other duties, and it is to its own advantage to have citizens who are dutiful toward their parents.* This is a lesson suited to our times.[24]

We have no need to harden our hearts with these iron plates; it is enough that our shoulders are armored. It is enough to dip our pens in ink without dipping them in blood. If it is greatness of courage, and the effect of a rare and singular virtue, to despise friendship, private obligations, one's word and kinship for the common good and obedience

23 The three are Pompey, Julius Caesar and Marius, in anecdotes told by Plutarch; the enemies are the Spartans.
24 The verse lines are from Ovid, Letters from Pontus.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
	vrayement pour nous en excuser, que c'est vne grandeur, qui ne peut loger en la grandeur du courage d'Epaminondas.	to the magistrate, truly it is excuse enough for us that this is a greatness that could find no room in the greatness of Epaminondas's courage.
3.1.31	I'abomine les exhortemens enragez, de cette autre ame desreglee, *Dum tela micant, non vos pietatis imago* *Vlla, nec aduersa conspecti fronte parentes* *Commoueant, vultus gladio turbate verendos.* Ostons aux meschants naturels, et sanguinaires, et traistres, ce pretexte de raison: laissons là cette iustice enorme, et hors de soy: et nous tenons aux plus humaines imitations. Combien peut le temps et l'exemple? En vne rencontre de la guerre ciuile contre Cinna, vn soldat de Pompeius, ayant tué sans y penser son frere, qui estoit au party contraire, se tua sur le champ soy-mesme, de honte et de regret. Et quelques annees apres, en vne autre guerre ciuile de ce mesme peuple, vn soldat, pour auoir tué son frere, demanda recompense à ses capitaines.	I abhor the frenzied exhortations of that other unruly soul: *While the weapons flash, let no image of filial love,* *Nor the sight of your fathers facing you in the opposing line,* *Move you: slash with the sword those faces you should revere.* Let us take this pretext of reason away from wicked, bloodthirsty and treacherous natures. Let us leave aside that monstrous justice, which is out of its mind, and hold to the most humane models. How much time and example can do! In one engagement of the civil war against Cinna, a soldier of Pompeius who had unwittingly killed his brother, who was on the other side, killed himself on the spot from shame and grief. And some years later, in another civil war of this same people, a soldier demanded a reward from his captains for having killed his brother.[25]
3.1.32	On argumente mal l'honneur et la beauté d'vne action, par son vtilité: et conclud-on mal, d'estimer que chacun y soit obligé, et qu'elle soit honeste à chacun, si elle est vtile. *Omnia non pariter rerum sunt omnibus apta.* Choisissons la plus necessaire et plus vtile de l'humaine societé, ce sera le mariage. Si est-ce que le conseil des saincts, trouue le contraire party plus honeste, et en exclut la plus venerable vacation des hommes: comme nous assignons au haras, les bestes qui sont de moindre estime.	It is bad reasoning to argue the honor and beauty of an action from its usefulness. It is also a bad conclusion to think that everyone is obliged to it, and that it is honorable for everyone, if it is useful. *All things are not equally fitting for all.* Let us choose the most necessary and most useful institution of human society: that will be marriage. And yet the counsel of the saints finds the opposite course more honorable, and excludes from marriage the most venerable calling among men, just as we put the animals of least value out to stud.[26]

25 Lucan, Pharsalia 7.320–322, from Caesar's speech to his troops before Pharsalus. Both soldiers' stories are told by Tacitus, Histories 3.51; Cinna was opposed by Pompeius Strabo in 87 BC.
26 Propertius, Elegies 3.9.7. The "most venerable calling" is the priesthood, bound to celibacy.

III.2 Of Repentance

Du repentir

Montaigne portrays himself as ever-changing and argues that true repentance must reach the self, not just regret particular acts.

FRENCH

ENGLISH

3.2.1 LES autres forment l'homme, ie le recite: et en represente vn particulier, bien mal formé; et lequel si i'auoy à façonner de nouueau, ie ferois vrayement bien autre qu'il n'est: mes-huy c'est fait. Or les traits de ma peinture, ne se fouruoyent point, quoy qu'ils se changent et diuersifient. Le monde n'est qu'vne branloire perenne. Toutes choses y branlent sans cesse, la terre, les rochers du Caucase, les pyramides d'Ægypte: et du branle public, et du leur. La constance mesme n'est autre chose qu'vn branle plus languissant. Ie ne puis asseurer mon obiect: il va trouble et chancelant, d'vne yuresse naturelle. Ie le prens en ce poinct, comme il est, en l'instant que ie m'amuse à luy.

Ie ne peinds pas l'estre, ie peinds le passage: non vn passage d'aage en autre, ou comme dict le peuple, de sept en sept ans, mais de iour en iour, de minute en minute. Il faut accommoder mon histoire à l'heure. Ie pourray tantost changer, non de fortune seulement, mais aussi d'intention. C'est vn contrerolle de diuers et muables accidens, et d'imaginations irresoluës, et quand il y eschet, contraires: soit que ie sois autre moy-mesme, soit que ie saisisse les subiects, par autres circonstances, et considerations. Tant y a que ie me contredis bien à l'aduanture, mais la verité, comme disoit Demades, ie ne la contredy point.

Si mon ame pouuoit prendre pied, ie ne m'essaierois pas, ie me resoudrois: elle est tousiours en apprentissage, et en espreuue.

Others form man; I tell of him, and portray a particular one, very badly formed. If I had to fashion him anew, I would truly make him very different from what he is. But by now it is done. Still, the strokes of my portrait do not go astray, though they change and vary. The world is nothing but a perpetual see-saw. All things in it are constantly swaying: the earth, the rocks of the Caucasus, the pyramids of Egypt, both with the common motion and with their own. Constancy itself is nothing but a more languid swaying. I cannot keep my subject still. It goes along muddled and staggering, with a natural drunkenness. I take it at this point, as it is, at the moment I give it my attention.

I do not portray being; I portray passing: not a passing from one age to another, or, as the people say, from seven years to seven years, but from day to day, from minute to minute. I must suit my story to the hour. I may soon change, not only by fortune but also by intention. This is a record of various and changeable occurrences, and of notions that are unsettled and, when it so happens, contradictory, whether because I myself am different or because I grasp my subjects in other circumstances and from other points of view. At any rate, I may well contradict myself now and then; but the truth, as Demades said, I do not contradict.

If my soul could find its footing, I would not be trying myself out; I would be making up my mind. It is always in apprenticeship and on trial.

3.2.2 Ie propose vne vie basse, et sans lustre. C'est tout vn. On attache aussi bien toute la philosophie morale, à vne vie populaire et priuee, qu'à vne vie de plus riche estoffe. Chaque homme porte la forme entiere, de l'humaine condition. Les autheurs se communiquent au peuple par quelque marque speciale et estrangere: moy le premier, par mon estre vniuersel: comme, Michel de Montaigne: non comme grammairien ou poëte, ou iurisconsulte. Si le

I set forth a humble life, without luster. It makes no difference. You can attach the whole of moral philosophy to a common and private life just as well as to a life of richer stuff. Every man bears the whole form of the human condition. Authors communicate with the public through some special and extraneous mark. I am the first to do so through my universal being, as Michel de Mon-

FRENCH

monde se plaint dequoy ie parle trop de moy, ie me plains dequoy il ne pense seulement pas à soy. Mais est-ce raison, que si particulier en vsage, ie pretende me rendre public en cognoissance?

Est-il aussi raison, que ie produise au monde, où la façon et l'art ont tant de credit et de commandement, des effects de nature et crus et simples, et d'vne nature encore bien foiblette? Est-ce pas faire vne muraille sans pierre, ou chose semblable, que de bastir des liures sans science? Les fantasies de la musique, sont conduites par art, les miennes par sort. Aumoins i'ay cecy selon la discipline, que iamais homme ne traicta subiect, qu'il entendist ne cogneust mieux, que ie fay celuy que i'ay entrepris: et qu'en celuy là ie suis le plus sçauant homme qui viue.

Secondement, que iamais aucun ne penetra en sa matiere plus auant, ny en esplucha plus distinctement les membres et suittes: et n'arriua plus exactement et plus plainement, à la fin qu'il s'estoit proposé à sa besongne. Pour la parfaire, ie n'ay besoing d'y apporter que la fidelité: celle-là y est, la plus sincere et pure qui se trouue. Ie dy vray, non pas tout mon saoul: mais autant que ie l'ose dire. Et l'ose vn peu plus en vieillissant: car il semble que la coustume concede à cet aage, plus de liberté de bauasser, et d'indiscretion à parler de soy. Il ne peut aduenir icy, ce que ie voy aduenir souuent, que l'artizan et sa besongne se contrarient.

Vn homme de si honneste conuersation, a-t-il faict vn si sot escrit? Ou, des escrits si sçauans, sont-ils partis d'vn homme de si foible conuersation? Qui a vn entretien commun, et ses escrits rares: c'est à dire, que sa capacité est en lieu d'où il l'emprunte, et non en luy. Vn personnage sçauant n'est pas sçauant par tout. Mais le suffisant est par tout suffisant, et à ignorer mesme. Icy nous allons conformément, et tout d'vn train, mon liure et moy. Ailleurs, on peut recommander et accuser l'ouurage, à part de l'ouurier: icy non: qui touche l'vn, touche l'autre. Celuy qui en iugera sans le congnoistre, se fera plus de tort qu'à moy: celuy qui l'aura cogneu, m'a du tout satisfaict.

Heureux outre mon merite, si i'ay seulement cette part à l'approbation publique, que ie face sentir aux gens d'entendement, que i'estoy capable de faire mon profit de

ENGLISH

taigne, not as a grammarian or a poet or a jurist. If the world complains that I speak too much of myself, I complain that it does not even think of itself. But is it reasonable that I, so private in my way of life, should claim to make myself known to the public?

Is it reasonable, too, that I should set before the world, where fashion and art have so much credit and command, products of nature that are crude and simple, and of a nature that is rather feeble at that? Is it not like making a wall without stone, or something of the kind, to build books without learning? The fantasias of music are guided by art; my fancies, by chance. At least I have this much according to the rules: that no man ever treated a subject he understood and knew better than I do the one I have undertaken, and that in this subject I am the most learned man alive.

Second, that no one ever went deeper into his material, or picked apart its parts and consequences more distinctly, or reached more exactly and fully the goal he had set for his work. To complete it, I need bring to it only faithfulness, and that is there, the most sincere and pure to be found. I speak the truth, not my fill of it, but as much as I dare to speak. And I dare a little more as I grow old, for it seems that custom grants this age more freedom to babble and more indiscretion in talking about oneself. What I often see happen cannot happen here: that the craftsman and his work contradict each other.

Has a man so decent in conversation written so foolish a book? Or have such learned writings come from a man so feeble in conversation? If a man's talk is commonplace and his writings exceptional, that means his ability lies in the place he borrows it from, and not in himself. A learned man is not learned in everything; but the able man is able in everything, even in being ignorant. Here we go in step and at the same pace, my book and I. Elsewhere one can commend or condemn the work apart from the workman; not here: whoever touches the one touches the other. He who judges it without knowing it will do more wrong to himself than to me; he who has come to know it has satisfied me completely.

I shall be happy beyond my deserts if I have only this share of public approval: that I make men of understanding feel that I would have been capable

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
	la science, si i'en eusse eu: et que ie meritoy que la memoire me secourust mieux.	of profiting from learning, if I had had any, and that I deserved better help from my memory.

WHY I RARELY REPENT

True vice brings its own repentance, and a good conscience its own reward.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
3.2.3	Excusons icy ce que ie dy souuent, que ie me repens rarement, et que ma conscience se contente de soy: non comme de la conscience d'vn ange, ou d'vn cheual, mais comme de la conscience d'vn homme. Adioustant tousiours ce refrein, non vn refrein de ceremonie, mais de naifue et essentielle submission: Que ie parle enquerant et ignorant, me rapportant de la resolution, purement et simplement, aux creances communes et legitimes. Ie n'enseigne point, ie raconte.	Let me excuse here what I often say, that I rarely repent and that my conscience is content with itself, not as the conscience of an angel or of a horse, but as the conscience of a man. I always add this refrain, not a refrain of ceremony but of genuine and essential submission: that I speak as one who inquires and does not know, referring the decision purely and simply to the common and lawful beliefs. I do not teach; I tell.
3.2.4	Il n'est vice veritablement vice, qui n'offence, et qu'vn iugement entier n'accuse. Car il a de la laideur et incommodité si apparente, qu'à l'aduanture ceux-là ont raison, qui disent, qu'il est principalement produict par bestise et ignorance: tant est-il mal-aisé d'imaginer qu'on le cognoisse sans le haïr. La malice hume la pluspart de son propre venin, et s'en empoisonne. Le vice laisse comme vn vlcere en la chair, vne repentance en l'ame, qui tousiours s'esgratigne, et s'ensanglante elle mesme. Car la raison efface les autres tristesses et douleurs, mais elle engendre celle de la repentance: qui est plus griefue, d'autant qu'elle naist au dedans: comme le froid et le chaud des fiéures est plus poignant, que celuy qui vient du dehors.	There is no vice truly a vice that does not offend, and that a sound judgment does not condemn. For its ugliness and harmfulness are so evident that perhaps those are right who say it is chiefly produced by stupidity and ignorance, so hard is it to imagine that anyone could know it without hating it. Wickedness sucks up most of its own venom and poisons itself with it. Vice leaves in the soul, like an ulcer in the flesh, a repentance that is always scratching itself and making itself bleed. For reason wipes out other sadnesses and sorrows, but it engenders that of repentance, which is the more grievous because it is born within, just as the cold and heat of fevers are sharper than those that come from outside.
	Ie tiens pour vices, mais chacun selon sa mesure, non seulement ceux que la raison et la nature condamnent, mais ceux aussi que l'opinion des hommes a forgé, voire fauce et erronee, si les loix et l'vsage l'auctorise.	I count as vices (but each according to its measure) not only those that reason and nature condemn, but also those that the opinion of men has forged, even false and mistaken opinion, if laws and usage give it authority.
3.2.5	Il n'est pareillement bonté, qui ne resiouysse vne nature bien nee. Il y a certes ie ne sçay quelle congratulation, de bien faire, qui nous resiouit en nous mesmes, et vne fierté genereuse, qui accompagne la bonne conscience. Vne ame courageusement vitieuse, se peut à l'aduenture garnir de securité: mais de cette complaisance et satisfaction, elle ne s'en peut fournir.	Likewise, there is no goodness that does not gladden a wellborn nature. There is indeed a certain self-congratulation in doing well that gladdens us within, and a noble pride that goes with a good conscience. A boldly vicious soul may perhaps arm itself with a sense of security; but this contentment and satisfaction it cannot supply for itself.
	Ce n'est pas vn leger plaisir, de se sentir preserué de la contagion d'vn siecle si gasté, et de dire en soy: Qui me verroit iusques dans l'ame, encore ne me trouueroit-il	It is no slight pleasure to feel oneself preserved from the contagion of so corrupt an age, and to say to oneself: "Whoever could see right into my soul

FRENCH

coupable, ny de l'affliction et ruyne de personne: ny de vengeance ou d'enuie, ny d'offence publique des loix: ny de nouuelleté et de trouble: ny de faute à ma parole: et quoy que la licence du temps permist et apprinst à chacun, si n'ay-ie mis la main ny és biens, ny en la bourse d'homme François, et n'ay vescu que sur la mienne non plus en guerre qu'en paix: ny ne me suis seruy du trauail de personne, sans loyer.

Ces tesmoignages de la conscience, plaisent, et nous est grand benefice que cette esiouyssance naturelle: et le seul payement qui iamais ne nous manque.

3.2.6 De fonder la recompence des actions vertueuses, sur l'approbation d'autruy, c'est prendre vn trop incertain et trouble fondement, signamment en vn siecle corrompu et ignorant, comme cettuy cy: la bonne estime du peuple est iniurieuse. A qui vous fiez vous, de veoir ce qui est louable? Dieu me garde d'estre homme de bien, selon la description que ie voy faire tous les iours par honneur, à chacun de soy. *Quæ fuerant vitià, mores sunt.* Tels de mes amis, ont par fois entreprins de me chapitrer et mercurializer à cœur ouuert, ou de leur propre mouuement, ou semons par moy, comme d'vn office, qui à vne ame bien faicte, non en vtilité seulement, mais en douceur aussi, surpasse tous les offices de l'amitié.

Ie l'ay tousiours accueilli des bras de la courtoisie et recognoissance, les plus ouuerts. Mais, à en parler à cette heure en conscience, i'ay souuent trouué en leurs reproches et louanges, tant de fauce mesure, que ie n'eusse guere failly, de faillir plustost, que de bien faire à leur mode. Nous autres principalement, qui viuons vne vie priuee, qui n'est en montre qu'à nous, deuons auoir estably vn patron au dedans, auquel toucher nos actions: et selon iceluy nous caresser tantost, tantost nous chastier. I'ay mes loix et ma cour, pour iuger de moy, et m'y adresse plus qu'ailleurs. Ie restrains bien selon autruy mes actions, mais ie ne les estends que selon moy.

Il n'y a que vous qui sçache si vous estes lâche et cruel, ou loyal et deuotieux: les autres ne vous voyent point, ils vous deuinent par coniectures incertaines: ils voyent, non tant vostre naturel, que vostre art. Par ainsi, ne vous tenez pas à leur sentence, tenez vous à la vostre. *Tuo tibi*

ENGLISH

would still not find me guilty of anyone's affliction or ruin, or of vengeance or envy, or of any public offense against the laws, or of innovation and disturbance, or of breaking my word. And whatever the license of the times allowed and taught everyone, I have never laid hands on the goods or the purse of any Frenchman, and have lived on my own purse alone, in war as in peace. Nor have I used anyone's labor without paying for it."

These testimonies of conscience give pleasure; and this natural rejoicing is a great boon to us, and the only payment that never fails us.

To base the reward of virtuous actions on the approval of others is to choose too uncertain and murky a foundation, especially in a corrupt and ignorant age like this one: the good opinion of the people is an insult. Whom do you trust to see what is praiseworthy? God keep me from being a good man according to the description I see everyone giving of himself every day, to his own honor. *What were vices are now morals.* Some of my friends have at times undertaken to take me to task and lecture me frankly, either of their own accord or at my invitation, as a service which, to a well-made soul, surpasses all the services of friendship, not only in usefulness but in sweetness too.[1]

I have always welcomed it with the most open arms of courtesy and gratitude. But to speak of it now in all conscience, I have often found such false measure in their reproaches and their praises that I would hardly have erred in erring rather than in doing well their way. We especially, who live a private life that is on show only to ourselves, must have set up a pattern within us against which to test our actions, and by which we now make much of ourselves, now punish ourselves. I have my own laws and my own court to judge me, and I turn to them more than anywhere else. I do restrain my actions according to others, but I extend them only according to myself.

No one but you knows whether you are cowardly and cruel, or loyal and devout. Others do not see you; they guess at you by uncertain conjectures; they see not so much your nature as your art. Therefore do not hold to their verdict; hold to your

1 Seneca, Letters 39.6.

FRENCH

iudicio est vtendum. Virtutis et vitiorum graue ipsius conscientiæ pondus est: qua sublata, iacent omnia.

ENGLISH

own. *You must use your own judgment. Great is the weight of one's own conscience in matters of virtue and vice: take it away, and everything collapses.*[2]

3.2.7 Mais ce qu'on dit, que la repentance suit de pres le peché, ne semble pas regarder le peché qui est en son haut appareil: qui loge en nous comme en son propre domicile. On peut desauouër et desdire les vices, qui nous surprennent, et vers lesquels les passions nous emportent: mais ceux qui par longue habitude, sont enracinez et ancrez en vne volonté forte et vigoureuse, ne sont subiects à contradiction. Le repentir n'est qu'vne desdicte de nostre volonté, et opposition de nos fantasies, qui nous pourmene à tout sens. Il faict desaduouër à celuy-là, sa vertu passee et sa continence. *Quæ mens est hodie, cur eadem non puero fuit, / Vel cur his animis incolumes non redeunt genæ?*

But the saying that repentance follows close upon sin does not seem to concern sin in its full regalia, sin that lodges in us as in its own home. We can disown and retract the vices that take us by surprise and toward which our passions sweep us. But those that, through long habit, are rooted and anchored in a strong and vigorous will are not open to contradiction. Repentance is nothing but a retraction of our will and a contradiction of our notions, and it leads us about in every direction. It makes this man disown his past virtue and continence: *Why did I not have as a boy the mind I have today? / Or why, with this mind, do my smooth cheeks not come back?*[3]

ORDER AT HOME

The real test of a life is its private, ordinary conduct, not its public show.

FRENCH

ENGLISH

3.2.8 C'est vne vie exquise, celle qui se maintient en ordre iusques en son priué. Chacun peut auoir part au battelage, et representer vn honneste personnage en l'eschaffaut: mais au dedans, et en sa poictrine, où tout nous est loisible, où tout est caché, d'y estre reglé, c'est le poinct. Le voysin degré, c'est de l'estre en sa maison, en ses actions ordinaires, desquelles nous n'auons à rendre raison à personne: où il n'y a point d'estude, point d'artifice. Et pourtant Bias peignant vn excellent estat de famille: de laquelle, dit-il, le maistre soit tel au dedans, par luy-mesme, comme il est au dehors, par la crainte de la loy, et du dire des hommes.

It is an exceptional life that keeps itself in order even in private. Anyone can take part in the mountebank show and play a decent character on the stage. But to be well-ordered within, in one's own breast, where everything is permitted to us and everything is hidden: that is the point. The next step is to be so in one's own house, in one's ordinary actions, for which we need give account to no one, where there is no studied effort, no artifice. And so Bias, describing an excellent household, says it is one whose master is the same within, by himself, as he is outside, through fear of the law and of what people say.

Et fut vne digne parole de Iulius Drusus, aux ouuriers qui luy offroient pour trois mille escus, mettre sa maison en tel poinct, que ses voysins n'y auroient plus la veuë qu'ils y auoient: Ie vous en donneray, dit-il, six mille, et faictes que chacun y voye de toutes parts. On remarque auec honneur l'vsage d'Agesilaus, de prendre en voyageant son logis dans les eglises, affin que le peuple, et les Dieux mesmes, vissent dans ses actions priuees. Tel a esté miraculeux au monde, auquel sa femme et son valet n'ont rien veu seulement de remercable. Peu d'hommes ont esté admirez par leurs domestiques. Nul a esté prophete

And it was a worthy remark of Julius Drusus to the workmen who offered, for three thousand crowns, to fix his house so that his neighbors would no longer have the view into it they had: "I will give you six thousand," he said, "and make it so that everyone can see in from every side." Agesilaus' practice is recorded to his honor: when traveling he lodged in temples, so that the people, and the gods themselves, might see into his private actions. Many a man has seemed a marvel to the

2 Both sentences are from Cicero; the second is from On the Nature of the Gods 3.35.
3 Horace, Odes 4.10.7–8.

FRENCH

non seulement en sa maison, mais en son païs, dit l'experience des histoires.

De mesmes aux choses de neant. Et en ce bas exemple, se void l'image des grands. En mon climat de Gascongne, on tient pour drolerie de me veoir imprimé. D'autant que la cognoissance, qu'on prend de moy, s'esloigne de mon giste, i'en vaux d'autant mieux. I'achette les imprimeurs en Guienne: ailleurs ils m'achettent. Sur cet accident se fondent ceux qui se cachent viuants et presents, pour se mettre en credit, trepassez et absents. I'ayme mieux en auoir moins. Et ne me iette au monde, que pour la part que i'en tire. Au partir de là, ie l'en quitte.

Le peuple reconuoye celuy-là, d'vn acte public, auec estonnement, iusqu'à sa porte: il laisse auec sa robbe ce rolle: il en retombe d'autant plus bas, qu'il s'estoit plus haut monté. Au dedans chez luy, tout est tumultuaire et vil. Quand le reglement s'y trouueroit, il faut vn iugement vif et bien trié, pour l'apperceuoir en ces actions basses et priuees. Ioint que l'ordre est vne vertu morne et sombre. Gaigner vne bresche, conduire vne ambassade, regir vn peuple, ce sont actions esclatantes: tancer, rire, vendre, payer, aymer, hayr, et conuerser auec les siens, et auec soy-mesme, doucement et iustement: ne relascher point, ne se desmentir point, c'est chose plus rare, plus difficile, et moins remerquable.

Les vies retirees soustiennent par là, quoy qu'on die, des deuoirs autant ou plus aspres et tendus, que ne font les autres vies. Et les priuez, dit Aristote, seruent la vertu plus difficilement et hautement, que ne font ceux qui sont en magistrat. Nous nous preparons aux occasions eminentes, plus par gloire que par conscience. La plus courte façon d'arriuer à la gloire, ce seroit faire pour la conscience ce que nous faisons pour la gloire. Et la vertu d'Alexandre me semble representer assez moins de vigueur en son theatre, que ne fait celle de Socrates, en cette exercitation basse et obscure. Ie conçois aisément Socrates, en la place d'Alexandre; Alexandre en celle de Socrates, ie ne puis.

Qui demandera à celuy-là, ce qu'il sçait faire, il respondra, Subiuguer le monde: qui le demandera à cettuy-cy, il dira, Mener l'humaine vie conformément à

ENGLISH

world in whom his wife and his valet saw nothing even remarkable. Few men have been admired by their own households. No one has been a prophet, not only in his own house but in his own country, says the experience of history.[4]

The same holds in things of no account, and in this lowly example one can see the image of the great. In my region of Gascony, people think it a joke to see me in print. The farther the knowledge of me travels from my lair, the more I am worth. In Guyenne I pay the printers; elsewhere they pay me. This is what those people count on who hide themselves while they are alive and present, in order to win credit once they are dead and absent. I would rather have less of it. I throw myself upon the world only for the share I get out of it. Once I am out of it, we are quits.

The people escort that man back to his door in awe after some public act. He leaves this role behind with his robe, and falls back all the lower for having climbed so high. Within, in his own house, everything is disorderly and base. Even if there were order there, it would take a keen and discriminating judgment to perceive it in these lowly and private actions. Besides, order is a dull and somber virtue. To take a breach, conduct an embassy, govern a people: these are brilliant actions. To scold, laugh, sell, pay, love, hate, and deal gently and justly with one's household and with oneself, not to let oneself go, not to belie oneself: that is rarer, more difficult, and less noticed.

Retired lives therefore carry duties, whatever people say, as harsh and strenuous as other lives do, or more so. And private persons, says Aristotle, serve virtue with more difficulty and in a higher way than those in office. We prepare ourselves for eminent occasions more for glory than for conscience. The shortest way to reach glory would be to do for conscience what we do for glory. And the virtue of Alexander seems to me to show much less vigor on its stage than that of Socrates in his lowly and obscure activity. I can easily imagine Socrates in Alexander's place; Alexander in Socrates', I cannot.

Ask the one what he knows how to do, and he will answer, "Conquer the world"; ask the other, and he will say, "Lead human life in conformity with its

4 Marcus Livius Drusus, Roman tribune (91 BC); both anecdotes are told by Plutarch.

FRENCH

sa naturelle condition: science bien plus generale, plus poisante, et plus legitime.

3.2.9 Le prix de l'ame ne consiste pas à aller haut, mais ordonnément. Sa grandeur ne s'exerce pas en la grandeur: c'est en la mediocrité. Ainsi que ceux qui nous iugent et touchent au dedans, ne font pas grand'recette de la lueur de noz actions publiques: et voyent que ce ne sont que filets et pointes d'eau fine reiallies d'vn fond au demeurant limonneux et poisant. En pareil cas, ceux qui nous iugent par cette braue apparence du dehors, concluent de mesmes de nostre constitution interne: et ne peuuent accoupler des facultez populaires et pareilles aux leurs, à ces autres facultez, qui les estonnent, si loin de leur visee. Ainsi donnons nous aux demons des formes sauuages.

Et qui non à Tamburlan des sourcils esleuez, des nazeaux ouuerts, vn visage afreux, et vne taille desmesuree, comme est la taille de l'imagination qu'il en a conceuë par le bruit de son nom? Qui m'eust faict veoir Erasme autrefois, il eust esté mal-aisé, que ie n'eusse prins pour adages et apophthegmes, tout ce qu'il eust dit à son vallet et à son hostesse. Nous imaginons bien plus sortablement vn artisan sur sa garderobe ou sur sa femme qu'vn grand President, venerable par son maintien et suffisance. Il nous semble que de ces hauts thrones ils ne s'abaissent pas iusques à viure. Comme les ames vicieuses sont incitees souuent à bien faire, par quelque impulsion estrangere? aussi sont les vertueuses à faire mal.

Il les faut doncq iuger par leur estat rassis: quand elles sont chez elles, si quelquefois elles y sont: ou au moins quand elles sont plus voysines du repos, et en leur naifue assiette.

3.2.10 Les inclinations naturelles s'aident et fortifient par institution: mais elles ne se changent gueres et surmontent. Mille natures, de mon temps, ont eschappé vers la vertu, ou vers le vice, au trauers d'vne discipline contraire. *Sic vbi desuetæ siluis in carcere clausæ*
Mansueuêre feræ, et vultus posuere minaces,
Atque hominem didicere pati, si torrida paruus
Venit in ora cruor, redeunt rabiésque furórque,
Admonitæque tument gustato sanguine fauces;
Feruet, et à trepido vix abstinet ira magistro. On n'extirpe pas ces qualitez originelles, on les couure, on les cache. Le langage Latin m'est comme naturel: ie l'entends mieux

ENGLISH

natural condition": a far more general, weightier, and more legitimate knowledge.

The worth of the soul consists not in going high, but in going in good order. Its greatness is exercised not in greatness but in the middle range. Those who judge and probe us within make little account of the luster of our public actions, and see that these are only jets and spurts of clear water springing from a bed that is otherwise muddy and heavy. In the same way, those who judge us by this fine outward show draw the same conclusion about our inner constitution, and cannot couple faculties that are ordinary and like their own with those other faculties that astonish them, so far beyond their range of sight. So it is that we give demons wild shapes.

And who does not give Tamburlaine raised eyebrows, flaring nostrils, a frightful face, and an enormous stature, as enormous as the image he has formed of him from the fame of his name? If someone had shown me Erasmus in former days, it would have been hard for me not to take for adages and apophthegms everything he said to his valet and his landlady. We imagine much more fittingly a craftsman on his privy or on his wife than a great presiding judge, venerable for his bearing and ability. It seems to us that from those lofty thrones they do not stoop so low as to live. Just as vicious souls are often incited to do good by some outside impulse, so are virtuous ones to do evil.[5]

So we must judge them in their settled state, when they are at home, if ever they are; or at least when they are nearest to repose and in their natural posture.

Natural inclinations are helped and strengthened by education, but they are hardly ever changed or overcome. A thousand natures in my time have broken away toward virtue or toward vice in spite of a contrary training. *So when wild beasts, grown unused to the forests and shut in a cage,*
Have become tame, and laid aside their threatening looks,
And learned to put up with man, if a little hot blood
Comes to their burning mouths, their rage and fury return,
And their jaws, reminded by the taste of blood, swell;

5 Erasmus (c. 1466–1536) compiled famous collections of Adages and Apophthegms.

FRENCH

que le François: mais il y a quarante ans, que ie ne m'en suis du tout poinct seruy à parler, ny guere à escrire.

Si est-ce qu'à des extremes et soudaines esmotions, où ie suis tombé, deux ou trois fois en ma vie: et l'vne, voyant mon pere tout sain, se renuerser sur moy pasmé: i'ay tousiours eslancé du fonds des entrailles, les premieres paroles Latines: Nature se sourdant et s'exprimant à force, à l'encontre d'vn si long vsage: et cet exemple se dit d'assez d'autres.

3.2.11 Ceux qui ont essaié de r'auiser les mœurs du monde, de mon temps, par nouuelles opinions, reforment les vices de l'apparence, ceux de l'essence ils les laissent là, s'ils ne les augmentent. Et l'augmentation y est à craindre. On se seiourne volontiers de tout autre bien faire, sur ces reformations externes, de moindre coust et de plus grand merite: et satisfait-on à bon marché par là, les autres vices naturels consubstantiels et intestins. Regardez vn peu, comment s'en porte nostre experience. Il n'est personne, s'il s'escoute, qui ne descouure en soy, vne forme sienne, vne forme maistresse, qui lucte contre l'institution: et contre la tempeste des passions, qui luy sont contraires.

De moy, ie ne me sens gueres agiter par secousse: ie me trouue quasi tousiours en ma place, comme font les corps lourds et poisans. Si ie ne suis chez moy, i'en suis tousiours bien pres: mes desbauches ne m'emportent pas fort loing: il n'y a rien d'extreme et d'estrange: et si ay des rauisemens sains et vigoureux.

3.2.12 La vraye condamnation, et qui touche la commune façon de nos hommes, c'est, que leur retraicte mesme est pleine de corruption, et d'ordure: l'idée de leur amendement chafourree, leur penitence malade, et en coulpe, autant à peu pres que leur peché. Aucuns, ou pour estre collez au vice d'vne attache naturelle, ou par longue accoustumance, n'en trouuent plus la laideur. A d'autres, duquel regiment ie suis, le vice poise, mais ils le contrebalancent auec le plaisir, ou autre occasion: et le souffrent et s'y prestent, à certain prix. Vitieusement pourtant, et laschement. Si se pourroit-il à l'aduanture

ENGLISH

Their anger boils, and barely spares their trembling keeper. These original qualities are not uprooted; they are covered over and hidden. Latin is almost my native tongue; I understand it better than French. But for forty years I have not used it at all for speaking, and hardly at all for writing.[6]

And yet in extreme and sudden emotions, which I have fallen into two or three times in my life (one of them when I saw my father, in perfect health, fall back on me in a faint), the first words I have poured out from the depths of my entrails have always been Latin: Nature welling up and expressing itself by force, against so long a habit. And this example is told of many others.

Those who in my time have tried to correct the world's morals by new opinions reform the vices of appearance; those of essence they leave alone, if they do not increase them. And their increase is to be feared. People readily rest from all other good-doing on these external reforms, which cost less and win more credit; and in this way they cheaply pay off the other vices, which are natural, consubstantial and internal. Just look a little at what our experience shows. There is no one who, if he listens to himself, does not discover in himself a form of his own, a ruling form, that struggles against education and against the storm of the passions that oppose it.

As for me, I hardly feel myself shaken by jolts. I find myself almost always in my place, as heavy and weighty bodies do. If I am not at home, I am always very near it. My excesses do not carry me very far; there is nothing extreme or strange about them. And besides, I have sound and vigorous recoveries.

The true condemnation, and one that applies to the common run of our men, is that even their retreat from vice is full of corruption and filth: their idea of amendment is smudged, their penance diseased and almost as much at fault as their sin. Some, either because they are glued to vice by a natural attachment or through long habit, no longer see its ugliness. For others, of whose regiment I am, vice weighs heavily, but they counterbalance it with pleasure or some other consideration, and put up with it and lend themselves to it

6 Lucan, Pharsalia 4.237–242. Montaigne's father had him taught Latin as his first language (see I.26).

FRENCH

imaginer, si esloignee disproportion de mesure, où auec iustice, le plaisir excuseroit le peché, comme nous disons de l'vtilité.

Non seulement s'il estoit accidental, et hors du peché, comme au larrecin, mais en l'exercice mesme d'iceluy, comme en l'accointance des femmes, où l'incitation est violente, et, dit-on, par fois inuincible. En la terre d'vn mien parent, l'autre iour que i'estois en Armaignac, ie vis vn paisant, que chacun surnomme le Larron.

Il faisoit ainsi le conte de sa vie: Qu'estant nay mendiant, et trouuant, qu'à gaigner son pain au trauail de ses mains, il n'arriueroit iamais à se fortifier assez contre l'indigence, il s'aduisa de se faire larron: et auoit employé à ce mestier toute sa ieunesse, en seureté, par le moyen de sa force corporelle: car il moissonnoit et vendangeoit des terres d'autruy: mais c'estoit au loing, et à si gros monceaux, qu'il estoit inimaginable qu'vn homme en eust tant emporté en vne nuict sur ses espaules: et auoit soing outre cela, d'egaler, et disperser le dommage qu'il faisoit, si que la foule estoit moins importable à chaque particulier.

Il se trouue à cette heure en sa vieillesse, riche pour vn homme de sa condition, mercy à cette trafique: de laquelle il se confesse ouuertement. Et pour s'accommoder auec Dieu, de ses acquests, il dit, estre tous les iours apres à satisfaire par bien-faicts, aux successeurs de ceux qu'il a desrobez: et s'il n'acheue (car d'y pouruoir tout à la fois, il ne peut) qu'il en chargera ses heritiers, à la raison de la science qu'il a luy seul, du mal qu'il a faict à chacun.

Par cette description, soit vraye ou fauce, cettuy-cy regarde le larrecin, comme action des-honneste, et le hayt, mais moins que l'indigence: s'en repent bien simplement, mais en tant qu'elle estoit ainsi contrebalancee et compensee, il ne s'en repent pas. Cela, ce n'est pas cette habitude, qui nous incorpore au vice, et y conforme nostre entendement mesme: ny n'est ce vent impetueux qui va troublant et aueuglant à secousses nostre ame, et nous precipite pour l'heure, iugement et tout, en la puissance du vice.

ENGLISH

at a certain price, viciously, however, and basely. Yet one could perhaps imagine so vast a disproportion of measure that pleasure might justly excuse the sin, as we say of usefulness.

And not only if the pleasure were incidental and separate from the sin, as in theft, but in the very exercise of it, as in intercourse with women, where the urge is violent and, they say, sometimes invincible. On the estate of a kinsman of mine, the other day when I was in Armagnac, I saw a peasant whom everyone nicknames the Thief.

This is how he told the story of his life. Born a beggar, and finding that by earning his bread with the work of his hands he would never manage to arm himself well enough against want, he decided to become a thief. He had spent his whole youth at this trade in safety, thanks to his bodily strength. For he harvested grain and grapes from other people's lands, but far away and in such huge loads that it was unimaginable that one man could have carried off so much on his shoulders in one night. And besides, he took care to even out and spread the damage he did, so that the burden was less unbearable for each individual.

Now, in his old age, he finds himself rich for a man of his station, thanks to this traffic, which he openly confesses. And to make his peace with God over his acquisitions, he says he is busy every day making amends, by good deeds, to the heirs of those he robbed; and if he does not finish (for he cannot provide for it all at once), he will charge his own heirs with it, according to the knowledge, which he alone has, of the harm he did to each.

By this description, whether true or false, this man regards theft as a dishonorable action and hates it, but less than poverty. He repents of it quite simply; but insofar as it was counterbalanced and compensated in this way, he does not repent of it. That is not the habit which incorporates us into vice and conforms even our understanding to it; nor is it that impetuous wind which keeps troubling and blinding our soul in gusts, and hurls us for the moment, judgment and all, into the power of vice.

ALL OF A PIECE

Montaigne cannot repent of what he is, only regret it; he blames fortune, not his choices.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
3.2.13	Ie fay coustumierement entier ce que ie fay, et marche tout d'vne piece: ie n'ay guere de mouuement qui se cache et desrobe à ma raison, et qui ne se conduise à peu pres, par le consentement de toutes mes parties: sans diuision, sans sedition intestine: mon iugement en a la coulpe, ou la louange entiere: et la coulpe qu'il a vne fois, il l'a tousiours: car quasi dés sa naissance il est vn, mesme inclination, mesme routte, mesme force. Et en matiere d'opinions vniuerselles, dés l'enfance, ie me logeay au poinct où i'auois à me tenir.	Usually I do wholly what I do, and move all in one piece. I have hardly any impulse that hides and steals away from my reason, and that is not guided, more or less, by the consent of all my parts, without division, without internal sedition. My judgment takes the whole blame or the whole praise for it; and the blame it once has, it always has, for almost from its birth it has been one: the same inclination, the same road, the same strength. And on general questions, from childhood I settled at the point where I was to hold.
	Il y a des pechez impetueux, prompts et subits, laissons les à part: mais en ces autres pechez, à tant de fois reprins, deliberez, et consultez, ou pechez de complexion, ou pechez de profession et de vacation: ie ne puis pas conceuoir, qu'ils soient plantez si long temps en vn mesme courage, sans que la raison et la conscience de celuy qui les possede, le vueille constamment, et l'entende ainsin. Et le repentir qu'il se vante luy en venir à certain instant prescript, m'est vn peu dur à imaginer et former. Ie ne suy pas la secte de Pythagoras, que les hommes prennent vne ame nouuelle, quand ils approchent des simulacres des Dieux, pour recueillir leurs oracles.	There are impetuous, prompt and sudden sins; let us leave them aside. But as for those other sins, so many times repeated, deliberated and pondered, whether sins of temperament or sins of profession and calling, I cannot conceive that they can be planted so long in the same heart without the reason and conscience of their possessor constantly willing it and understanding it so. And the repentance which he boasts comes to him at a certain prescribed moment is a little hard for me to imagine and picture. I do not follow the school of Pythagoras, that men take on a new soul when they approach the images of the gods to receive their oracles.
	Sinon qu'il voulust dire cela mesme, qu'il faut bien qu'elle soit estrangere, nouuelle, et prestee pour le temps: la nostre montrant si peu de signe de purification et netteté condigne à cet office.	Unless he meant just this: that it must indeed be a foreign soul, new and lent for the occasion, since ours shows so little sign of a purification and cleanness worthy of that office.
3.2.14	Ils font tout à l'opposite des preceptes Stoiques: qui nous ordonnent bien, de corriger les imperfections et vices que nous recognoissons en nous, mais nous defendent d'en alterer le repos de nostre ame. Ceux-cy nous font à croire, qu'ils en ont grande desplaisance, et remors au dedans, mais d'amendement et correction ny d'interruption, ils ne nous en font rien apparoir. Si n'est-ce pas guerison, si on ne se descharge du mal. Si la repentance pesoit sur le plat de la balance, elle emporteroit le peché. Ie ne trouue aucune qualité si aysee à contrefaire, que la deuotion, si on n'y conforme les mœurs et la vie: son essence est abstruse et occulte, les apparences faciles et pompeuses.	They do just the opposite of the Stoic precepts, which do bid us correct the imperfections and vices we recognize in ourselves, but forbid us to disturb the repose of our soul over them. These people make us believe that they feel great displeasure and remorse within; but of amendment and correction, or even of a pause, they show us nothing. Yet it is no cure if one does not get rid of the disease. If repentance were weighed in the scale, it would outweigh the sin. I find no quality so easy to counterfeit as devoutness, if one does not make one's morals and life conform to it. Its essence is abstruse and hidden; its appearances are easy and showy.
3.2.15		

FRENCH

Quant à moy, ie puis desirer en general estre autre: ie puis condamner et me desplaire de ma forme vniuerselle, et supplier Dieu pour mon entiere reformation, et pour l'excuse de ma foiblesse naturelle: mais cela, ie ne le doibs nommer repentir, ce me semble, non plus que le desplaisir de n'estre ny Ange ny Caton. Mes actions sont reglees, et conformes à ce que ie suis, et à ma condition. Ie ne puis faire mieux: et le repentir ne touche pas proprement les choses qui ne sont pas en nostre force: ouy bien le regret. I'imagine infinies natures plus hautes et plus reglees que la mienne.

Ie n'amende pourtant mes facultez: comme ny mon bras, ny mon esprit, ne deuiennent plus vigoureux, pour en conceuoir vn autre qui le soit. Si l'imaginer et desirer vn agir plus noble que le nostre, produisoit la repentance du nostre, nous aurions à nous repentir de nos operations plus innocentes: d'autant que nous iugeons bien qu'en la nature plus excellente, elles auroyent esté conduictes d'vne plus grande perfection et dignité: et voudrions faire de mesme. Lors que ie consulte des deportemens de ma ieunesse auec ma vieillesse, ie trouue que ie les ay communement conduits auec ordre, selon moy. C'est tout ce que peut ma resistance. Ie ne me flatte pas: à circonstances pareilles, ie seroy tousiours tel.

Ce n'est pas macheure, c'est plustost vne teinture vniuerselle qui me tache. Ie ne cognoy pas de repentance superficielle, moyenne, et de ceremonie. Il faut qu'elle me touche de toutes parts, auant que ie la nomme ainsin: et qu'elle pinse mes entrailles, et les afflige autant profondement, que Dieu me voit, et autant vniuersellement.

3.2.16 Quand aux negoces, il m'est eschappé plusieurs bonnes auantures, à faute d'heureuse conduitte: mes conseils ont pourtant bien choisi, selon les occurrences qu'on leur presentoit. Leur façon est de prendre tousiours le plus facile et seur party. Ie trouue qu'en mes deliberations passees, i'ay, selon ma regle, sagement procedé, pour l'estat du subiect qu'on me proposoit: et en ferois autant d'icy à mille ans, en pareilles occasions. Ie ne regarde pas, quel il est à cette heure, mais quel il estoit, quand i'en consultois. La force de tout conseil gist au temps: les occasions et les matieres roulent et changent sans cesse. I'ay encouru quelques lourdes erreurs en ma vie, et importantes: non par faute de bon aduis, mais par faute de bon heur.

ENGLISH

As for me, I may desire in general to be other than I am; I may condemn and dislike my form as a whole, and pray God for my entire reformation and for pardon for my natural weakness. But this, it seems to me, I ought not to call repentance, any more than my displeasure at being neither an angel nor Cato. My actions are regulated by and conform to what I am and to my condition. I cannot do better. And repentance does not properly concern things that are not in our power; regret certainly does. I imagine countless natures loftier and better ordered than mine.

Yet I do not improve my faculties by doing so, just as neither my arm nor my mind becomes more vigorous by imagining another that is. If imagining and desiring a nobler way of acting than ours produced repentance for ours, we would have to repent of our most innocent operations, since we judge well enough that in a more excellent nature they would have been carried out with greater perfection and dignity; and we would want to do the same. When I consult my old age about the conduct of my youth, I find that I generally conducted myself in an orderly way, according to my own lights. That is all my resistance can do. I do not flatter myself: in similar circumstances, I would always be the same.

It is not a smudge; it is rather a universal dye that stains me. I know no repentance that is superficial, middling and ceremonial. It must touch me in every part before I call it that, and it must pinch my entrails and afflict them as deeply as God sees me, and as universally.

As for business, many good opportunities have slipped from me for want of successful handling; yet my decisions chose well, according to the circumstances presented to them. Their way is always to take the easiest and safest course. I find that in my past deliberations I have proceeded wisely, according to my rule, given the state of the matter put before me; and I would do the same a thousand years from now on similar occasions. I do not look at what the matter is now, but at what it was when I was deliberating on it. The force of all counsel lies in its time: occasions and matters roll and change ceaselessly. I have fallen into some gross and important errors in my life, not for lack of good judgment but for lack of good luck.

FRENCH

Il y a des parties secrettes aux obiects, qu'on manie, et indiuinables: signamment en la nature des hommes: des conditions muettes, sans montre, incognues par fois du possesseur mesme: qui se produisent et esueillent par des occasions suruenantes. Si ma prudence ne les a peu penetrer et profetizer, ie ne luy en sçay nul mauuais gré: sa charge se contient en ses limites. Si l'euenement me bat, et s'il fauorise le party que i'ay refusé: il n'y a remede, ie ne m'en prens pas à moy, i'accuse ma fortune, non pas mon ouurage: cela ne s'appelle pas repentir.

3.2.17 Phocion auoit donné aux Atheniens certain aduis, qui ne fut pas suiuy: l'affaire pourtant se passant contre son opinion, auec prosperité, quelqu'vn luy dit: Et bien Phocion, es tu content que la chose aille si bien? Bien suis-ie content, fit-il, qu'il soit aduenu cecy, mais ie ne me repens point d'auoir conseillé cela. Quand mes amis s'adressent à moy, pour estre conseillez, ie le fay librement et clairement, sans m'arrester comme faict quasi tout le monde, à ce que la chose estant hazardeuse, il peut aduenir au rebours de mon sens, par où ils ayent à me faire reproche de mon conseil: dequoy il ne me chaut. Car ils auront tort, et ie n'ay deu leur refuser cet office.

3.2.18 Ie n'ay guere à me prendre de mes fautes ou infortunes, à autre qu'à moy. Car en effect, ie me sers rarement des aduis d'autruy, si ce n'est par honneur de ceremonie: sauf où i'ay besoing d'instruction de science, ou de la cognoissance du faict. Mais és choses où ie n'ay à employer que le iugement: les raisons estrangeres peuuent seruir à m'appuyer, mais peu à me destourner. Ie les escoute fauorablement et decemment toutes. Mais, qu'il m'en souuienne, ie n'en ay creu iusqu'à cette heure que les miennes. Selon moy, ce ne sont que mouſches et atomes, qui promeinent ma volonté. Ie prise peu mes opinions: mais ie prise aussi peu celles des autres, fortune me paye dignement.

Si ie ne reçoy pas de conseil, i'en donne aussi peu. I'en suis peu enquis, et encore moins creu: et ne sache nulle entreprinse publique ny priuee, que mon aduis aye redressee et ramenee. Ceux mesmes que la fortune y auoit aucunement attachez, se sont laissez plus volontiers manier à toute autre ceruelle qu'à la mienne. Comme cil qui suis bien autant ialoux des droits de mon

ENGLISH

There are secret and unguessable parts in the matters we handle, especially in the nature of men: silent qualities, without outward show, sometimes unknown even to their possessor, which are brought out and awakened by unforeseen occasions. If my prudence could not see into them and foretell them, I bear it no ill will: its charge is confined within its limits. If the outcome beats me, and favors the course I rejected, there is no help for it. I do not blame myself; I blame my fortune, not my work. That is not called repentance.

Phocion had given the Athenians some advice which was not followed. When the affair nevertheless turned out prosperously, contrary to his opinion, someone said to him: "Well, Phocion, are you pleased that things are going so well?" "I am indeed pleased," he said, "that this has happened, but I do not repent of having advised that." When my friends come to me for advice, I give it freely and clearly, without stopping, as almost everyone does, to think that since the matter is risky it may turn out contrary to my view, so that they may reproach me for my advice. I do not care about that. For they will be wrong, and I could not refuse them that service.[7]

I have hardly anyone but myself to blame for my faults or misfortunes. For in fact I rarely use other people's advice, except out of ceremonious courtesy, save where I need expert instruction or knowledge of the facts. But in matters where I have only my judgment to apply, other people's reasons can serve to support me, but hardly to turn me aside. I listen to them all favorably and courteously; but, as far as I can remember, I have never yet believed any but my own. To my mind they are mere flies and motes that set my will wandering. I set little value on my opinions, but I set just as little on those of others. Fortune pays me as I deserve.

If I do not take advice, I give just as little. I am seldom asked for it, and even more seldom believed; and I know of no public or private undertaking that my advice has set right and brought back on course. Even those whom fortune had in some way bound to it have more willingly let themselves be guided by any other brain than mine. Be-

7 The anecdote is from Plutarch.

FRENCH

repos, que des droits de mon auctorité, ie l'ayme mieux ainsi. Me laissant là, on fait selon ma profession, qui est, de m'establir et contenir tout en moy. Ce m'est plaisir, d'estre desinteressé des affaires d'autruy, et desgagé de leur gariement.

ENGLISH

ing a man quite as jealous of the rights of my repose as of the rights of my authority, I prefer it so. In leaving me alone, people act according to my profession, which is to settle and contain myself wholly within myself. It is a pleasure to me to have no stake in other people's affairs and to be free from answering for them.

3.2.19 En tous affaires quand ils sont passés, comment que ce soit, i'ay peu de regret: car cette imagination me met hors de peine, qu'ils deuoyent ainsi passer: les voyla dans le grand cours de l'vniuers, et dans l'encheineure des causes Stoïques. Vostre fantasie n'en peut, par souhait et imagination, remuer vn poinct, que tout l'ordre des choses ne renuerse et le passé et l'aduenir.

In all affairs, once they are past, however they turned out, I feel little regret. For this thought puts me out of pain: that they were bound to pass that way. There they are, in the great course of the universe and in the chain of Stoic causes. Your fancy cannot, by wishing and imagining, move a single point of them without the whole order of things overturning both past and future.

THE FALSE REPENTANCE OF AGE

Montaigne refuses to credit old age with virtue for the vices it can no longer commit.

FRENCH

3.2.20 Au demeurant, ie hay cet accidental repentir que l'aage apporte. Celuy qui disoit anciennement, estre obligé aux annees, dequoy elles l'auoyent deffait de la volupté, auoit autre opinion que la mienne. Ie ne sçauray iamais bon gré à l'impuissance, de bien qu'elle me face. *Nec tam auersa vnquam videbitur ab opere suo prouidentia, vt debilitas inter optima inuenta sit.* Nos appetits sont rares en la vieillesse: vne profonde satieté nous saisit apres le coup. En cela ie ne voy rien de conscience. Le chagrin, et la foiblesse nous impriment vne vertu lasche, et caterreuse. Il ne nous faut pas laisser emporter si entiers, aux alterations naturelles, que d'en abastardir notre iugement.

La ieunesse et le plaisir n'ont pas faict autrefois que i'aye mescogneu le visage du vice en la volupté: ny ne fait à cette heure, le degoust que les ans m'apportent, que ie mescognoisse celuy de la volupté au vice. Ores que ie n'y suis plus, i'en iuge comme si i'y estoy. Moy qui la secouë viuement et attentiuement, trouue que ma raison est celle mesme que i'auoy en l'aage plus licencieux: sinon à l'auanture, d'autant qu'elle s'est affoiblie et empiree, en vieillissant. Et trouue que ce qu'elle refuse de m'enfourner à ce plaisir, en consideration de l'interest de ma santé corporelle, elle ne le feroit non plus qu'autrefois, pour la santé spirituelle. Pour la voir hors de combat, ie ne l'estime pas plus valeureuse.

ENGLISH

For the rest, I hate that incidental repentance that age brings. The man who said long ago that he was obliged to the years for having rid him of sensual pleasure held a different opinion from mine. I shall never be grateful to impotence for any good it may do me. *Nor will Providence ever seem so hostile to its own work that weakness should be counted among the best things.* Our appetites are few in old age; a profound satiety seizes us after the act. In this I see nothing of conscience. Peevishness and weakness stamp on us a slack and rheumy virtue. We must not let ourselves be carried away so entirely by natural changes as to let them debase our judgment.[8]

Youth and pleasure did not once make me fail to recognize the face of vice in pleasure; nor does the distaste that the years bring me now make me fail to recognize the face of pleasure in vice. Now that I am no longer in it, I judge it as if I were. Shaking my reason briskly and attentively, I find that it is the very same as I had in my more licentious years, except perhaps that it has grown weaker and worse with age. And I find that if it refuses to plunge me into this pleasure, it does so out of concern for my bodily health; for the sake of spiritual

8 The ancient was Sophocles, as reported in Plato's Republic, Book 1. The Latin is from Quintilian, Institutes of Oratory 5.12.

FRENCH

ENGLISH

health it would do no more than it did before. I do not think it any braver for seeing it out of the fight.

Mes tentations sont si cassees et mortifiees, qu'elles ne valent pas qu'elle s'y oppose: tendant seulement les mains au deuant, ie les coniure. Qu'on luy remette en presence, cette ancienne concupiscence, ie crains qu'elle auroit moins de force à la soustenir, qu'elle n'auoit autrefois. Ie ne luy voy rien iuger à part soy, que lors elle ne iugeast, ny aucune nouuelle clarté. Parquoy s'il y a conualescence, c'est vne conualescence maleficiee. Miserable sorte de remede, deuoir à la maladie sa santé. Ce n'est pas à nostre malheur de faire cet office: c'est au bon heur de nostre iugement. On ne me fait rien faire par les offenses et afflictions, que les maudire. C'est aux gents, qui ne s'esueillent qu'à coups de fouët.

My temptations are so broken and deadened that they are not worth its opposing them. Merely by holding out my hands before me, I conjure them away. Let that old lust be set before it again, and I fear it would have less strength to withstand it than it once had. I do not see it judge anything on its own that it did not judge then, nor see any new light in it. Therefore, if there is convalescence, it is a blighted convalescence. A miserable kind of remedy, to owe one's health to sickness! It is not for our misfortune to perform this office; it is for the good fortune of our judgment. Offenses and afflictions can make me do nothing but curse them. That is for people who wake up only under the whip.

Ma raison a bien son cours plus deliure en la prosperité: elle est bien plus distraitte et occupee à digerer les maux, que les plaisirs. Ie voy bien plus clair en temps serain. La santé m'aduertit, comme plus alaigrement, aussi plus vtilement, que la maladie. Ie me suis auancé le plus que i'ay peu, vers ma reparation et reglement, lors que i'auoy à en iouïr. Ie seroy honteux et enuieux, que la misere et l'infortune de ma vieillesse eust à se preferer à mes bonnes annees, saines, esueillees, vigoureuses. Et qu'on eust à m'estimer, non par où i'ay esté, mais par où i'ay cesse d'estre.

My reason runs a freer course in prosperity. It is much more distracted and taken up with digesting ills than pleasures. I see much more clearly in fair weather. Health admonishes me more cheerfully, and therefore more usefully, than sickness. I advanced as far as I could toward my reform and regulation while I had health to enjoy it. I would be ashamed and vexed if the misery and misfortune of my old age were to be preferred to my good years, healthy, wakeful and vigorous; and if people were to value me not for what I have been but for what I have ceased to be.

3.2.21 A mon aduis, c'est le viure heureusement, non, comme disoit Antisthenes, le mourir heureusement, qui fait l'humaine felicité. Ie ne me suis pas attendu d'attacher monstrueusement la queuë d'vn philosophe à la teste et au corps d'vn homme perdu: ny que ce chetif bout eust à desaduoüer et desmentir la plus belle, entiere et longue partie de ma vie. Ie me veux presenter et faire veoir par tout vniformément. Si i'auois à reuiure, ie reuiurois comme i'ay vescu. Ny ie ne pleins le passé, ny ie ne crains l'aduenir: et si ie ne me deçoy, il est allé du dedans enuiron comme du dehors.

In my opinion it is living happily, not, as Antisthenes said, dying happily, that makes human happiness. I have not set out to attach, monstrously, the tail of a philosopher to the head and body of a profligate; nor have I intended this sorry remnant to disown and belie the finest, fullest and longest part of my life. I want to present myself and be seen everywhere in the same way. If I had to live again, I would live as I have lived. I neither lament the past nor fear the future; and unless I deceive myself, things have gone much the same within as without.

C'est vne des principales obligations, que i'aye à ma fortune, que le cours de mon estat corporel ayt esté conduit, chasque chose en sa saison, i'en ay veu l'herbe, et les fleurs, et le fruit: et en voy la secheresse. Heureusement, puisque c'est naturellement. Ie porte bien plus doucement les maux que i'ay, d'autant qu'ils sont en leur poinct: et qu'ils me font aussi plus fauorablement

It is one of the chief debts I owe my fortune that the course of my bodily life has run each thing in its season. I have seen its grass, its flowers and its fruit; and now I see it drying up. Happily, since it is naturally. I bear the ills I have much more gently because they come in their proper time, and because they also make me remember more

FRENCH

souuenir de la longue felicité de ma vie passee. Pareillement, ma sagesse peut bien estre de mesme taille, en l'vn et en l'autre temps: mais elle estoit bien de plus d'exploit, et de meilleure grace, verte, gaye, naïue, qu'elle n'est à present, cassee, grondeuse, laborieuse. Ie renonce donc à ces reformations casuelles et douloureuses.

Il faut que Dieu nous touche le courage: il faut que nostre conscience s'amende d'elle mesme, par renforcement de nostre raison, non par l'affoiblissement de nos appetits. La volupté n'en est en soy, ny pasle, ny descoulouree, pour estre apperceuë par des yeux chassieux et troubles.

3.2.22 On doibt aymer la temperance par elle mesme, et pour le respect de Dieu qui nous l'a ordonnee, et la chasteté: celle que les caterres nous prestent, et que ie doibs au benefice de ma cholique, ce n'est ny chasteté, ny temperance. On ne peut se vanter de mespriser et combatre la volupté, si on ne la voit, si on l'ignore, et ses graces, et ses forces, et sa beauté plus attrayante. Ie cognoy l'vne et l'autre, c'est à moy de le dire. Mais il me semble qu'en la vieillesse, nos ames sont subiectes à des maladies et imperfections plus importunes, qu'en la ieunesse.

Ie le disois estant ieune, lors on me donnoit de mon menton par le nez: ie le dis encore à cette heure, que mon poil gris m'en donne le credit. Nous appellons sagesse, la difficulté de nos humeurs, le desgoust des choses presentes: mais à la verité, nous ne quittons pas tant les vices, comme nous les changeons: et, à mon opinion, en pis. Outre vne sotte et caduque fierté, vn babil ennuyeux, ces humeurs espineuses et inassociables, et la superstition, et vn soin ridicule des richesses, lors que l'vsage en est perdu, i'y trouue plus d'enuie, d'iniustice et de malignité.

Elle nous attache plus de rides en l'esprit qu'au visage: et ne se void point d'ames, ou fort rares, qui en vieillissant ne sentent l'aigre et le moisi. L'homme marche entier, vers son croist et vers son décroist. A voir la sagesse de Socrates, et plusieurs circonstances de sa condamnation, i'oseroy croire, qu'il s'y presta aucunement luy mesme, par preuarication, à dessein: ayant de si prés, aagé de soixante et dix ans, à souffrir l'engourdissement des riches allures de son esprit, et l'esblouïssement de sa clairté accoustumée. Quelles metamorphoses luy voy-ie faire tous les iours, en plusieurs de mes cognoissans?

ENGLISH

fondly the long happiness of my past life. Likewise my wisdom may well be of the same size in both periods; but it was far more accomplished and more graceful then, green, gay and natural, than it is now, broken, grumbling and laborious. I therefore renounce these chance and painful reformations.

God must touch our heart. Our conscience must amend of itself, through the strengthening of our reason, not through the weakening of our appetites. Pleasure is not in itself pale or discolored because it is seen by bleary and clouded eyes.

We should love temperance for its own sake, and out of respect for God who has ordained it for us, and chastity too. What catarrhs lend us, and what I owe to the kindness of my colic, is neither chastity nor temperance. One cannot boast of despising and fighting pleasure if one does not see it, if one does not know it, its graces, its powers, and its most alluring beauty. I know both the one and the other; it is for me to say. But it seems to me that in old age our souls are subject to more troublesome ailments and imperfections than in youth.

I said so when I was young, and then people threw my beardless chin in my face. I say it again now that my gray hair gives me credit. We call wisdom the crabbedness of our temperament, our distaste for present things. But in truth we do not so much give up our vices as change them, and, in my opinion, for the worse. Besides a foolish and decrepit pride, tedious chatter, prickly and unsociable moods, superstition, and a ridiculous concern for riches when we have lost the use of them, I find more envy, injustice and malice in it.

Old age attaches more wrinkles to our minds than to our faces; and one sees no souls, or very rare ones, that do not smell sour and musty as they grow old. Man moves all of a piece toward his growth and toward his decline. Considering the wisdom of Socrates and several circumstances of his condemnation, I would venture to believe that he lent himself to it to some extent, by deliberate collusion, being so close, at seventy years of age, to suffering the numbing of the rich movements of his mind and the dimming of its accustomed brightness. What metamorphoses I see it work every day in many of my acquaintances!

FRENCH	ENGLISH
c’est vne puissante maladie, et qui se coule naturellement et imperceptiblement: il y faut grande prouision d’estude, et grande precaution, pour euiter les imperfections qu’elle nous charge: ou aumoins affoiblir leur progrez. Ie sens que nonobstant tous mes retranchemens, elle gaigne pied à pied sur moy. Ie soustien tant que ie puis, mais ie ne sçay en fin, où elle me menera moy-mesme. A toutes auantures, ie suis content qu’on sçache d’où ie seray tombé.	It is a powerful disease, and one that creeps on naturally and imperceptibly. It takes a great store of study and great precaution to avoid the imperfections it loads us with, or at least to slow their progress. I feel that, despite all my entrenchments, it is gaining on me foot by foot. I hold out as long as I can; but I do not know where in the end it will lead even me. At all events, I am content that people should know from where I shall have fallen.

III.3 Of Three Kinds of Company

De trois commerces

Montaigne weighs the three kinds of company he enjoys—friends, women, and books—and describes the library in his tower.

FRENCH

3.3.1 IL ne faut pas se cloüer si fort à ses humeurs et complexions. Nostre principalle suffisance, c'est, sçauoir s'appliquer à diuers vsages. C'est estre, mais ce n'est pas viure que se tenir attaché et obligé par necessité, à vn seul train. Les plus belles ames sont celles qui ont plus de varieté et de souplesse. Voyla vn honorable tesmoignage du vieil Caton: *Huic versatile ingenium sic pariter ad omnia fuit, vt natum ad id vnum diceres, quodcumque ageret.* Si c'estoit à moy à me dresser à ma mode, il n'est aucune si bonne façon, où ie voulusse estre fiché, pour ne m'en sçauoir desprendre. La vie est vn mouuement inegal, irregulier, et multiforme.

Ce n'est pas estre amy de soy, et moins encore maistre; c'est en estre esclaue, de se suiure incessamment: et estre si pris à ses inclinations, qu'on n'en puisse fouruoyer, qu'on ne les puisse tordre. Ie le dy à cette heure, pour ne me pouuoir facilement despestrer de l'importunité de mon ame, en ce qu'elle ne sçait communément s'amuser, sinon où elle s'empesche, ny s'employer, que bandee et entiere. Pour leger subiect qu'on luy donne, elle le grossit volontiers, et l'estire, iusques au poinct où elle ayt à s'y embesongner de toute sa force. Son oysiueté m'est à cette cause vne penible occupation, et qui offense ma santé.

La plus part des esprits ont besoing de matiere estrangere, pour se desgourdir et exercer: le mien en a besoing, pour se rassoir plustost et seiourner, *vitia otij negotio discutienda sunt*. Car son plus laborieux et principal estude, c'est, s'estudier soy. Les liures sont, pour luy, du genre des occupations, qui le desbauchent de son estude. Aux premieres pensees qui luy viennent, il s'agite, et fait preuue de sa vigueur à tout sens: exerce son maniement tantost vers la force, tantost vers l'ordre et la grace, se range, modere, et fortifie. Il a dequoy esueiller ses facultez par luy mesme. Nature luy a donné

ENGLISH

We should not rivet ourselves so firmly to our temperaments and dispositions. Our chief ability is knowing how to apply ourselves to various uses. To stay tied and bound by necessity to a single course is to exist, but it is not to live. The finest souls are those that have the most variety and suppleness. Here is an honorable testimony about old Cato: *His mind was so versatile, so equally suited to everything, that whatever he was doing you would have said he had been born for that alone.* If it were up to me to train myself in my own way, there is no way of being so good that I would want to be fixed in it and unable to get free of it. Life is an uneven, irregular and multiform motion.[1]

To follow oneself incessantly is not to be a friend to oneself, still less a master; it is to be a slave to oneself. So is being so caught by one's inclinations that one cannot stray from them or bend them. I say this now because I cannot easily rid myself of the importunity of my mind. It usually cannot amuse itself except where it gets entangled, nor apply itself except tense and whole. However slight a subject you give it, it readily enlarges and stretches it until it has to work at it with all its strength. For this reason its idleness is a painful occupation for me, and one that harms my health.

Most minds need outside matter to rouse and exercise them; mine needs it rather to settle and rest. *The vices of idleness must be shaken off by activity.* For its most laborious and principal study is to study itself. Books, for it, are among the occupations that lure it away from that study. At the first thoughts that come to it, it bestirs itself and proves its vigor in every direction. It exercises its handling now toward force, now toward order and grace; it marshals, moderates and strengthens it-

1 Livy, History of Rome 39.40, on Cato the Censor.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
	comme à tous, assez de matiere sienne, pour son vtilité, et des subiects propres assez, où inuenter et iuger.	self. It has the means to awaken its faculties by itself. Nature has given it, as to all, enough matter of its own for its use, and enough subjects of its own on which to invent and judge.[2]
3.3.2	Le mediter est vn puissant estude et plein, à qui sçait se taster et employer vigoureusement. I'ayme mieux forger mon ame, que la meubler. Il n'est point d'occupation ny plus foible, ny plus forte, que celle d'entretenir ses pensees, selon l'ame que c'est. Les plus grandes en font leur vacation, *quibus viuere est cogitare*. Aussi l'a nature fauorisee de ce priuilege, qu'il n'y a rien, que nous puissions faire si long temps: ny action à laquelle nous nous addonnions plus ordinairement et facilement. C'est la besongne des Dieux, dit Aristote, de laquelle naist et leur beatitude et la nostre.	Meditation is a powerful and full study for anyone who knows how to probe himself and put himself vigorously to work. I would rather forge my mind than furnish it. There is no occupation either weaker or stronger than entertaining one's own thoughts, depending on what the mind is. The greatest minds make it their vocation, *for whom to live is to think*. And so nature has favored it with this privilege: there is nothing we can do for so long, and no action we devote ourselves to more habitually and easily. It is the work of the gods, says Aristotle, and from it is born both their blessedness and ours.[3]
3.3.3	La lecture me sert specialement à esueiller par diuers obiects mon discours: à embesongner mon iugement, non ma memoyre. Peu d'entretiens doncq m'arrestent sans vigueur et sans effort. Il est vray que la gentillesse et la beauté me remplissent et occupent, autant ou plus, que le pois et la profondeur. Et d'autant que ie sommeille en toute autre communication, et que ie n'y preste que l'escorce de mon attention, il m'aduient souuent, en telle sorte de propos abatus et lasches, propos de contenance, de dire et respondre des songes et bestises, indignes d'vn enfant, et ridicules: ou de me tenir obstiné en silence, plus ineptement encore et inciuilement.	Reading serves me especially to awaken my reasoning through various objects, to occupy my judgment, not my memory. So few conversations hold me if they lack vigor and force. It is true that charm and beauty fill and occupy me as much as weight and depth, or more. And since I doze in every other kind of conversation and lend it only the bark of my attention, it often happens to me, in that sort of feeble, slack talk, talk for form's sake, that I say and answer dreamy nonsense and silly things, unworthy of a child, and ridiculous. Or else I keep obstinately silent, which is still more inept and uncivil.
	I'ay vne façon resueuse, qui me retire à moy: et d'autre part vne lourde ignorance et puerile, de plusieurs choses communes. Par ces deux qualitez, i'ay gaigné, qu'on puisse faire au vray, cinq ou six contes de moy, aussi niais que d'autre quel qu'il soit.	I have a dreamy way that withdraws me into myself; and on the other hand a dense and childish ignorance of many ordinary things. Thanks to these two qualities I have earned the distinction that five or six stories can truthfully be told about me as foolish as about anyone at all.
3.3.4	Or suyuant mon propos, cette complexion difficile me rend delicat à la pratique des hommes: il me les faut trier sur le volet: et me rend incommode aux actions communes. Nous viuons, et negotions auec le peuple: si sa conuersation nous importune, si nous desdaignons à nous appliquer aux ames basses et vulgaires: et les basses et vulgaires sont souuent aussi reglees que les plus déliees: et toute sapience est insipide qui ne s'accommode à l'insipience commune: il ne nous faut	Now, to continue with my subject, this difficult temperament makes me fastidious in dealing with men—I have to pick them out with great care—and makes me unfit for ordinary activities. We live and deal with the people. If their conversation bores us, if we disdain to adapt ourselves to low and common souls—and the low and common are often as well ordered as the most refined, and all wisdom is insipid that does not accommodate it-

2 Seneca, Letters 56.
3 Cicero, Tusculan Disputations 5.38; Aristotle, Nicomachean Ethics 10.8.

FRENCH

plus entremettre ny de nos propres affaires, ny de ceux d'autruy: et les publiques et les priuez se demeslent auec ces gens là. Les moins tendues et plus naturelles alleures de nostre ame, sont les plus belles: les meilleures occupations, les moins efforcees.

Mon Dieu, que la sagesse faict vn bon office à ceux, de qui elle renge les desirs à leur puissance! Il n'est point de plus vtile science. Selon qu'on peut: c'estoit le refrain et le mot fauory de Socrates. Mot de grande substance: il faut adresser et arrester nos desirs, aux choses les plus aysees et voysines. Ne m'est-ce pas vne sotte humeur, de disconuenir auec vn milier à qui ma fortune me ioint, de qui ie ne me puis passer, pour me tenir à vn ou deux, qui sont hors de mon commerce: ou plustost à vn desir fantastique, de chose que ie ne puis recouurer? Mes mœurs molles, ennemies de toute aigreur et aspreté, peuuent aysement m'auoir deschargé d'enuies et d'inimitiez.

D'estre aymé, ie ne dy, mais de n'estre point hay, iamais homme n'en donna plus d'occasion. Mais la froideur de ma conuersation, m'a desrobé auec raison, la bien-vueillance de plusieurs, qui sont excusables de l'interpreter à autre, et pire sens.

3.3.5 Ie suis tres-capable d'acquerir et maintenir des amitiez rares et exquises. D'autant que ie me harpe auec si grande faim aux accointances qui reuiennent à mon goust, ie m'y produis, ie m'y iette si auidement, que ie ne faux pas aysement de m'y attacher, et de faire impression où ie donne: j'en ay faict souuent heureuse preuue. Aux amitiez communes, ie suis aucunement sterile et froid: car mon aller n'est pas naturel, s'il n'est à pleine voyle. Outre ce, que ma fortune m'ayant duit et affriandé de ieunesse, à vne amitié seule et parfaicte, m'a à la verité aucunement desgousté des autres: et trop imprimé en la fantasie, qu'elle est beste de compagnie, non pas de troupe, comme disoit cet ancien.

Aussi, que i'ay naturellement peine à me communiquer à demy: et auec modification, et cette seruile prudence et soupçonneuse, qu'on nous ordonne, en la conuersation de ces amitiez nombreuses, et imparfaictes. Et nous l'ordonne lon principalement en ce temps, qu'il ne se

ENGLISH

self to common unwisdom—then we must no longer meddle in our own affairs or in other people's; for both public and private affairs are worked out with those people. The least strained and most natural motions of our soul are the finest; the best occupations are the least forced.

My God, what a good service wisdom does for those whose desires it brings into line with their power! There is no more useful knowledge. "As far as one can": that was Socrates' refrain and favorite saying. A saying of great substance: we must direct and fix our desires on the easiest and nearest things. Is it not a foolish disposition in me to be at odds with a thousand people to whom my fortune joins me, and whom I cannot do without, in order to cling to one or two who are outside my company—or rather to a fanciful desire for something I cannot recover? My gentle ways, enemies of all sourness and harshness, may easily have spared me envy and enmity.

No man ever gave more reason—I do not say to be loved, but not to be hated. But the coldness of my manner has rightly robbed me of the goodwill of many, who may be excused for interpreting it in another, worse sense.

I am very capable of acquiring and keeping rare and exquisite friendships. I seize with such hunger on the acquaintances that suit my taste, I put myself forward and throw myself into them so avidly, that I rarely fail to attach myself and to make an impression where I strike; I have often had happy proof of it. In ordinary friendships I am somewhat barren and cold, for my going is not natural unless it is under full sail. Besides, my fortune trained me from youth for a single, perfect friendship and gave me a taste for it. That has in truth somewhat put me off the others, and impressed too deeply on my mind that friendship is a companionable creature, not a herd animal, as that ancient said.[4]

Also, I find it naturally hard to communicate myself by halves and with reservations, with that servile and suspicious prudence prescribed for us in the dealings of these numerous and imperfect friendships. And it is prescribed especially in

4 His friendship with La Boétie (I.28). The ancient is Plutarch, On Having Many Friends.

FRENCH

peut parler du monde, que dangereusement, ou faucement.

3.3.6 Si voy-ie bien pourtant, que qui a comme moy, pour sa fin, les commoditez de sa vie, ie dy les commoditez essentielles, doibt fuyr comme la peste, ces difficultez et delicatesse d'humeur. Ie louerois vn' ame à diuers estages, qui sçache et se tendre et se desmonter: qui soit bien par tout où sa fortune la porte: qui puisse deuiser auec son voisin, de son bastiment, de sa chasse et de sa querelle: entretenir auec plaisir vn charpentier et vn iardinier. I'enuie ceux, qui sçauent s'apriuoiser au moindre de leur suitte, et dresser de l'entretien en leur propre train.

Et le conseil de Platon ne me plaist pas, de parler tousiours d'vn langage maistral à ses seruiteurs, sans ieu, sans familiarité: soit enuers les masles, soit enuers les femelles. Car outre ma raison, il est inhumain et iniuste, de faire tant valoir cette telle quelle prerogatiue de la fortune: et les polices, où il se souffre moins de disparité entre les valets et les maistres, me semblent les plus equitables. Les autres s'estudient à eslancer et guinder leur esprit: moy à le baisser et coucher: il n'est vicieux qu'en extention. *Narras et genus Æaci,*
Et pugnata sacro bella sub Ilio:
Quo Chium pretio cadum
Mercemur, quis aquam temperet ignibus,
Quo præbente domum, et quota
Pelignis caream frigoribus, taces.

3.3.7 Ainsi comme la vaillance Lacedemonienne auoit besoing de moderation, et du son doux et gratieux du ieu des flustes, pour la flatter en la guerre, de peur qu'elle ne se iettast à la temerité, et à la furie: là où toutes autres nations ordinairement employent des sons et des voix aigues et fortes, qui esmeuuent et qui eschauffent à outrance le courage des soldats: il me semble de mesme, contre la forme ordinaire, qu'en l'vsage de nostre esprit, nous auons pour la plus part, plus besoing de plomb, que d'ailes: de froideur et de repos, que d'ardeur et d'agitation.

Sur tout, c'est à mon gré bien faire le sot, que de faire l'entendu, entre ceux qui ne le sont pas: parler tousjours bandé, *fauellar in punta di forchetta*. Il faut se desmettre au train de ceux auec qui vous estes, et par fois affecter

ENGLISH

these times, when one cannot speak of the world except dangerously or falsely.

And yet I see clearly that anyone who, like me, has for his aim the comforts of his life—I mean its essential comforts—should flee these difficulties and this fastidiousness of temperament like the plague. I would praise a soul with several stories, one that knows how both to tighten and to unbend itself. It should be at ease wherever its fortune carries it. It should be able to chat with its neighbor about his building, his hunting and his quarrel, and to converse with pleasure with a carpenter and a gardener. I envy those who know how to be at ease with the least of their retinue and to make conversation within their own household.

And I do not like Plato's advice always to speak to one's servants in a masterly tone, without banter, without familiarity, whether to the men or the women. For, apart from my own reason, it is inhuman and unjust to make so much of this paltry prerogative of fortune. And the governments that tolerate less disparity between servants and masters seem to me the most equitable. Others strive to launch their minds aloft and hoist them up; I, to lower mine and lay it down. It goes wrong only when it stretches. *You tell of the line of Aeacus*
and the wars fought beneath sacred Troy;
but at what price we may buy a jar of Chian,
who will warm the water over the fire,
who will lend a house, and at what hour
I shall escape the Pelignian cold, you do not say.[5]

Spartan valor needed moderation, and the soft, gracious sound of flutes to soothe it in war, for fear it should throw itself into rashness and fury; whereas all other nations usually employ shrill, strong sounds and voices that stir the soldiers' courage and inflame it to excess. In the same way, it seems to me, contrary to the usual pattern, that in the use of our mind we mostly need lead more than wings, coolness and rest more than ardor and agitation.

Above all, to my taste, it is playing the fool to play the expert among those who are not: to speak always under strain, *to talk on the point of a fork*. You must come down to the level of those you are

5 Plato, Laws 6; Horace, Odes 3.19.

FRENCH

l'ignorance. Mettez à part la force et la subtilité: en l'vsage commun, c'est assez d'y reseruer l'ordre: trainez vous au demeurant à terre, s'ils veulent.

3.3.8 Les sçauans chopent volontiers à cette pierre: ils font tousiours parade de leur magistere, et sement leurs liures par tout. Ils en ont en ce temps entonné si fort les cabinets et oreilles des dames, que si elles n'en ont retenu la substance, au moins elles en ont la mine. A toute sorte de propos, et matiere, pour basse et populaire qu'elle soit, elles se seruent d'vne façon de parler et d'escrire, nouuelle et sçauante. *Hoc sermone pauent, hoc iram, gaudia, curas,*
Hoc cuncta effundunt animi secreta, quid vltrà?
Concumbunt doctè. Et alleguent Platon et sainct Thomas, aux choses ausquelles le premier rencontré, seruiroit aussi bien de tesmoing.

La doctrine qui ne leur a peu arriuer en l'ame, leur est demeuree en la langue. Si les bien-nees me croient, elles se contenteront de faire valoir leurs propres et naturelles richesses. Elles cachent et couurent leurs beautez, soubs des beautez estrangeres: c'est grande simplesse, d'estouffer sa clarté pour luire d'vne lumiere empruntee. Elles sont enterrees et enseuelies soubs l'art de *Capsula totæ*. C'est qu'elles ne se cognoissent point assez: le monde n'a rien de plus beau: c'est à elles d'honnorer les arts, et de farder le fard. Que leur faut-il, que viure aymees et honnorees? Elles n'ont, et ne sçauent que trop, pour cela. Il ne faut qu'esueiller vn peu, et reschauffer les facultez qui sont en elles.

Quand ie les voy attachees à la rhetorique, à la iudiciaire, à la logique, et semblables drogueries, si vaines et inutiles à leur besoing: i'entre en crainte, que les hommes qui le leur conseillent, le facent pour auoir loy de les regenter soubs ce tiltre. Car quelle autre excuse leur trouuerois-ie? Baste, qu'elles peuuent sans nous, renger la grace de leurs yeux, à la gayeté, à la seuerité, et à la douceur: assaisonner vn nenny, de rudesse, de doubte, et de faueur: et qu'elles ne cherchent point d'interprete aux discours qu'on faict pour leur seruice. Auec cette science,

ENGLISH

with, and sometimes affect ignorance. Put force and subtlety aside; in ordinary use it is enough to keep order. For the rest, crawl along the ground, if they wish.[6]

Learned men readily stumble on this stone: they always parade their mastery and scatter their books everywhere. In these times they have poured them so heavily into the studies and ears of the ladies that if the ladies have not retained the substance, at least they have the look of it. On every sort of topic and subject, however low and popular, they use a new and learned way of speaking and writing. *In this language they voice their fears, their anger, joys, cares;*
in this they pour out all their soul's secrets. What more?
They make love learnedly. And they cite Plato and Saint Thomas on matters for which the first person they met would serve just as well as a witness.[7]

The learning that could not reach their souls has stayed on their tongues. If well-born women will believe me, they will be content to make the most of their own natural riches. They hide and cover their beauties under foreign beauties. It is great simplicity to smother one's own brightness in order to shine with borrowed light. They are buried and entombed under the art of being *all out of a box*. That is because they do not know themselves well enough. The world has nothing more beautiful; it is for them to do honor to the arts and to paint the paint. What do they need but to live loved and honored? For that they have and know all too much. They need only awaken a little and rekindle the faculties that are in them.[8]

When I see them taken up with rhetoric, judicial astrology, logic and similar trumpery, so vain and useless for their needs, I begin to fear that the men who advise them to it do so in order to have the right to rule over them under that pretext. For what other excuse could I find for them? Enough that they can, without us, set the grace of their eyes to gaiety, to severity and to sweetness. They can season a "no" with harshness, with doubt, and with favor. They need no interpreter for the

6 An Italian expression for affected, overly precise speech.
7 Juvenal, Satires 6, where the language in question is Greek.
8 Seneca, Letters 115, said of fops groomed as if taken straight out of a box.

FRENCH

elles commandent à baguette, et regentent les regents et l'escole.

3.3.9 Si toutesfois il leur fasche de nous ceder en quoy que ce soit, et veulent par curiosité auoir part aux liures: la poësie est vn amusement propre à leur besoin: c'est vn art follastre, et subtil, desguisé, parlier, tout en plaisir, tout en montre, comme elles. Elles tireront aussi diuerses commoditez de l'histoire. En la philosophie, de la part qui sert à la vie, elles prendront les discours qui les dressent à iuger de nos humeurs et conditions, à se deffendre de nos trahisons: à regler la temerité de leurs propres desirs: à mesnager leur liberté: allonger les plaisirs de la vie, et à porter humainement l'inconstance d'vn seruiteur, la rudesse d'vn mary, et l'importunité des ans, et des rides, et choses semblables.

Voyla pour le plus, la part que ie leur assignerois aux sciences.

3.3.10 Il y a des naturels particuliers, retirez et internes. Ma forme essentielle, est propre à la communication, et à la production: ie suis tout au dehors et en euidence, nay à la societé et à l'amitié. La solitude que i'ayme, et que ie presche, ce n'est principallement, que ramener à moy mes affections, et mes pensees: restreindre et resserrer, non mes pas, ains mes desirs et mon soucy, resignant la solicitude estrangere, et fuyant mortellement la seruitude, et l'obligation: et non tant la foule des hommes, que la foule des affaires. La solitude locale, à dire verité, m'estend plustost, et m'eslargit au dehors: ie me iette aux affaires d'estat, et à l'vniuers, plus volontiers quand ie suis seul.

Au Louure et en la presse, ie me resserre et contraints en ma peau. La foule me repousse à moy. Et ne m'entretiens iamais si folement, si licentieusement et particulierement, qu'aux lieux de respect, et de prudence ceremonieuse. Nos folies ne me font pas rire, ce sont nos sapiences. De ma complexion, ie ne suis pas ennemy de l'agitation des cours: i'y ay passé partie de la vie: et suis faict à me porter allaigrement aux grandes compagnies: pourueu que ce soit par interualles, et à mon poinct. Mais cette mollesse de iugement, dequoy ie parle, m'attache par force à la solitude.

Voire chez moy, au milieu d'vne famille peuplee, et maison des plus frequentees, i'y voy des gens assez, mais

ENGLISH

speeches made to court them. With this knowledge they command imperiously and rule over the teachers and the school.

If, however, it vexes them to yield to us in anything at all, and out of curiosity they want a share in books, poetry is an amusement suited to their need. It is a playful and subtle art, disguised, talkative, all pleasure, all show, like them. They will also draw various benefits from history. In philosophy, from the part that serves life, they will take the reasonings that train them to judge our temperaments and characters and to defend themselves against our betrayals. These will teach them to regulate the rashness of their own desires, to manage their freedom, to prolong the pleasures of life, and to bear with humanity a suitor's inconstancy, a husband's rudeness, the burden of years and wrinkles, and the like.

That, at most, is the share in learning I would assign them.

There are some particular natures, retiring and inward. My essential form is suited to communication and to bringing forth: I am all outward and in view, born for society and friendship. The solitude that I love and preach is chiefly nothing but bringing my affections and thoughts back to myself. It means restraining and narrowing not my steps but my desires and cares, resigning concern for outside things, and shunning servitude and obligation like death—and not so much the crowd of men as the crowd of affairs. Solitude of place, to tell the truth, rather extends me and enlarges me outward: I throw myself into affairs of state and into the universe more willingly when I am alone.

At the Louvre and in the crowd, I draw in and shrink into my skin. The crowd pushes me back into myself. And I never entertain myself so foolishly, so licentiously and privately, as in places that call for respect and ceremonious prudence. It is not our follies that make me laugh; it is our wisdoms. By constitution I am no enemy to the bustle of courts. I have spent part of my life there, and I am used to carrying myself cheerfully in great gatherings, provided it is at intervals and when I choose. But that softness of judgment I speak of ties me by force to solitude.

Even at home, in the midst of a populous household and one of the most frequented of houses, I

FRENCH	ENGLISH
rarement ceux, auecq qui i'ayme à communiquer. Et ie reserue là, et pour moy, et pour les autres, vne liberté inusitee. Il s'y faict trefue de ceremonie, d'assistance, et conuoiemens, et telles autres ordonnances penibles de nostre courtoisie (ô la seruile et importune vsance) chacun s'y gouuerne à sa mode, y entretient qui veut ses pensees: ie m'y tiens muet, resueur, et enfermé, sans offence de mes hostes.	see people enough, but rarely those with whom I like to converse. And there I reserve, both for myself and for others, an unusual freedom. There is a truce there from ceremony, from attendance and escorting, and other such painful rules of our courtesy (oh, what a servile and tiresome custom!). Everyone conducts himself as he pleases; whoever wishes entertains his own thoughts. I keep silent, dreamy and shut up in myself, without offense to my guests.

MEN OF WORTH

The first kind of company: conversation with able, honorable men.

FRENCH	ENGLISH
3.3.11 Les hommes, de la societé et familiarité desquels ie suis en queste, sont ceux qu'on appelle honnestes et habiles hommes: l'image de ceux icy me degouste des autres. C'est à le bien prendre, de nos formes, la plus rare: et forme qui se doit principallement à la nature. La fin de ce commerce, c'est simplement la priuauté, frequentation, et conference: l'exercice des ames, sans autre fruit. En nos propos, tous subiects me sont égaux: il ne me chaut qu'il y ayt ny poix, ny profondeur: la grace et la pertinence y sont tousiours: tout y est teinct d'vn iugement meur et constant, et meslé de bonté, de franchise, de gayeté et d'amitié.	The men whose society and familiarity I seek are those called honorable and capable men; the image of these spoils my taste for the others. Rightly considered, it is the rarest of our types, and a type owed chiefly to nature. The aim of this association is simply intimacy, company and conversation: the exercise of souls, with no other fruit. In our talk all subjects are alike to me. I do not care whether there is weight or depth in it; grace and pertinence are always there. Everything is tinged with a mature and steady judgment, and mingled with goodness, frankness, gaiety and friendship.
Ce n'est pas au subiect des substitutions seulement, que nostre esprit montre sa beauté et sa force, et aux affaires des Roys: il la montre autant aux confabulations priuees. Ie congnois mes gens au silence mesme, et à leur soubsrire, et les descouure mieux à l'aduanture à table, qu'au conseil. Hippomachus disoit bien qu'il congnoissoit les bons lucteurs, à les voir simplement marcher par vne ruë. S'il plaist à la doctrine de se mesler à nos deuis, elle n'en sera point refusee: non magistrale, imperieuse, et importune, comme de coustume, mais suffragante et docile elle mesme. Nous n'y cherchons qu'à passer le temps: à l'heure d'estre instruicts et preschez, nous l'irons trouuer en son throsne.	It is not only on the subject of entails, or in the affairs of kings, that our mind shows its beauty and strength; it shows them just as much in private conversations. I know my people even by their silence and their smiles, and perhaps discover them better at table than in council. Hippomachus rightly said that he could recognize good wrestlers just by seeing them walk down a street. If learning cares to join our talk, it will not be refused—not magisterial, imperious and tiresome, as it usually is, but itself deferential and docile. We seek there only to pass the time. When it is time to be instructed and preached to, we will go and find it on its throne.[9]
Qu'elle se demette à nous pour ce coup s'il lui plaist: car toute vtile et desirable qu'elle est, ie presuppose, qu'encore au besoing nous en pourrions nous bien du tout passer, et faire nostre effect sans elle. Vne ame bien nee, et exercee à la practique des hommes, se rend plainement aggreable d'elle mesme. L'art n'est autre	Let it come down to our level for this once, if it pleases. For useful and desirable as it is, I presume that even at need we could do entirely without it and achieve our purpose without it. A well-born soul, practiced in dealing with men, makes itself thoroughly agreeable on its own. Art is nothing

9 Hippomachus was a Greek wrestling master; the remark is in Plutarch.

FRENCH	ENGLISH
chose que le contrerolle, et le registre des productions de telles ames.	but the record and register of the productions of such souls.

WOMEN

The second kind: the company of beautiful and honorable women, enjoyed with care.

FRENCH	ENGLISH
3.3.12 C'est aussi pour moy vn doux commerce, que celuy des belles et honnestes femmes: *nam nos quoque oculos eruditos habemus.* Si l'ame n'y a pas tant à iouyr qu'au premier, les sens corporels qui participent aussi plus à cettuy-cy, le ramenent à vne proportion voisine de l'autre: quoy que selon moy, non pas esgalle. Mais c'est vn commerce où il se faut tenir vn peu sur ses gardes: et notamment ceux en qui le corps peut beaucoup, comme en moy. Ie m'y eschauday en mon enfance: et y souffris toutes les rages, que les poëtes disent aduenir à ceux qui s'y laissent aller sans ordre et sans iugement. Il est vray que ce coup de fouët m'a seruy depuis d'instruction.	Another sweet association for me is that of beautiful and decent women: *for we too have learned eyes.* If the soul has not as much to enjoy here as in the first, the bodily senses, which have a greater share in this one, bring it to a proportion close to the other, though in my view not equal. But it is an association in which one must stay a little on one's guard, especially those in whom the body has great power, as in me. I scalded myself at it in my youth, and suffered all the frenzies that the poets say befall those who abandon themselves to it without order and without judgment. It is true that this whipping has since served me as a lesson.
Quicumque Argolica de classe Capharea fugit, / Semper ab Euboicis vela retorquet aquis. C'est folie d'y attacher toutes ses pensees, et s'y engager d'vne affection furieuse et indiscrete. Mais d'autre part, de s'y mesler sans amour, et sans obligation de volonté, en forme de comediens, pour iouer vn rolle commun, de l'aage et de la coustume, et n'y mettre du sien que les parolles: c'est de vray pouruoir à sa seureté: mais bien laschement, comme celuy qui abandonneroit son honneur ou son proffit, ou son plaisir, de peur du danger. Car il est certain, que d'vne telle pratique, ceux qui la dressent, n'en peuuent esperer aucun fruict, qui touche ou satisface vne belle ame.	*Whoever of the Argive fleet has escaped Caphareus / always turns his sails away from Euboean waters.* It is folly to fasten all one's thoughts on it and to engage in it with a furious and indiscreet passion. But on the other hand, to mix in it without love and without commitment of the will, like actors, playing a common part of one's age and of custom, putting nothing of one's own into it but words—that is indeed providing for one's safety, but in a very cowardly way, like a man who would abandon his honor, his profit or his pleasure for fear of danger. For it is certain that those who go in for such a practice can expect from it no fruit that touches or satisfies a fine soul.[10]
Il faut auoir en bon escient desiré, ce qu'on veut prendre en bon escient plaisir de iouyr. Ie dy quand iniustement fortune fauoriseroit leur masque: ce qui aduient souuent, à cause de ce qu'il n'y a aucune d'elles, pour malotrüe qu'elle soit, qui ne pense estre bien aymable, qui ne se recommande par son aage, ou par son poil, ou par son mouuement (car de laides vniuersellement, il n'en est non plus que de belles) et les filles Brachmanes, qui ont faute d'autre recommendation, le peuple assemblé à cri publiq pour cet effect, vont en la place, faisans montre de leurs parties matrimoniales: veoir, si par là aumoins elles ne valent pas d'acquerir vn mary.	One must have truly desired what one wants truly to take pleasure in enjoying. I mean this even if fortune should unjustly favor their mask. That often happens, because there is no woman, however ill-favored, who does not think herself quite lovable, and who does not commend herself by her age, or her hair, or her way of moving (for there are no more women universally ugly than universally beautiful). And the Brahmin girls who lack other recommendation go into the square, the people having been assembled for the purpose by public crier, and display their matrimonial parts,

10 Ovid, Tristia 1.1. Caphareus, a cape of Euboea, is where the Greek fleet was wrecked on its return from Troy.

FRENCH

Par consequent il n'en est pas vne qui ne se laisse facilement persuader au premier serment qu'on luy fait de la seruir. Or de cette trahison commune et ordinaire des hommes d'auiourd'huy, il faut qu'il aduienne, ce que desia nous montre l'experience: c'est qu'elles se r'allient et reiettent à elles mesmes, ou entre elles, pour nous fuyr: ou bien qu'elles se rengent aussi de leur costé, à cet exemple que nous leur donnons: qu'elles ioüent leur part de la farce, et se prestent à cette negociation, sans passion, sans soing et sans amour: *Neque affectui suo aut alieno obnoxiæ.* Estimans, suyuant la persuasion de Lysias en Platon, qu'elles se peuuent addonner vtilement et commodement à nous, d'autant plus, que moins nous les aymons.

Il en ira comme des comedies, le peuple y aura autant ou plus de plaisir que les comediens. De moy, ie ne connois non plus Venus sans Cupidon, qu'vne maternité sans engeance. Ce sont choses qui s'entreprestent et s'entredoiuent leur essence. Ainsi cette piperie reiallit sur celuy qui la fait: il ne luy couste guere, mais il n'acquiert aussi rien qui vaille. Ceux qui ont faict Venus Deesse, ont regardé que sa principale beauté estoit incorporelle et spirituelle. Mais celle que ces gens cy cerchent, n'est pas seulement humaine, ny mesme brutale: les bestes ne la veulent si lourde et si terrestre.

Nous voyons que l'imagination et le desir les eschauffe souuent et solicite, auant le corps: nous voyons en l'vn et l'autre sexe, qu'en la presse elles ont du choix et du triage en leurs affections, et qu'elles ont entre-elles des accointances de longue bien-vueillance. Celles mesmes à qui la vieillesse refuse la force corporelle, fremissent encores, hannissent et tressaillent d'amour. Nous les voyons auant le faict, pleines d'esperance et d'ardeur: et quand le corps a ioué son ieu, se chatouiller encor de la douceur de cette souuenance: et en voyons qui s'enflent de fierté au partir de là, et qui en produisent des chants de feste et de triomphe, lasses et saoules.

Qui n'a qu'à descharger le corps d'vne necessité naturelle, n'a que faire d'y embesongner autruy auec des apprests si curieux. Ce n'est pas viande à vne grosse et lourde faim.

ENGLISH

to see whether by that at least they are not worth a husband.

Consequently there is not one who does not easily let herself be persuaded by the first vow made to her to serve her. Now from this common and ordinary treachery of the men of today, there must follow what experience already shows us. Either women rally and fall back on themselves, or on one another, to avoid us; or else they too, on their side, fall in with the example we give them. They play their part in the farce and lend themselves to this transaction without passion, without care and without love: *in thrall neither to their own feelings nor to another's.* They reckon, following the argument of Lysias in Plato, that they can give themselves to us profitably and conveniently, all the more as we love them less.[11]

It will be as with comedies: the audience will get as much pleasure from them as the actors, or more. For my part, I no more know Venus without Cupid than motherhood without offspring. They are things that lend and owe each other their essence. So this cheating rebounds on the one who practices it: it costs him little, but he gains nothing worth having either. Those who made Venus a goddess took into account that her principal beauty was incorporeal and spiritual. But the beauty these people seek is not merely human, nor even animal: the beasts do not want it so gross and earthy.

We see that imagination and desire often heat and stir the beasts before the body does. We see in both sexes that, in the herd, they have choice and discrimination in their affections, and that they form attachments among themselves of long goodwill. Even those to whom old age denies bodily strength still quiver, neigh and tremble with love. We see them before the act full of hope and ardor, and when the body has played its part, still tickling themselves with the sweetness of that memory. And we see some who swell with pride on leaving it, and who produce songs of festivity and triumph, weary and sated.

Whoever has only to relieve his body of a natural necessity has no need to involve another in it with such elaborate preparations. This is no food for a gross and heavy hunger.

11 Tacitus, Annals 13.45, of Poppaea. Lysias' speech in Plato's Phaedrus argues that one should favor a non-lover over a lover.

FRENCH

ENGLISH

3.3.13 Comme celuy qui ne demande point qu'on me tienne pour meilleur que ie suis, ie diray cecy des erreurs de ma ieunesse: non seulement pour le danger qu'il y a, de la santé, (si n'ay-ie sceu si bien faire, que ie n'en aye eu deux atteintes, legeres toutesfois, et preambulaires) mais encores par mespris, ie ne me suis guere adonné aux accointances venales et publiques. I'ay voulu aiguiser ce plaisir par la difficulté, par le desir et par quelque gloire. Et aymois la façon de l'Empereur Tibere, qui se prenoit en ses amours, autant par la modestie et noblesse, que par autre qualité.

Et l'humeur de la courtisane Flora, qui ne se prestoit à moins, que d'vn Dictateur, ou Consul, ou Censeur: et prenoit son deduit, en la dignité de ses amoureux. Certes les perles et le brocadel y conferent quelque chose: et les tiltres, et le train.

As one who does not ask to be thought better than I am, I will say this about the errors of my youth. I hardly ever went in for paid, public liaisons—not only because of the danger to health (and yet I did not manage so well that I escaped two touches of it, light ones, however, and preliminary), but also out of contempt. I wanted to sharpen that pleasure by difficulty, by desire and by some glory. And I liked the way of the Emperor Tiberius, who was captivated in his loves as much by modesty and nobility as by any other quality.

And the disposition of the courtesan Flora, who would give herself to no one less than a dictator, a consul or a censor, and took her delight in the dignity of her lovers. Certainly pearls and brocade contribute something to it, and titles, and a retinue.[12]

3.3.14 Au demeurant, ie faisois grand compte de l'esprit, mais pourueu que le corps n'en fust pas à dire. Car à respondre en conscience, si l'vne ou l'autre des deux beautez deuoit necessairement y faillir, i'eusse choisi de quitter plustost la spirituelle. Elle a son vsage en meilleures choses. Mais au subiect de l'amour, subiect qui principallement se rapporte à la veuë et à l'atouchement, on faict quelque chose sans les graces de l'esprit, rien sans les graces corporelles. C'est le vray aduantage des dames que la beauté: elle est si leur, que la nostre, quoy qu'elle desire des traicts vn peu autres, n'est en son point, que confuse auec la leur, puerile et imberbe.

On dit que chez le grand Seigneur, ceux qui le seruent sous titre de beauté, qui sont en nombre infini, ont leur congé, au plus loing, à vingt et deux ans. Les discours, la prudence, et les offices d'amitié, se trouuent mieux chez les hommes: pourtant gouuernent-ils les affaires du monde.

For the rest, I set great store by the mind, but provided the body was not lacking. For, to answer in conscience, if one or the other of the two beauties had necessarily to be missing, I would sooner have chosen to give up the spiritual one. It has its use in better things. But in the matter of love, a matter that relates chiefly to sight and touch, something can be done without the graces of the mind, nothing without the graces of the body. Beauty is the true advantage of women. It is so much theirs that ours, though it calls for somewhat different features, is at its best only when it is mixed with theirs, boyish and beardless.

They say that at the court of the Grand Signor, those who serve him by reason of their beauty, who are infinite in number, are dismissed at twenty-two at the latest. Reasoning, prudence and the offices of friendship are found better among men; that is why they govern the affairs of the world.[13]

BOOKS

The third and surest kind: books, always at hand, which console and divert.

FRENCH

ENGLISH

3.3.15 Ces deux commerces sont fortuites, et despendans d'autruy: l'vn est ennuyeux par sa rareté, l'autre se flestrit auec l'aage: ainsin ils n'eussent pas assez prouueu

These two kinds of association are fortuitous and depend on others. One is distressing in its rarity; the other withers with age; so they would not have

12 Flora was a Roman courtesan whom Plutarch says Pompey loved.
13 The Ottoman sultan.

FRENCH

au besoing de ma vie. Celuy des liures, qui est le troisiesme, est bien plus seur et plus à nous. Il cede aux premiers les autres aduantages: mais il a pour sa part la constance et facilité de son seruice. Cettuy-cy costoye tout mon cours, et m'assiste par tout: il me console en la vieillesse et en la solitude: il me descharge du poix d'vne oisiueté ennuyeuse: et me deffait à toute heure des compagnies qui me faschent: il emousse les pointures de la douleur, si elle n'est du tout extreme et maistresse.

Pour me distraire d'vne imagination importune, il n'est que de recourir aux liures, ils me destournent facilement à eux, et me la desrobent. Et si ne se mutinent point, pour voir que ie ne les recherche, qu'au deffaut de ces autres commoditez, plus reelles, viues et naturelles: ils me reçoiuent tousiours de mesme visage. Il a bel aller à pied, dit-on, qui meine son cheual par la bride.

Et nostre Iacques Roy de Naples, et de Sicile, qui beau, ieune, et sain, se faisoit porter par pays en ciuiere, couché sur vn meschant oriller de plume, vestu d'vne robe de drap gris, et vn bonnet de mesme: suiuy ce pendant d'vne grande pompe royalle, lictieres, cheuaux à main de toutes sortes, gentils-hommes et officiers: representoit vne austerité tendre encores et chancellante. Le malade n'est pas à plaindre, qui a la guarison en sa manche. En l'experience et vsage de cette sentence, qui est tres-veritable, consiste tout le fruict que ie tire des liures. Ie ne m'en sers en effect, quasi non plus que ceux qui ne les cognoissent poinct.

I'en iouys, comme les auaritieux des tresors, pour sçauoir que i'en iouyray quand il me plaira: mon ame se rassasie et contente de ce droict de possession. Ie ne voyage sans liures, ny en paix, ny en guerre. Toutesfois il se passera plusieurs iours, et des mois, sans que ie les employe. Ce sera tantost, dis-ie, ou demain, ou quand il me plaira: le temps court et s'en va ce pendant sans me blesser. Car il ne se peut dire, combien ie me repose et seiourne en cette consideration, qu'ils sont à mon costé pour me donner du plaisir à mon heure: et à reconnoistre, combien ils portent de secours à ma vie.

ENGLISH

provided sufficiently for the needs of my life. That of books, which is the third, is much more secure and more our own. It yields the other advantages to the first two, but it has for its share the constancy and ease of its service. It goes along beside my whole course and attends me everywhere. It consoles me in old age and in solitude. It relieves me of the weight of a wearisome idleness, and rids me at any hour of company that annoys me. It blunts the stings of pain, unless the pain is altogether extreme and in command.

To divert me from a troublesome fancy, I need only turn to books: they easily draw me to them and steal it away from me. And yet they do not mutiny on seeing that I seek them only for lack of those other pleasures, more real, lively and natural; they always receive me with the same face. He may well go on foot, they say, who leads his horse by the bridle.

And our Jacques, king of Naples and Sicily, handsome, young and healthy, had himself carried about the country on a stretcher, lying on a wretched feather pillow, dressed in a gown of gray cloth with a cap to match. Meanwhile he was followed by great royal pomp, litters, led horses of all sorts, gentlemen and officers. He displayed an austerity still tender and wavering. The sick man is not to be pitied who has his cure up his sleeve. In the experience and practice of this maxim, which is very true, lies all the fruit I draw from books. In fact I make hardly more use of them than those who do not know them at all.[14]

I enjoy them as misers enjoy their treasures, knowing that I shall enjoy them when I please; my soul is sated and contented with this right of possession. I do not travel without books, either in peace or in war. Yet many days will pass, and months, without my using them. Soon, I say, or tomorrow, or when I please; meanwhile time runs on and goes by without hurting me. For it is impossible to say how much I rest and take my ease in the thought that they are at my side to give me pleasure when I choose, and in recognizing how much help they bring to my life.

14 Jacques de Bourbon, count of La Marche (d. 1438), husband of Queen Joanna II of Naples, who later became a Franciscan.

THE LIBRARY IN THE TOWER

Montaigne describes the round library where he reads, dreams and dictates.

FRENCH

C'est la meilleure munition que i'aye trouué à cet humain voyage: et plains extremement les hommes d'entendement, qui l'ont à dire. I'accepte plustost toute autre sorte d'amusement, pour leger qu'il soit: d'autant que cettuy-cy ne me peut faillir. Chez moy, ie me destourne vn peu plus souuent à ma librairie, d'où, tout d'vne main, ie commande mon mesnage. Ie suis sur l'entree, et vois soubs moy, mon iardin, ma basse cour, ma cour, et dans la plus part des membres de ma maison. Là ie feuillette à cette heure vn liure, à cette heure vn autre, sans ordre et sans dessein, à pieces descousues. Tantost ie resue, tantost i'enregistre et dicte, en me promenant, mes songes que voicy. Elle est au troisiesme estage d'vne tour.

Le premier, c'est ma chapelle, le second vne chambre et sa suitte, où ie me couche souuent, pour estre seul. Au dessus, elle a vne grande garderobe. C'estoit au temps passé, le lieu plus inutile de ma maison. Ie passe là et la plus part des iours de ma vie, et la plus part des heures du iour. Ie n'y suis iamais la nuict. A sa suitte est vn cabinet assez poly, capable à receuoir du feu pour l'hyuer, tres-plaisamment percé.

Et si ie ne craignoy non plus le soing que la despense, le soing qui me chasse de toute besongne: i'y pourroy facilement coudre à chasque costé vne gallerie de cent pas de long, et douze de large, à plein pied: ayant trouué tous les murs montez, pour autre vsage, à la hauteur qu'il me faut. Tout lieu retiré requiert vn proumenoir. Mes pensees dorment, si ie les assis. Mon esprit ne va pas seul, comme si les iambes l'agitent. Ceux qui estudient sans liure, en sont tous là.

La figure en est ronde, et n'a de plat, que ce qu'il faut à ma table et à mon siege: et vient m'offrant en se courbant, d'vne veuë, tous mes liures, rengez sur des pulpitres à cinq degrez tout à l'enuiron. Elle a trois veuës de riche et libre prospect, et seize pas de vuide en diametre. En hyuer i'y suis moins continuellement: car ma maison est iuchee sur vn tertre, comme dit son nom: et n'a point de piece plus euentee que cette cy: qui me

ENGLISH

It is the best provision I have found for this human journey, and I greatly pity men of intelligence who lack it. I take up any other sort of amusement first, however slight, since this one cannot fail me. At home I turn aside a little more often to my library, from which I direct my household at the same time. It is over the entrance, and I see below me my garden, my farmyard, my courtyard, and into most parts of my house. There I leaf through now one book, now another, without order and without plan, in disconnected pieces. Now I muse; now I record and dictate, walking up and down, these musings of mine you have here. It is on the third floor of a tower.[15]

The first floor is my chapel, the second a bedroom with its adjoining rooms, where I often lie down to be alone. Above it is a large wardrobe room. In times past it was the most useless place in my house. There I spend most of the days of my life and most of the hours of the day. I am never there at night. Next to it is a rather elegant little study, with a fireplace for the winter, very pleasantly windowed.

And if I feared the trouble no more than the expense—the trouble that drives me from every task—I could easily join on to each side a gallery a hundred paces long and twelve wide, on the same level, for I have found all the walls already built, for another purpose, to the height I need. Every secluded place needs a walk. My thoughts fall asleep if I make them sit down. My mind does not go on its own, as it does when my legs move it. Those who study without a book are all in the same case.

Its shape is round, with no flat part except what is needed for my table and chair. Curving around me, it offers me at a glance all my books, arranged on shelves five tiers high all the way round. It has three views with a rich and open prospect, and sixteen paces of free space across. In winter I am there less continually, for my house is perched on a hillock, as its name says, and has no room more

15 The tower still stands at the château de Montaigne in the Périgord, with the Latin and Greek maxims he had painted on the library beams.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
	plaist d'estre vn peu penible et à l'esquart, tant pour le fruit de l'exercice, que pour reculer de moy la presse. C'est là mon siege.	exposed to the wind than this one. I like it for being a little hard to reach and out of the way, both for the benefit of the exercise and to keep the crowd at a distance. That is my seat.[16]
	I'essaye à m'en rendre la domination pure: et à soustraire ce seul coing, à la communauté et coniugale, et filiale, et ciuile. Par tout ailleurs ie n'ay qu'vne auctorité verbale: en essence, confuse. Miserable à mon gré, qui n'a chez soy, où estre à soy: où se faire particulierement la cour: où se cacher. L'ambition paye bien ses gents, de les tenir tousiours en montre, comme la statue d'vn marché. *Magna seruitus est magna fortuna.* Ils n'ont pas seulement leur retraict pour retraitte.	I try to make my rule there absolute, and to withdraw this one corner from all community, conjugal, filial and civil. Everywhere else I have only a verbal authority, in essence confused. Wretched, to my mind, is the man who has nowhere in his own home where he can be by himself, where he can pay court to himself in private, where he can hide. Ambition pays its people well by keeping them always on display, like a statue in a marketplace. *A great fortune is a great servitude.* They cannot even have their privy for privacy.
	Ie n'ay rien iugé de si rude en l'austerité de vie, que nos religieux affectent, que ce que ie voy en quelqu'vne de leurs compagnies, auoir pour regle vne perpetuelle societé de lieu: et assistance nombreuse entre eux, en quelque action que ce soit. Et trouue aucunement plus supportable, d'estre tousiours seul, que ne le pouuoir iamais estre.	I have found nothing so harsh in the austerity of life our monks affect as what I see in some of their orders: a rule of perpetual sharing of place, and numerous company among them in every action whatever. And I find it somewhat more bearable to be always alone than never to be able to be so.
3.3.16	Si quelqu'vn me dit, que c'est auillir les muses, de s'en seruir seulement de iouet, et de passetemps, il ne sçait pas comme moy, combien vaut le plaisir, le ieu et le passetemps: à peine que ie ne die toute autre fin estre ridicule. Ie vis du iour à la iournee, et parlant en reuerence, ne vis que pour moy: mes desseins se terminent là. I'estudiay ieune pour l'ostentation; depuis, vn peu pour m'assagir: à cette heure pour m'esbattre: iamais pour le quest. Vne humeur vaine et despensiere que i'auois, apres cette sorte de meuble: non pour en prouuoir seulement mon besoing, mais de trois pas au dela, pour m'en tapisser et parer: ie l'ay pieça abandonnee.	If someone tells me that it is degrading the Muses to use them only as a toy and a pastime, he does not know, as I do, how much pleasure, play and pastime are worth. I would almost say that any other aim is ridiculous. I live from day to day, and, saving your reverence, I live only for myself; my plans end there. In youth I studied for show; later, a little to make myself wiser; now for amusement; never for gain. I once had a vain, spendthrift humor for this sort of furniture—not merely to provide for my need, but to go three steps beyond it, to deck and adorn myself with it. I gave it up long ago.
3.3.17	Les liures ont beaucoup de qualitez aggreables à ceux qui les sçauent choisir. Mais aucun bien sans peine. C'est vn plaisir qui n'est pas net et pur, non plus que les autres: il a ses incommoditez, et bien poisantes. L'ame s'y exerce, mais le corps, duquel ie n'ay non plus oublié le soing, demeure ce pendant sans action, s'atterre et s'attriste. Ie ne sçache excez plus dommageable pour moy, ny plus à euiter, en cette declinaison d'aage.	Books have many qualities pleasing to those who know how to choose them. But no good without pain. It is a pleasure no more clean and pure than the others; it has its drawbacks, and heavy ones. The mind exercises itself, but the body, whose care I have not forgotten either, meanwhile remains inactive, grows heavy and dejected. I know of no excess more harmful to me, or more to be avoided, in this decline of age.
3.3.18		

16 "Montaigne" means "mountain."

FRENCH	ENGLISH
Voyla mes trois occupations fauories et particulieres. Ie ne parle point de celles que ie doibs au monde par obligation ciuile.	Those are my three favorite and particular occupations. I do not speak of those I owe to the world by civic obligation.

III.4 Of Diversion

De la Diuersion

Montaigne shows that grief, fear, and passion are better eased by turning the mind aside than by facing them head-on.

FRENCH

3.4.1 I'AY autresfois esté employé à consoler vne dame vrayement affligee. La plus part de leurs deuils sont artificiels et ceremonieux. *Vberibus semper lacrymis, sempérque paratis*
In statione sua, atque expectantibus illam
Quo iubeat manare modo. On y procede mal, quand on s'oppose à cette passion: car l'opposition les pique et les engage plus auant à la tristesse. On exaspere le mal par la ialousie du debat. Nous voyons des propos communs, que ce que i'auray dit sans soing, si on vient à me le contester, ie m'en formalise, ie l'espouse: beaucoup plus ce à quoy i'aurois interest.

Et puis en ce faisant, vous vous presentez à vostre operation d'vne entree rude: là où les premiers accueils du medecin enuers son patient, doiuent estre gracieux, gays, et aggreables. Iamais medecin laid, et rechigné n'y fit œuure. Au contraire doncq, il faut ayder d'arriuee et fauoriser leur plaincte, et en tesmoigner quelque approbation et excuse. Par cette intelligence, vous gaignez credit à passer outre, et d'vne facile et insensible inclination, vous vous coulez aux discours plus fermes et propres à leur guerison. Moy, qui ne desirois principalement que de piper l'assistance, qui auoit les yeux sur moy, m'aduisay de plastrer le mal. Aussi me trouue-ie par experience, auoir mauuaise main et infructueuse à persuader.

Ou ie presente mes raisons trop pointues et trop seiches: ou trop brusquement: ou trop nonchalamment. Apres que ie me fus appliqué vn temps à son tourment, ie n'essayay pas de le guarir par fortes et viues raisons: par ce que i'en ay faute, ou que ie pensois autrement faire mieux mon effect. Ny n'allay choisissant les diuerses manieres, que la philosophie prescrit à consoler: Que ce qu'on plaint n'est pas mal, comme Cleanthes: Que c'est vn leger mal, comme les Peripateticiens: Que se plaindre n'est action, ny iuste, ny loüable, comme Chrysippus: Ny

ENGLISH

I was once employed to console a lady who was truly afflicted. Most of their mourning is artificial and ceremonious. *Tears always abundant, always ready*
at their post, waiting for her
to command them how to flow. It is a mistake to oppose this passion, for opposition goads them and drives them further into sadness. One aggravates the ill by the jealousy of debate. We see from ordinary conversation that if something I have said carelessly comes to be contested, I take offense and embrace it—much more so something in which I have an interest.[1]

And then, in doing so, you begin your operation with a rough approach, whereas the physician's first greetings to his patient should be gracious, cheerful and pleasant. No ugly, sullen physician ever achieved anything. So, on the contrary, you must from the start help and encourage their lament, and show some approval and excuse for it. By this understanding you gain credit to go further, and by an easy and imperceptible inclination you slide into firmer arguments, fitter to cure them. I, who wanted chiefly to beguile the company, who had their eyes on me, decided to plaster over the ill. And indeed I find by experience that I have a poor and unfruitful hand at persuading.

Either I present my reasons too sharp and too dry, or too abruptly, or too casually. After I had applied myself to her torment for a while, I did not try to cure it with strong and lively reasons, because I lack them, or because I thought I could achieve my purpose better otherwise. Nor did I go choosing among the various methods of consolation that philosophy prescribes: that what one laments is not an evil, like Cleanthes; that it is a slight evil,

1 Juvenal, Satires 6.

FRENCH

cette cy d'Epicurus, plus voisine à mon style, de transferer la pensee des choses fascheuses aux plaisantes: Ny faire vne charge de tout cet amas, le dispensant par occasion, comme Cicero.

Mais declinant tout mollement noz propos, et les gauchissant peu à peu, aux subiects plus voysins, et puis vn peu plus eslongnez, selon qu'elle se prestoit plus à moy, ie luy desrobay imperceptiblement cette pensee douloureuse: et la tins en bonne contenance et du tout r'apaisee autant que i'y fus. I'vsay de diuersion. Ceux qui me suyuirent à ce mesme seruice, n'y trouuerent aucun amendement: car ie n'auois pas porté la coignee aux racines.

ENGLISH

like the Peripatetics; that lamenting is an action neither just nor praiseworthy, like Chrysippus. Nor did I use this one of Epicurus, closer to my style, of transferring one's thoughts from unpleasant things to pleasant ones; nor did I make a load of this whole heap and dispense it as occasion arose, like Cicero.[2]

But steering our talk very gently, and turning it little by little to nearby subjects and then to ones a little further away, as she lent herself more to me, I imperceptibly stole that painful thought from her, and kept her composed and entirely calm for as long as I was there. I used diversion. Those who followed me in the same service found no improvement in her, for I had not laid the axe to the roots.

DIVERSIONS PUBLIC AND PRIVATE

Generals, Atalanta's suitor and physicians all succeed by turning attention elsewhere.

FRENCH

3.4.2 A l'aduenture ay-ie touché quelque espece de diuersions publiques. Et l'vsage des militaires, dequoy se seruit Pericles en la guerre Peloponnesiaque: et mille autres ailleurs, pour reuoquer de leurs païs les forces contraires, est trop frequent aux histoires. Ce fut vn ingenieux destour, dequoy le Sieur d'Himbercourt sauua et soy et d'autres, en la ville du Liege: où le Duc de Bourgongne, qui la tenoit assiegee, l'auoit fait entrer, pour executer les conuenances de leur reddition accordee. Ce peuple assemblé de nuict pour y pouruoir, commence à se mutiner contre ces accords passez: et delibererent plusieurs, de courre sus aux negociateurs, qu'ils tenoient en leur puissance.

Luy, sentant le vent de la premiere ondee de ces gens, qui venoient se ruer en son logis, lascha soudain vers eux, deux des habitans de la ville, (car il y en auoit aucuns auec luy) chargez de plus douces et nouuelles offres, à proposer en leur conseil, qu'il auoit forgees sur le champ pour son besoing. Ces deux arresterent la premiere tempeste, ramenant cette tourbe esmeüe en la maison de ville, pour ouyr leur charge, et y deliberer. La deliberation fut courte.

Voicy desbonder vn second orage, autant animé que l'autre: et luy à leur despecher en teste, quatre nouueaux

ENGLISH

Perhaps I have touched here on some sort of public diversions. And the military practice that Pericles used in the Peloponnesian War, and a thousand others elsewhere, to draw enemy forces away from their own countries, is all too frequent in the histories. It was an ingenious ruse by which the Sieur d'Himbercourt saved both himself and others in the city of Liège. The Duke of Burgundy, who was besieging it, had sent him in to carry out the terms of their agreed surrender. The people, assembled by night to deal with this, began to rebel against the agreements made, and many resolved to fall upon the negotiators, whom they held in their power.[3]

He, getting wind of the first wave of these people, who were coming to storm his lodging, at once sent out to them two of the city's inhabitants (for he had some with him). They carried new and milder offers, which he had invented on the spot for his need, to be put before their council. These two stopped the first storm, leading the agitated mob back to the town hall to hear their message and deliberate on it. The deliberation was short.

Then a second storm broke loose, as fierce as the first; and he sent four new and similar inter-

2 Cicero reviews these methods of consolation in Tusculan Disputations 3.
3 Guy de Brimeu, lord of Humbercourt, envoy of Charles the Bold at Liège in 1467; the story is from Commynes' Memoirs.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
	et semblables intercesseurs, protestans auoir à leur declarer à ce coup, des presentations plus grasses, du tout à leur contentement et satisfaction: par où ce peuple fut de rechef repoussé dans le conclaue. Somme, que par telle dispensation d'amusemens, diuertissant leur furie, et la dissipant en vaines consultations, il l'endormit en fin, et gaigna le iour, qui estoit son principal affaire.	cessors out to meet them, declaring that this time they had richer proposals to put to them, entirely to their content and satisfaction. By this the people were driven back once more into the conclave. In short, by such a dispensing of distractions, turning aside their fury and dissipating it in vain consultations, he finally lulled it to sleep and held out until daylight, which was his main concern.
3.4.3	Cet autre comte est aussi de ce predicament. Atalante fille de beauté excellente, et de merueilleuse disposition, pour se deffaire de la presse de mille poursuiuants, qui la demandoient en mariage, leur donna cette loy, qu'elle accepteroit celuy qui l'egalleroit à la course, pourueu que ceux qui y faudroient, en perdissent la vie. Il s'en trouua assez, qui estimerent ce prix digne d'vn tel hazard, et qui encoururent la peine de ce cruel marché. Hippomenes ayant à faire son essay apres les autres, s'adressa à la deesse tutrice de cette amoureuse ardeur, l'appellant à son secours: qui exauçant sa priere, le fournit de trois pommes d'or, et de leur vsage.	This other story also falls into the same category. Atalanta, a girl of excellent beauty and wonderful agility, wanted to rid herself of the throng of a thousand suitors who sought her in marriage. She gave them this law: she would accept the one who equaled her in a race, provided that those who failed lost their lives. There were enough who judged that prize worth such a risk, and who incurred the penalty of this cruel bargain. Hippomenes, who had to make his trial after the others, turned to the goddess who is guardian of this amorous ardor and called on her for help. She granted his prayer and supplied him with three golden apples and with instructions for their use.
	Le champ de la course ouuert, à mesure qu'Hippomenes sent sa maistresse luy presser les talons, il laisse eschapper, comme par inaduertance, l'vne de ces pommes: la fille amusee de sa beauté, ne faut point de se destourner pour l'amasser: *Obstupuit virgo, nitidique cupidine pomi / Declinat cursus, aurúmque volubile tollit.* Autant en fit-il à son poinct, et de la seconde et de la tierce: iusques à ce que par ce fouruoyement et diuertissement, l'aduantage de la course luy demeura.	When the race began, as Hippomenes feels his beloved pressing on his heels, he lets one of the apples drop as if by inadvertence. The girl, beguiled by its beauty, does not fail to turn aside to pick it up: *The maiden was dazzled, and in her desire for the shining fruit / she swerves from her course and picks up the rolling gold.* He did the same at the right moment with the second and the third, until by this straying and diversion the advantage in the race remained his.[4]
3.4.4	Quand les medecins ne peuuent purger le caterrhe, ils le diuertissent, et desuoyent à vne autre partie moins dangereuse. Ie m'apperçoy que c'est aussi la plus ordinaire recepte aux maladies de l'ame. *Abducendus etiam nonnunquam animus est ad alia studia, solicitudines, curas, negotia: loci denique mutatione, tanquam ægroti non conualescentes, sæpe curandus est.* On luy fait peu choquer les maux de droit fil: on ne luy en fait ny soustenir ny rabatre l'atteinte: on la luy fait decliner et gauchir.	When physicians cannot purge a catarrh, they divert it and shift it to another, less dangerous part. I notice that this is also the most usual remedy for the diseases of the soul. *The mind must sometimes be drawn away to other pursuits, concerns, cares, business; and finally it must often be treated by a change of place, like sick people who are not recovering.* We seldom make it meet ills head-on; we make it neither withstand their attack nor beat it back; we make it dodge and sidestep them.[5]
3.4.5	Cette autre leçon est trop haute et trop difficile. C'est à faire à ceux de la premiere classe, de s'arrester purement	That other lesson is too lofty and too difficult. It is for those of the first rank to keep purely to the

4 Ovid, Metamorphoses 10; the goddess is Venus.
5 Cicero, Tusculan Disputations 4.35.

FRENCH

à la chose, la considerer, la iuger. Il appartient à vn seul Socrates, d'accointer la mort d'vn visage ordinaire, s'en appriuoiser et s'en iouer. Il ne cherche point de consolation hors de la chose: le mourir luy semble accident naturel et indifferent: il fiche là iustement sa veuë, et s'y resoult, sans regarder ailleurs.

Les disciples d'Hegesias, qui se font mourir de faim, eschauffez des beaux discours de ses leçons, et si dru que le Roy Ptolomee luy fit defendre de plus entretenir son eschole de ces homicides discours: ceux là ne considerent point la mort en soy, ils ne la iugent point: ce n'est pas là où ils arrestent leur pensee: ils courent, ils visent à vn estre nouueau.

3.4.6 Ces pauures gens qu'on void sur l'eschaffaut, remplis d'vne ardente deuotion, y occupants tous leurs sens autant qu'ils peuuent: les aureilles aux instructions qu'on leur donne; les yeux et les mains tendues au ciel: la voix à des prieres hautes, auec vne esmotion aspre et continuelle, font certes chose louable et conuenable à vne telle necessité. On les doibt louer de religion: mais non proprement de constance. Ils fuyent la lucte: ils destournent de la mort leur consideration: comme on amuse les enfans pendant qu'on leur veut donner le coup de lancette. I'en ay veu, si par fois leur veuë se raualoit à ces horribles asprets de la mort, qui sont autour d'eux, s'en transir, et reietter auec furie ailleurs leur pensee.

A ceux qui passent vne profondeur effroyable, on ordonne de clorre ou destourner leurs yeux.

3.4.7 Subrius Flauius, ayant par le commandement de Neron, à estre deffaict, et par les mains de Niger, tous deux chefs de guerre: quand on le mena au champ, où l'execution deuoit estre faicte, voyant le trou que Niger auoit fait cauer pour le mettre, inegal et mal formé: Ny cela, mesme, dit-il, se tournant aux soldats qui y assistoyent, n'est selon la discipline militaire. Et à Niger, qui l'exhortoit de tenir la teste ferme: Frapasses tu seulement aussi ferme. Et deuina bien: car le bras tremblant à Niger, il la luy coupa à diuers coups. Cettuy-cy semble auoir eu sa pensee droittement et fixement au subiect.

ENGLISH

thing itself, to consider it, to judge it. It belongs to Socrates alone to meet death with an ordinary face, to grow familiar with it and play with it. He seeks no consolation outside the thing itself. Dying seems to him a natural and indifferent accident; he fixes his gaze precisely there and makes up his mind to it, without looking elsewhere.

The disciples of Hegesias, who starved themselves to death, fired by the fine discourses of his lessons —and in such numbers that King Ptolemy had him forbidden to entertain his school any longer with these murderous discourses—those people do not consider death in itself; they do not judge it; that is not where they fix their thought. They run, they aim at a new existence.[6]

Those poor people we see on the scaffold, filled with ardent devotion, occupy all their senses with it as much as they can: their ears with the instructions given to them, their eyes and hands raised to heaven, their voices in loud prayers, with a harsh and continual emotion. They are certainly doing something praiseworthy and fitting for such a necessity. We should praise them for religion, but not properly for steadfastness. They flee the struggle; they turn their attention away from death, as we distract children when we are about to give them the stroke of the lancet. I have seen some who, if their gaze sometimes dropped to the horrible harshness of death around them, froze with fear and furiously threw their thoughts elsewhere.

Those who cross over a frightful depth are told to close or avert their eyes.

Subrius Flavus had been condemned by Nero's command to be put to death at the hands of Niger, both of them military commanders. When he was led out to the field where the execution was to take place, he saw that the pit Niger had had dug to put him in was uneven and badly shaped. "Not even this," he said, turning to the soldiers who were present, "is according to military discipline." And to Niger, who was urging him to hold his head steady: "If only you strike as steadily." He guessed right, for Niger's arm trembled and he cut off his head in several blows. This man seems to have

6 Hegesias was nicknamed "the death-persuader"; the story is in Cicero.

FRENCH

ENGLISH

kept his thought squarely and fixedly on the matter.[7]

3.4.8 Celuy qui meurt en la meslee, les armes à la main, il n'estudie pas lors la mort, il ne la sent, ny ne la considere: l'ardeur du combat l'emporte. Vn honneste homme de ma cognoissance, estant tombé comme il se batoit en estocade, et se sentant daguer à terre par son ennemy de neuf ou dix coups, chacun des assistans luy crioit qu'il pensast à sa conscience, mais il me dit depuis, qu'encores que ces voix luy vinssent aux oreilles, elles ne l'auoient aucunement touché, et qu'il ne pensa iamais qu'à se descharger et à se venger. Il tua son homme en ce mesme combat. Beaucoup fit pour L.

The man who dies in the thick of the fight, weapons in hand, is not studying death at that moment; he neither feels it nor considers it: the heat of combat carries him away. A decent man of my acquaintance fell while fighting with the sword, and felt his enemy stab him with a dagger nine or ten times as he lay on the ground. Every one of the bystanders was shouting at him to think of his conscience. But he told me afterward that although these voices reached his ears, they had not touched him at all, and that he thought of nothing but getting free and taking revenge. He killed his man in that same fight. A great service was done to L.

Syllanus, celuy qui luy apporta sa condamnation: de ce qu'ayant ouy sa response, qu'il estoit bien preparé à mourir, mais non pas de mains scelerees: il se rua sur luy, auec ses soldats pour le forcer: et comme luy tout desarmé, se defendoit obstinement de poingts et de pieds, il le fit mourir en ce debat: dissipant en prompte cholere et tumultuaire, le sentiment penible d'vne mort longue et preparee, à quoy il estoit destiné.

Silanus by the man who brought him his sentence. Having heard his reply, that he was well prepared to die, but not at the hands of criminals, this man rushed at him with his soldiers to overpower him; and as Silanus, completely unarmed, stubbornly defended himself with fists and feet, he had him killed in the struggle. So he dissipated, in a quick and tumultuous anger, the painful feeling of the long, prepared death to which Silanus had been destined.[8]

3.4.9 Nous pensons tousiours ailleurs: l'esperance d'vne meilleure vie nous arreste et appuye: ou l'esperance de la valeur de nos enfans: ou la gloire future de nostre nom: ou la fuitte des maux de cette vie: ou la vengeance qui menasse ceux qui nous causent la mort: *Spero equidem mediis, si quid pia numina possunt,*
Supplicia hausurum scopulis, et nomine Dido
Sæpe vocaturum.
Audiam, et hæc manes veniet mihi fama sub imos. Xenophon sacrifioit couronné quand on luy vint annoncer la mort de son fils Gryllus, en la bataille de Mantinee. Au premier sentiment de cette nouuelle, il ietta sa couronne à terre: mais par la suitte du propos, entendant la forme d'vne mort tres-valeureuse, il l'amassa, et remit sur sa teste.

We are always thinking of something else. The hope of a better life stops us and props us up; or the hope of our children's worth; or the future glory of our name; or escape from the ills of this life; or the vengeance that threatens those who cause our death: *I hope indeed, if the righteous powers can do anything, that amid the rocks*
You will drain your punishment to the dregs, and call on Dido by name
Again and again.
I shall hear it, and the news will reach me down among the shades. Xenophon was offering a sacrifice, wearing a garland, when they came to tell him of the death of his son Gryllus at the battle of Mantinea. At the first impression of the news he threw his garland to the ground; but as the account went on, hearing how very valiant a death it

7 Subrius Flavus, a tribune of the praetorian guard, was executed in AD 65 for his part in the Pisonian conspiracy against Nero; the story is in Tacitus, Annals XV.
8 Lucius Junius Silanus was killed on Nero's orders in AD 65 (Tacitus, Annals XVI).

FRENCH	ENGLISH
	had been, he picked it up and put it back on his head.[9]
Epicurus mesme se console en sa fin, sur l'eternité et l'vtilité de ses escrits. *Omnes clari et nobilitati labores, fiunt tolerabiles.* Et la mesme playe, le mesme trauail, ne poise pas, dit Xenophon, à vn general d'armee, comme à vn soldat. Epaminondas print sa mort bien plus alaigrement, ayant esté informé, que la victoire estoit demeuree de son costé. *Hæc sunt solatia, hæc fomenta summorum dolorum.* Et telles autres circonstances nous amusent, diuertissent et destournent de la consideration de la chose en soy. Voire les arguments de la philosophie, vont à touts coups costoyans et gauchissans la matiere, et à peine essuyans sa crouste.	Epicurus himself, at his end, consoles himself with the eternity and usefulness of his writings. *All labors that bring fame and renown become bearable.* And the same wound, the same toil, does not weigh as heavily, says Xenophon, on a general as on a soldier. Epaminondas took his death far more cheerfully once he had been told that the victory had remained on his side. *These are the consolations, these the soothing remedies for the greatest pains.* And other such circumstances amuse, divert and turn us away from considering the thing itself. Even the arguments of philosophy are forever skirting and sidestepping the matter, barely brushing its crust.[10]
Le premier homme de la premiere eschole philosophique, et surintendante des autres, ce grand Zenon, contre la mort: Nul mal n'est honorable: la mort l'est: elle n'est pas donc mal. Contre l'yurongnerie: Nul ne fie son secret à l'yurongne: chacun le fie au sage: le sage ne sera donc pas yurongne. Cela est-ce donner au blanc? I'ayme à veoir ces ames principales, ne se pouuoir desprendre de nostre consorce. Tant parfaicts hommes qu'ils soyent, ce sont tousiours bien lourdement des hommes.	The foremost man of the foremost school of philosophy, the one that presides over all the others, the great Zeno, argues against death: "No evil is honorable; death is honorable; therefore death is not an evil." Against drunkenness: "No one entrusts his secret to a drunkard; everyone entrusts it to the wise man; therefore the wise man will not be a drunkard." Is that hitting the target? I like to see these leading souls unable to break free of our common fellowship. However perfect they may be, they are still, very clumsily, men.

DIVERTING PASSIONS

Revenge and love can be weakened by turning them aside rather than fighting them head-on.

FRENCH	ENGLISH
3.4.10 C'est vne douce passion que la vengeance, de grande impression et naturelle: ie le voy bien, encore que ie n'en aye aucune experience. Pour en distraire dernierement vn ieune Prince, ie ne luy allois pas disant, qu'il falloit prester la iouë à celuy qui vous auoit frappé l'autre, pour le deuoir de charité: ny ne luy allois representer les tragiques euenements que la poësie attribue à cette passion. Ie la laissay là, et m'amusay à luy faire gouster la beauté d'vne image contraire: l'honneur, la faueur, la bien-vueillance qu'il acquerroit par clemence et bonté: ie le destournay à l'ambition. Voyla comme lon en faict.	Revenge is a sweet passion, one that strikes deep and comes naturally: I can see that well enough, though I have no experience of it. Recently, to draw a young prince away from it, I did not go telling him that out of the duty of charity he must offer his cheek to the man who had struck him on the other one; nor did I go setting before him the tragic outcomes that poetry attributes to this passion. I left it alone and busied myself making him savor the beauty of a contrary picture: the honor, the favor, the goodwill he would gain by clemency and kindness. I diverted him toward ambition. That is how it is done.

9 Virgil, Aeneid IV: Dido cursing the departing Aeneas. The battle of Mantinea was fought in 362 BC.
10 Both Latin quotations are from Cicero, Tusculan Disputations II.

FRENCH

ENGLISH

3.4.11 Si vostre affection en l'amour est trop puissante, dissipez la, disent-ils. Et disent vray, car ie l'ay souuent essayé auec vtilité. Rompez la à diuers desirs, desquels il y en ayt vn regent et vn maistre, si vous voulez, mais de peur qu'il ne vous gourmande et tyrannise, affoiblissez-le, seiournez-le, en le diuisant et diuertissant. *Cùm morosa vago singultiet inguine vena,*
Coniicito humorem collectum in corpora quæque. Et pouruoyez y de bonne heure, de peur que vous n'en soyez en peine, s'il vous a vne fois saisi. *Si non prima nouis conturbes vulnera plagis,*
Volgiuagáque vagus Venere ante recentia cures.

If your affection in love is too powerful, disperse it, they say. And they are right, for I have often tried it to good effect. Break it up into various desires; one of them may be ruler and master, if you like, but for fear it should bully and tyrannize you, weaken it, hold it in check by dividing and diverting it. *When the peevish vein throbs in your restless groin,*
Discharge the gathered fluid into any body you please. And see to it early, for fear you will be in trouble once it has seized you. *Unless you confound the first wounds with fresh blows,*
And heal them while still new, roaming after a roving Venus.[11]

3.4.12 Ie fus autrefois touché d'vn puissant desplaisir, selon ma complexion: et encores plus iuste que puissant: ie m'y fusse perdu à l'aduenture, si ie m'en fusse simplement fié à mes forces. Ayant besoing d'vne vehemente diuersion pour m'en distraire, ie me fis par art amoureux et par estude: à quoy l'aage m'aydoit. L'amour me soulagea et retira du mal, qui m'estoit causé par l'amitié. Par tout ailleurs de mesme. Vne aigre imagination me tient: ie trouue plus court, que de la dompter, la changer: ie luy en substitue, si ie ne puis vne contraire, aumoins vn' autre. Tousiours la variation soulage, dissout et dissipe. Si ie ne puis la combatre, ie luy eschappe: et en la fuïant, ie fouruoye, ie ruse.

I was once struck by a powerful grief, powerful for a temperament like mine, and even more just than powerful. I might well have been lost in it if I had simply relied on my own strength. Needing a vehement diversion to draw me away from it, I made myself fall in love, by art and by study, in which my age helped me. Love relieved me and drew me out of the pain that friendship had caused me. It is the same everywhere else. A bitter notion takes hold of me: I find it quicker to change it than to subdue it. I put another in its place, if not a contrary one, at least a different one. Variation always relieves, dissolves and dissipates. If I cannot fight it, I escape it; and in fleeing it I take detours and play tricks.[12]

Muant de lieu, d'occupation, de compagnie, ie me sauue dans la presse d'autres amusemens et pensees, où elle perd ma trace, et m'esgare.

Changing place, occupation, company, I slip away into the crowd of other amusements and thoughts, where it loses my trail and loses track of me.

3.4.13 Nature procede ainsi, par le benefice de l'inconstance. Car le temps qu'elle nous a donné pour souuerain medecin de nos passions, gaigne son effect principalement par là, que fournissant autres et autres affaires à nostre imagination, il demesle et corrompt cette premiere apprehension, pour forte qu'elle soit. Vn sage ne voit guere moins, son amy mourant, au bout de vingt et cinq ans, qu'au premier an; et suiuant Epicurus, de rien moins: car il n'attribuoit aucun leniment des fascheries, ny à la preuoyance, ny à l'antiquité d'icelles. Mais tant d'autres cogitations trauersent cette-cy, qu'elle s'alanguit, et se lasse en fin.

Nature proceeds this way, by the benefit of inconstancy. For time, which she has given us as the sovereign physician of our passions, achieves its effect chiefly by this: by supplying our imagination with one matter after another, it unravels and breaks down that first impression, however strong it may be. A wise man sees his friend dying hardly less after twenty-five years than in the first year; and according to Epicurus, not a bit less, for he attributed no easing of troubles either to foreseeing them or to their being old. But so many other thoughts cut across this one that it languishes and at last grows weary.

11 Persius, Satires VI; Lucretius, On the Nature of Things IV.
12 Generally taken to be the death of La Boétie in 1563.

FRENCH

ENGLISH

3.4.14 Pour destourner l'inclination des bruits communs, Alcibiades couppa les oreilles et la queuë à son beau chien, et le chassa en la place: afin que donnant ce subiect pour babiller au peuple, il laissast en paix ses autres actions. I'ay veu aussi, pour cet effect de diuertir les opinions et coniectures du peuple, et desuoyer les parleurs, des femmes, couurir leurs vrayes affections, par des affections contrefaictes. Mais i'en ay veu telle, qui en se contrefaisant s'est laissee prendre à bon escient, et a quitté la vraye et originelle affection pour la feinte: et aprins par elle, que ceux qui se trouuent bien logez, sont des sots de consentir à ce masque.

To turn the drift of common gossip elsewhere, Alcibiades cut off the ears and tail of his beautiful dog and drove it out into the public square, so that, having given the people this to chatter about, they would leave his other actions in peace. I have also seen women, for this same purpose of diverting public opinion and conjecture and throwing the talkers off the scent, cover their true affections with counterfeit ones. But I have seen one who, while counterfeiting, let herself be caught in earnest, and abandoned her true and original affection for the feigned one. From her I learned that those who find themselves well placed are fools to consent to this masquerade.

Les accueils et entretiens publiques estans reseruez à ce seruiteur aposté, croyez qu'il n'est guere habile, s'il ne se met en fin en vostre place, et vous envoye en la sienne. Cela c'est proprement tailler et coudre vn soulier, pour qu'vn autre le chausse.

Since the public welcomes and conversations are reserved for this planted suitor, believe me, he is not very clever if he does not end up putting himself in your place and sending you to his. That is truly cutting and stitching a shoe for someone else to wear.

LITTLE THINGS MOVE US

Small images and sounds stir our grief more than the thing itself.

FRENCH

ENGLISH

3.4.15 Peu de chose nous diuertit et destourne: car peu de chose nous tient. Nous ne regardons gueres les subiects en gros et seuls: ce sont des circonstances ou des images menues et superficielles qui nous frappent: et des vaines escorces qui reiallissent des subiects. *Folliculos vt nunc teretes æstate cicadæ / Linquunt.* Plutarque mesme regrette sa fille par des singeries de son enfance. Le souuenir d'vn adieu, d'vne action, d'vne grace particuliere, d'vne recommandation derniere, nous afflige. La robe de Cæsar troubla toute Romme, ce que sa mort n'auoit pas faict. Le son mesme des noms, qui nous tintoüine aux oreilles: Mon pauure maistre, ou mon grand amy: helas mon cher pere, ou ma bonne fille.

Little things divert and distract us, for little things hold us. We hardly ever look at subjects as a whole and by themselves; it is circumstances, or small, superficial images, that strike us, and the empty husks that peel off from subjects. *As cicadas in summer / Leave behind their smooth husks.* Even Plutarch mourns his daughter through the little antics of her childhood. The memory of a farewell, of an action, of some particular grace, of a last request, afflicts us. Caesar's robe threw all Rome into turmoil, which his death had not done. The very sound of names ringing in our ears: "My poor master," or "My great friend," "Alas, my dear father," or "My good daughter."[13]

Quand ces redites me pinsent, et que i'y regarde de pres, ie trouue que c'est vne pleinte grammairiene, le mot et le ton me blesse. Comme les exclamations des prescheurs, esmouuent leur auditoire souuent, plus que ne font leurs raisons: et comme nous frappe la voix piteuse d'vne beste qu'on tue pour nostre seruice: sans que ie poise ou penetre ce pendant, la vraye essence et massiue de mon

When these refrains pinch me and I look at them closely, I find it is a grammarian's lament: the word and the tone wound me. Just as preachers' exclamations often move their audience more than their reasons do, and as the pitiful cry of an animal being killed for our use strikes us—all without my weighing or getting to the bottom,

13 Lucretius, On the Nature of Things IV. Caesar's bloodstained robe was displayed by Mark Antony at the funeral in 44 BC.

FRENCH

subiect. *His se stimulis dolor ipse lacessit.* Ce sont les fondemens de nostre deuil.

3.4.16 L'opiniastreté de mes pierres, specialement en la verge, m'a par fois ietté en longues suppressions d'vrine, de trois, de quatre iours: et si auant en la mort, que c'eust esté follie d'esperer l'euiter, voyre desirer, veu les cruels efforts que cet estat m'apporte. O que ce bon Empereur, qui faisoit lier la verge à ses criminels, pour les faire mourir à faute de pisser, estoit grand maistre en la science de bourrellerie! Me trouuant là, ie consideroy par combien legeres causes et obiects, l'imagination nourrissoit en moy le regret de la vie: de quels atomes se bastissoit en mon ame, le poids et la difficulté de ce deslogement: à combien friuoles pensees nous donnions place en vn si grand affaire.

Vn chien, vn cheual, vn liure, vn verre, et quoy non? tenoient compte en ma perte. Aux autres, leurs ambitieuses esperances, leur bourse, leur science, non moins sottement à mon gré. Ie voy nonchalamment la mort, quand ie la voy vniuersellement, comme fin de la vie. Ie la gourmande en bloc: par le menu, elle me pille. Les larmes d'vn laquais, la dispensation de ma desferre, l'attouchement d'vne main cognue, vne consolation commune, me desconsole et m'attendrit.

Ainsi nous troublent l'ame, les plaintes des fables: et les regrets de Didon, et d'Ariadné passionnent ceux mesmes qui ne les croyent point en Virgile et en Catulle: c'est vne exemple de nature obstinee et dure, n'en sentir aucune emotion: comme on recite, pour miracle, de Polemon: mais aussi ne pallit il pas seulement à la morsure d'vn chien enragé, qui luy emporta le gras de la iambe. Et nulle sagesse ne va si auant, de conceuoir la cause d'vne tristesse, si viue et entiere, par iugement, qu'elle ne souffre accession par la presence, quand les yeux et les oreilles y ont leur part: parties qui ne peuuent estre agitees que par vains accidens.

3.4.17 Est-ce raison que les arts mesmes se seruent et facent leur proufit, de nostre imbecillité et bestise naturelle? L'orateur, dit la rhetorique, en cette farce de son plaidoier, s'esmouuera par le son de sa voix, et par ses agitations feintes; et se lairra piper à la passion qu'il

ENGLISH

meanwhile, of the true and solid essence of my subject. *With these goads grief spurs itself on.* These are the foundations of our mourning.[14]

The stubbornness of my stones, especially in the penis, has sometimes thrown me into long retentions of urine, of three or four days, and brought me so far into death that it would have been folly to hope to avoid it—indeed, to wish to, given the cruel agonies this condition brings me. Oh, what a great master in the science of torture was that good emperor who had his criminals' penises tied up so as to make them die for want of pissing! Finding myself in that state, I considered by what slight causes and objects imagination fed my regret for life in me; out of what atoms the weight and difficulty of this departure were built up in my soul; to what frivolous thoughts we gave room in so great an affair.[15]

A dog, a horse, a book, a glass, and what not, counted in my loss. For others, their ambitious hopes, their purse, their learning—no less foolishly, to my mind. I look at death nonchalantly when I look at it universally, as the end of life. Wholesale, I lord it over death; retail, it robs me. The tears of a lackey, the giving away of my cast-off clothes, the touch of a familiar hand, an ordinary word of consolation, disconsole me and melt me.

In the same way, the laments of fables trouble our soul; and the grief of Dido and of Ariadne stirs even those who do not believe in them, in Virgil and in Catullus. It is a sign of an obstinate, hard nature to feel no emotion at them, as is told of Polemon as a marvel; but then he did not even turn pale when a mad dog bit him and tore away the calf of his leg. And no wisdom goes so far as to grasp the cause of a sadness so vividly and completely by judgment that it is not increased by presence, when the eyes and ears have their share —parts that can be stirred only by superficial incidents.

Is it reasonable that even the arts should make use of our natural weakness and stupidity and profit by them? The orator, says rhetoric, in the farce of his pleading, will be moved by the sound of his own voice and by his feigned agitations, and will

14 Lucan, Pharsalia II.
15 The emperor is Tiberius, according to Suetonius.

FRENCH	ENGLISH
represente. Il s'imprimera vn vray deuil et essentiel, par le moyen de ce battelage qu'il iouë, pour le transmettre aux iuges, à qui il touche encore moins. Comme font ces personnes qu'on loüe aux mortuaires, pour ayder à la ceremonie du deuil, qui vendent leurs larmes à poix et à mesure, et leur tristesse.	let himself be taken in by the passion he is portraying. By means of the act he is putting on, he will impress on himself a true and essential grief, in order to pass it on to the judges, whom it concerns even less. Just like those people who are hired at funerals to help with the ceremony of mourning, who sell their tears and their sadness by weight and measure.
Car encore qu'ils s'esbranlent en forme empruntee, toutesfois en habituant et rengeant la contenance, il est certain qu'ils s'emportent souuent tous entiers, et reçoiuent en eux vne vraye melancholie. Ie fus entre plusieurs autres de ses amis, conduire à Soissons le corps de monsieur de Grammont, du siege de la Fere, où il fut tué. Ie consideray que par tout où nous passions, nous remplissions de lamentation et de pleurs, le peuple que nous rencontrions, par la seule montre de l'appareil de nostre conuoy: car seulement le nom du trespassé n'y estoit pas cogneu.	For although they set themselves going in a borrowed form, still, by adjusting and arranging their countenance, it is certain that they are often carried away entirely and take into themselves a real melancholy. I was one of several of his friends who escorted the body of Monsieur de Gramont to Soissons from the siege of La Fère, where he was killed. I observed that everywhere we passed, we filled the people we met with lamentation and tears, merely by the outward show of our funeral procession; for not even the dead man's name was known there.[16]
Quintilian dit auoir veu des comediens si fort engagez en vn rolle de deuil, qu'ils en pleuroient encore au logis: et de soy mesme, qu'ayant prins à esmouuoir quelque passion en autruy, il l'auoit espousee, iusques à se trouuer surprins, non seulement de larmes, mais d'vne palleur de visage et port d'homme vrayement accablé de douleur.	Quintilian says he has seen actors so deeply caught up in a role of mourning that they were still weeping over it at home; and says of himself that, having set out to stir some passion in others, he had so embraced it that he found himself overcome not only by tears but by a pallor of face and the bearing of a man truly crushed by grief.
3.4.18 En vne contree pres de nos montaignes, les femmes font le prestre-martin: car comme elles agrandissent le regret du mary perdu, par la souuenance des bonnes et agreables conditions qu'il auoit, elles font tout d'vn train aussi recueil et publient ses imperfections: comme pour entrer d'elles mesmes en quelque compensation, et se diuertir de la pitié au desdain. De bien meilleure grace encore que nous, qui à la perte du premier cognu, nous piquons à luy prester des louanges nouuelles et fauces: et à le faire tout autre, quand nous l'auons perdu de veuë, qu'il ne nous sembloit estre, quand nous le voyions. Comme si le regret estoit vne partie instructiue: ou que les larmes en lauant nostre entendement, l'esclaircissent.	In a region near our mountains, the women play both parts at once. For as they magnify their grief for the husband they have lost by recalling the good and pleasant qualities he had, they also, in the same breath, gather up and proclaim his imperfections, as if to strike some balance of their own accord and turn themselves from pity to disdain. They do it with much better grace than we do, who, on losing any acquaintance at all, make a point of lending him new and false praises, and of making him, once he is out of our sight, quite different from what he seemed to us when we could see him. As if regret were something that teaches, or as if tears, by washing our understanding, made it clearer.[17]
Ie renonce dés à present aux fauorables tesmoignages, qu'on me voudra donner, non par ce que i'en seray digne, mais par ce que ie seray mort.	I renounce here and now any favorable testimonies people may want to give me, not because I shall deserve them but because I shall be dead.

16 Philibert de Gramont, husband of Diane d'Andoins, was killed at the siege of La Fère in 1580.
17 "Faire le prestre-martin" was a proverb for playing both parts, after a priest Martin who said Mass and gave the responses himself.

THE POWER OF IMAGINATION

Empty fancies inflame and torment us as much as real causes.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
3.4.19	Qui demandera à celuy là, Quel interest auez vous à ce siege? L'interest de l'exemple, dira-il, et de l'obeyssance commune du Prince: ie n'y pretens proffit quelconque: et de gloire, ie sçay la petite part qui en peut toucher vn particulier comme moy: ie n'ay icy ny passion ny querelle. Voyez le pourtant le lendemain, tout changé, tout bouillant et rougissant de cholere, en son rang de bataille pour l'assaut. C'est la lueur de tant d'acier, et le feu et tintamarre de nos canons et de nos tambours, qui luy ont ietté cette nouuelle rigueur et hayne dans les veines. Friuole cause, me direz vous. Comment cause? il n'en faut point, pour agiter nostre ame.	Ask that man: "What is your interest in this siege?" "The interest of setting an example," he will say, "and of common obedience to the prince. I claim no profit from it whatever; and as for glory, I know how small a share of it can come to a private person like me. I have neither passion nor quarrel here." Yet look at him the next day, completely changed, boiling over and red with anger, in his place in the battle line for the assault. It is the gleam of so much steel, and the fire and din of our cannons and drums, that have thrown this new harshness and hatred into his veins. A frivolous cause, you will tell me. What do you mean, cause? None is needed to stir our soul.
	Vne resuerie sans corps et sans subiect la regente et l'agite. Que ie me mette à faire des chasteaux en Espaigne, mon imagination m'y forge des commoditez et des plaisirs, desquels mon ame est reellement chatouillee et resiouye. Combien de fois embrouillons nous nostre esprit de cholere ou de tristesse, par telles ombres, et nous inserons en des passions fantastiques, qui nous alterent et l'ame et le corps? Quelles grimaces, estonnees, riardes, confuses, excite la resuerie en noz visages! Quelles saillies et agitations de membres et de voix! Semble-il pas de cet homme seul, qu'il aye des visions fauces, d'vne presse d'autres hommes, auec qui il negocie: ou quelque demon interne, qui le persecute? Enquerez vous à vous, où est l'obiect de cette mutation?	A fancy without body or subject governs and stirs it. Let me start building castles in Spain, and my imagination forges comforts and pleasures for me there by which my soul is really tickled and gladdened. How many times do we cloud our mind with anger or sadness through such shadows, and throw ourselves into imaginary passions that alter both our soul and our body? What grimaces—astonished, laughing, bewildered—daydreaming calls up in our faces! What starts and agitations of limbs and voice! Doesn't it seem, of this man alone, that he is having false visions of a crowd of other men he is dealing with, or that some inner demon is persecuting him? Ask yourself where the object of this change is.
	Est-il rien sauf nous, en nature, que l'inanité substante, sur quoy elle puisse? Cambyses pour auoir songé en dormant, que son frere deuoit deuenir Roy de Perse, le fit mourir, vn frere qu'il aymoit, et duquel il s'estoit tousiours fié. Aristodemus Roy des Messeniens se tua, pour vne fantasie qu'il print de mauuais augure, de ie ne sçay quel hurlement de ses chiens. Et le Roy Midas en fit autant, troublé et fasché de quelque mal plaisant songe qu'il auoit songé. C'est priser sa vie iustement ce qu'elle est, de l'abandonner pour vn songe. Oyez pourtant nostre ame, triompher de la misere du corps, de sa foiblesse, de ce qu'il est en butte à toutes offences et alterations: vrayement elle a raison d'en parler.	Is there anything in nature but us that emptiness feeds, anything over which it has power? Cambyses, having dreamed in his sleep that his brother was to become king of Persia, put him to death—a brother whom he loved and had always trusted. Aristodemus, king of the Messenians, killed himself over a notion that some howling or other of his dogs was a bad omen. And King Midas did the same, troubled and vexed by some unpleasant dream he had dreamed. To abandon one's life for a dream is to value it at exactly what it is worth. And yet listen to our soul triumphing over the wretchedness of the body, over its weakness, over its being exposed to every injury and change. Truly, it has good reason to talk![18]

FRENCH	ENGLISH
O prima infelix fingenti terra Prometheo! *Ille parum cauti pectoris egit opus.* *Corpora disponens, mentem non vidit in arte,* *Recta animi primùm debuit esse via.*	*O luckless earth, first shaped by Prometheus!* *He did his work with too little care.* *In arranging bodies, his craft gave no thought to the mind;* *The soul's path should have been made straight first.*[19]

18 Cambyses II of Persia had his brother Smerdis killed (Herodotus III).
19 Propertius, Elegies III.

III.5 On Some Verses of Virgil

Sur des vers de Virgile

Prompted by Virgil and Lucretius, an aging Montaigne writes frankly about sex, marriage, and the hypocrisy surrounding desire.

FRENCH

ENGLISH

3.5.1 A mesure que les pensemens vtiles sont plus pleins, et solides, ils sont aussi plus empeschans, et plus onereux. Le vice, la mort, la pauureté, les maladies, sont subiects graues, et qui greuent. Il faut auoir l'ame instruitte des moyens de soustenir et combatre les maux, et instruite des regles de bien viure, et de bien croire: et souuent l'esueiller et exercer en cette belle estude. Mais à vne ame de commune sorte, il faut que ce soit auec relasche et moderation: elle s'affolle, d'estre trop continuellement bandee. I'auoy besoing en ieunesse, de m'aduertir et solliciter pour me tenir en office. L'alegresse et la santé ne conuiennent pas tant bien, dit-on, auec ces discours serieux et sages. Ie suis à present en vn autre estat.

The fuller and more solid useful thoughts are, the more cumbersome and burdensome they are too. Vice, death, poverty, illness are weighty subjects, and they weigh us down. The soul must be instructed in the means of bearing and fighting ills, and instructed in the rules of living well and believing well; and it must often be roused and exercised in this fine study. But for a soul of the common sort, this must be done with relaxation and moderation: it goes mad from being too continuously strained. In my youth I needed to warn and urge myself to keep to my duty. Cheerfulness and health, they say, do not go so well with these serious and wise reasonings. I am now in a different state.

Les conditions de la vieillesse, ne m'aduertissent que trop, m'assagissent et me preschent. De l'excez de la gayeté, ie suis tombé en celuy de la seuerité: plus fascheux. Parquoy, ie me laisse à cette heure aller vn peu à la desbauche, par dessein: et employe quelque fois l'ame, à des pensemens folastres et ieunes, où elle se seiourne. Ie ne suis meshuy que trop rassis, trop poisant, et trop meur. Les ans me font leçon tous les iours, de froideur, et de temperance. Ce corps fuyt le desreiglement, et le craint: il est à son tour de guider l'esprit vers la reformation: il regente à son tour: et plus rudement et imperieusement.

The conditions of old age warn me only too much; they make me wise and preach to me. From an excess of gaiety I have fallen into an excess of severity, which is more disagreeable. Therefore I now let myself go a little toward license, on purpose, and sometimes occupy my soul with playful, youthful thoughts, where it takes its rest. I am by now only too settled, too heavy and too ripe. The years lecture me every day on coldness and temperance. This body flees disorder and fears it. It is its turn to guide the mind toward reform; it rules in its turn, and more harshly and imperiously.

Il ne me laisse pas vne heure, ny dormant ny veillant, chaumer d'instruction, de mort, de patience, et de pœnitence. Ie me deffens de la temperance, comme i'ay faict autresfois de la volupté: elle me tire trop arriere, et iusques à la stupidité. Or ie veux estre maistre de moy, à tout sens. La sagesse a ses excez, et n'a pas moins besoing de moderation que la folie. Ainsi, de peur que ie ne seche, tarisse, et m'aggraue de prudence, aux interualles que mes maux me donnent, *Mens intenta suis ne siet vsque malis,* ie gauchis tout doucement, et desrobe ma veuë de ce ciel orageux et nubileux que i'ay deuant moy.

It does not leave me one hour, sleeping or waking, free from lessons on death, patience and penitence. I defend myself against temperance as I once did against pleasure: it pulls me too far back, even to the point of dullness. Now I want to be master of myself in every direction. Wisdom has its excesses, and needs moderation no less than folly does. So, for fear that I may dry up, wither and grow heavy with prudence, in the intervals my ills allow me, *So that my mind may not be forever bent on its ills,* I swerve aside very gently and steal my gaze

FRENCH

Lequel, Dieu mercy, ie considere bien sans effroy, mais non pas sans contention, et sans estude. Et me vay amusant en la recordation des ieunesses passees: *Animus quod perdidit, optat,*
Atque in præterita se totus imagine versat. Que l'enfance regarde deuant elle, la vieillesse derriere: estoit ce pas ce que signifioit le double visage de Ianus? Les ans m'entrainnent s'ils veulent, mais à reculons. Autant que mes yeux peuuent recognoistre cette belle saison expiree, ie les y destourne à secousses. Si elle eschappe de mon sang et de mes veines, aumoins n'en veux-ie déraciner l'image de la memoire. *Hoc est*
Viuere bis, vita posse priore frui.

3.5.2 Platon ordonne aux vieillards d'assister aux exercices, danses, et ieux de la ieunesse, pour se resiouyr en autruy, de la soupplesse et beauté du corps, qui n'est plus en eux: et rappeller en leur souuenance, la grace et faueur de cet aage verdissant. Et veut qu'en ces esbats, ils attribuent l'honneur de la victoire, au ieune homme, qui aura le plus esbaudi et resioui, et plus grand nombre d'entre eux. Ie merquois autresfois les iours poisans et tenebreux, comme extraordinaires. Ceux-là sont tantost les miens ordinaires: les extraordinaires sont les beaux et serains. Ie m'en vay au train de tressaillir, comme d'vne nouuelle faueur, quand aucune chose ne me deult.

Que ie me chatouille, ie ne puis tantost plus arracher vn pauure rire de ce meschant corps. Ie ne m'esgaye qu'en fantasie et en songe: pour destourner par ruse, le chagrin de la vieillesse. Mais certes il faudroit autre remede, qu'en songe. Foible lucte, de l'art contre la nature. C'est grand simplesse, d'alonger et anticiper, comme chacun fait, les incommoditez humaines. I'ayme mieux estre moins long temps vieil, que d'estre vieil, auant que de l'estre. Iusques aux moindres occasions de plaisir que ie puis rencontrer, ie les empoigne. Ie congnois bien par ouyr dire, plusieurs especes de voluptez prudentes, fortes et glorieuses: mais l'opinion ne peut pas assez sur moy pour m'en mettre en appetit.

Ie ne les veux pas tant magnanimes, magnifiques et fastueuses, comme ie les veux doucereuses, faciles et prestes. *A natura discedimus: populo nos damus, nullius rei*

ENGLISH

away from the stormy, cloudy sky that lies before me.[1]

That sky, thank God, I can contemplate without dread, but not without effort and study. And I keep amusing myself by recalling my bygone youth:
The mind longs for what it has lost,
And loses itself entirely in images of the past. That childhood looks ahead and old age behind—was that not the meaning of Janus' double face? The years may drag me along if they will, but backward. As long as my eyes can make out that lovely season now gone, I turn them toward it by fits and starts. If it escapes from my blood and my veins, at least I will not root out its image from my memory. *This is*
To live twice: to be able to enjoy one's former life.[2]

Plato orders old men to attend the exercises, dances and games of the young, so as to delight in others in the suppleness and beauty of body that is no longer in themselves, and to call back to memory the grace and charm of that green age. And he wants them, in these sports, to award the honor of victory to the young man who has most delighted and cheered the greatest number of them. I used to mark the heavy, gloomy days as extraordinary. These are now becoming my ordinary ones; the extraordinary ones are the fine, clear ones. I am on the way to thrilling, as at some new favor, when nothing hurts me.

Tickle myself as I may, I can now hardly wring a poor laugh out of this wretched body. I make merry only in fancy and in dreams, to divert by cunning the gloom of old age. But truly it would take some other remedy than a dream. A feeble struggle, art against nature. It is great simplicity to lengthen and anticipate human discomforts, as everyone does. I would rather be old for a shorter time than be old before I am. I seize even the slightest occasions for pleasure I can come across. I know well enough by hearsay several kinds of prudent, strong and glorious pleasures, but opinion has not enough power over me to give me an appetite for them.

I do not want them so much magnanimous, magnificent and showy as I want them sweet, easy and

1 Ovid, Tristia IV.
2 Petronius, Satyricon, and Martial, Epigrams X.

FRENCH

bono auctori. Ma philosophie est en action, en vsage naturel et present: peu en fantasie. Prinssé-ie plaisir à iouer aux noisettes et à la toupie! *Non ponebat enim rumores ante salutem.* La volupté est qualité peu ambitieuse; elle s'estime assez riche de soy, sans y mesler le prix de la reputation: et s'ayme mieux à l'ombre. Il faudroit donner le foüet à vn ieune homme, qui s'amuseroit à choisir le goust du vin, et des sauces. Il n'est rien que i'aye moins sçeu, et moins prisé: à cette heure ie l'apprens. I'en ay grand honte, mais qu'y feroy-ie?

I'ay encor plus de honte et de despit, des occasions qui m'y poussent. C'est à nous, à resuer et baguenauder, et à la ieunesse à se tenir sur la reputation et sur le bon bout. Elle va vers le monde, vers le credit: nous en venons. *Sibi arma, sibi equos, sibi hastas, sibi clauam, sibi pilam, sibi natationes et cursus habeant: nobis senibus, ex lusionibus multis, talos relinquant et tesseras.* Les loix mesme nous enuoyent au logis. Ie ne puis moins en faueur de cette chetiue condition, où mon aage me pousse, que de luy fournir de ioüets et d'amusoires, comme à l'enfance: aussi y retombons nous.

Et la sagesse et la folie, auront prou à faire, à m'estayer et secourir par offices alternatifs, en cette calamité d'aage. *Misce stultitiam consiliis breuem.* Ie fuis de mesme les plus legeres pointures: et celles qui ne m'eussent pas autresfois esgratigné, me transpercent à cette heure. Mon habitude commence de s'appliquer si volontiers au mal: *in fragili corpore odiosa omnis offensio est. Ménsque pati durum sustinet ægra nihil.* I'ay esté tousiours chatouilleux et delicat aux offences, ie suis plus tendre à cette heure, et ouuert par tout. *Et minimæ vires frangere quassa valent.* Mon iugement m'empesche bien de regimber et gronder contre les inconuenients que Nature m'ordonne à souffrir, mais non pas de les sentir.

Ie courrois d'vn bout du monde à l'autre, chercher vn bon an de tranquillité plaisante et eniouee, moy, qui n'ay autre fin que viure et me resiouyr. La tranquillité sombre et stupide, se trouue assez pour moy, mais elle m'endort

ENGLISH

ready to hand. *We depart from nature; we give ourselves over to the people, who are a good authority on nothing.* My philosophy is in action, in natural and present use; little in fancy. If only I could take pleasure in playing at cobnuts and spinning tops! *For he did not put rumors before safety.* Pleasure is a quality with little ambition: it considers itself rich enough on its own without mixing in the value of reputation, and prefers to be in the shade. A young man who amused himself by fussing over the taste of wine and sauces ought to be whipped. There is nothing I have known less or valued less. Now I am learning it. I am very ashamed of it, but what can I do?[3]

I am even more ashamed and vexed at the reasons that drive me to it. It is for us to daydream and fool around, and for youth to stand on its reputation and keep its dignity. Youth is heading toward the world, toward standing; we are coming back from them. *Let them keep for themselves arms, horses, spears, clubs, balls, swimming and running; and of their many games let them leave us old men knuckle-bones and dice.* Even the laws send us home. I can do no less for this wretched condition into which my age is pushing me than provide it with toys and playthings, as for childhood; and indeed we fall back into it.[4]

Both wisdom and folly will have plenty to do to prop me up and help me, taking turns, in this calamity of age. *Mix a little folly with your counsels.* Likewise I shun the slightest pricks; and those that once would not even have scratched me now pierce me through. My constitution is beginning to take so readily to ailments: *In a frail body every shock is painful. And a sick mind can bear nothing harsh.* I have always been ticklish and sensitive to injuries; I am more tender now, and open on every side. *And the slightest force can break what is already cracked.* My judgment keeps me from kicking and grumbling against the discomforts that Nature orders me to suffer, but not from feeling them.[5]

I would run from one end of the world to the other in search of one good year of pleasant, cheerful tranquillity—I who have no other aim than to live and be merry. Gloomy, dull tranquillity I can find

3 Seneca, Letters 99; the second line is from Ennius on Fabius Maximus, quoted by Cicero in On Old Age.
4 Cicero, On Old Age.
5 Horace, Odes IV; then Cicero, On Old Age, and Ovid, Letters from the Black Sea.

FRENCH	ENGLISH
et enteste: ie ne m'en contente pas. S'il y a quelque personne, quelque bonne compagnie, aux champs, en la ville, en France, ou ailleurs, resseante, ou voyagere, à qui mes humeurs soient bonnes, de qui les humeurs me soyent bonnes, il n'est que de siffler en paume, ie leur iray fournir des Essays, en chair et en os.	enough of, but it puts me to sleep and fogs my head; it does not satisfy me. If there is any person, any good company, in the country or in town, in France or elsewhere, settled or traveling, who likes my temperament and whose temperament I like, they have only to whistle in their palm and I will go and supply them with Essays in flesh and bone.

THE MIND FOLLOWS THE BODY

In old age Montaigne lets his mind play, since it can no longer rise above the body.

FRENCH	ENGLISH
3.5.3 Puisque c'est le priuilege de l'esprit, de se r'auoir de la vieillesse, ie luy conseille autant que ie puis, de le faire: qu'il verdisse, qu'il fleurisse ce pendant, s'il peut, comme le guy sur vn arbre mort. Ie crains que c'est vn traistre: il s'est si estroittement affreté au corps, qu'il m'abandonne à tous coups, pour le suiure en sa necessité. Ie le flatte à part, ie le practique pour neant: i'ay beau essayer de le destourner de cette colligence, et luy presenter et Seneque et Catulle, et les dames et les dances royalles: si son compagnon a la cholique, il semble qu'il l'ayt aussi.	Since it is the mind's privilege to recover from old age, I advise it as strongly as I can to do so: let it grow green, let it flourish meanwhile if it can, like mistletoe on a dead tree. I fear it is a traitor. It has bound itself so tightly to the body that it abandons me at every turn to follow the body in its need. I flatter it in private, I work on it to no purpose; it is no use my trying to turn it away from this collusion, and offering it Seneca and Catullus, and the ladies and the royal dances: if its companion has colic, it seems to have it too.
Les puissances mesmes qui luy sont particulieres et propres, ne se peuuent lors sousleuer: elles sentent euidemment le morfondu: il n'y a poinct d'allegresse en ses productions, s'il n'en y a quand et quand au corps.	Even the faculties that are peculiar and proper to it cannot rise up then; they plainly smell of a chill. There is no liveliness in what it produces unless there is some in the body at the same time.
3.5.4 Noz maistres ont tort, dequoy cherchants les causes des eslancements extraordinaires de nostre esprit, outre ce qu'ils en attribuent à vn rauissement diuin, à l'amour, à l'aspreté guerriere, à la poësie, au vin: ils n'en ont donné sa part à la santé. Vne santé bouillante, vigoureuse, pleine, oysiue, telle qu'autrefois la verdeur des ans et la securité, me la fournissoient par venuës. Ce feu de gayeté suscite en l'esprit des eloises viues et claires outre nostre clairté naturelle: et entre les enthousiasmes, les plus gaillards, sinon les plus esperdus. Or bien, ce n'est pas merueille, si vn contraire estat affesse mon esprit, le clouë, et en tire vn effect contraire.	Our masters are wrong in this: seeking the causes of the extraordinary flights of our mind, besides what they attribute to divine rapture, to love, to warlike fierceness, to poetry, to wine, they have not given health its share—a boiling, vigorous, full, idle health, such as the greenness of my years and my freedom from care once supplied me with now and then. This fire of gaiety kindles in the mind flashes of lightning, vivid and bright beyond our natural brightness, and among enthusiasms the lustiest, if not the most frenzied. Well then, it is no wonder if a contrary state weighs my mind down, nails it to the ground, and produces a contrary effect.
Ad nullum consurgit opus cum corpore languet. Et veut encores que ie luy sois tenu, dequoy il preste, comme il dit, beaucoup moins à ce consentement, que ne porte l'vsage ordinaire des hommes. Aumoins pendant que nous auons trefue, chassons les maux et difficultez de nostre commerce, *Dum licet, obducta soluatur fronte*	*It rises to no task when it languishes with the body.* And still it wants me to be obliged to it because, as it says, it gives much less to this complicity than is the ordinary way with men. At least while we have a truce, let us drive ills and difficulties out of our company: *While we may, let old age smooth its*

FRENCH

senectus: tetrica sunt amœnanda iocularibus. I'ayme vne sagesse gaye et ciuile, et fuis l'aspreté des mœurs, et l'austerité: ayant pour suspecte toute mine rebarbatiue: *Tristémque vultus tetrici arrogantiam; / Et habet tristis quoque turba cynædos.* Ie croy Platon de bon cœur, qui dit les humeurs faciles ou difficiles, estre vn grand preiudice à la bonté ou mauuaistié de l'ame. Socrates eut vn visage constant, mais serein et riant.

Non fascheusement constant, comme le vieil Crassus, qu'on ne veit iamais rire. La vertu est qualité plaisante et gaye.

ENGLISH

clouded brow; gloomy things must be sweetened with jests. I love a gay and sociable wisdom, and I shun harshness of manners and austerity, holding every forbidding face suspect: *And the gloomy arrogance of a grim countenance; / The solemn crowd, too, has its debauchees.* I heartily believe Plato, who says that easy or difficult temperaments are a strong indication of the goodness or badness of the soul. Socrates had a steady face, but serene and smiling.[6]

Not disagreeably steady, like old Crassus, whom no one ever saw laugh. Virtue is a pleasant and cheerful quality.

DARING TO SAY IT

Montaigne resolves to say whatever he dares to do, and confesses himself in public.

FRENCH

3.5.5 Ie sçay bien que fort peu de gens rechigneront à la licence de mes escrits, qui n'ayent plus à rechigner à la licence de leur pensee. Ie me conforme bien à leur courage: mais i'offence leurs yeux. C'est vne humeur bien ordonnee, de pinser les escrits de Platon, et couler ses negociations pretendues auec Phedon, Dion, Stella, Archeanassa. *Non pudeat dicere, quod non pudet sentire.* Ie hay vn esprit hargneux et triste, qui glisse par dessus les plaisirs de sa vie, et s'empoigne et paist aux malheurs. Comme les mouches, qui ne peuuent tenir contre vn corps bien poly, et bien lissé, et s'attachent et reposent aux lieux scabreux et raboteux. Et comme les vantouses, qui ne hument et appetent que le mauuais sang.

3.5.6 Au reste, ie me suis ordonné d'oser dire tout ce que i'ose faire: et me desplaist des pensees mesmes impubliables. La pire de mes actions et conditions, ne me semble pas si laide, comme ie trouue laid et lasche, de ne l'oser aduouer. Chacun est discret en la confession, on le deuroit estre en l'action. La hardiesse de faillir, est aucunement compensee et bridee, par la hardiesse de le confesser. Qui s'obligeroit à tout dire, s'obligeroit à ne rien faire de ce qu'on est contraint de taire.

Dieu vueille que cet excés de ma licence, attire nos hommes iusques à la liberté: par dessus ces vertus

ENGLISH

I know very well that very few people will frown at the license of my writings who do not have more reason to frown at the license of their own thoughts. I suit their hearts well enough, but I offend their eyes. It is a well-ordered temperament indeed that carps at Plato's writings and glides over his alleged dealings with Phaedo, Dion, Stella and Archeanassa. *Let us not be ashamed to say what we are not ashamed to think.* I hate a surly, gloomy mind that slides over the pleasures of its life and seizes on misfortunes and feeds on them—like flies, which cannot hold on to a well-polished, smooth body, and cling to and settle on rough, uneven spots; and like cupping-glasses, which suck in and crave only bad blood.[7]

For the rest, I have ordered myself to dare to say whatever I dare to do; and I am displeased even by thoughts that cannot be made public. The worst of my actions and qualities does not seem to me as ugly as I find it ugly and cowardly not to dare to own it. Everyone is discreet in confession; we ought to be so in action. The boldness of doing wrong is to some extent offset and curbed by the boldness of confessing it. Whoever bound himself to tell everything would bind himself to do nothing of what we are forced to keep quiet.

God grant that this excess of license in me may draw our men toward freedom, beyond these cow-

6 The quotations are from Maximianus, Horace (Epodes XIII), Sidonius Apollinaris, George Buchanan and Martial.

FRENCH

couardes et mineuses, nees de nos imperfections: qu'aux despens de mon immoderation, ie les attire iusques au point de la raison. Il faut voir son vice, et l'estudier, pour le redire: ceux qui le celent à autruy, le celent ordinairement à eux mesmes: et ne le tiennent pas pour assés couuert, s'ils le voyent. Ils le soustrayent et desguisent à leur propre conscience. *Quare vitia sua nemo confitetur? Quia etiam nunc in illis est, somnium narrare vigilantis est.* Les maux du corps s'esclaircissent en augmentant. Nous trouuons que c'est goutte, ce que nous nommions rheume ou foulleure.

Les maux de l'ame s'obscurcissent en leurs forces: le plus malade les sent le moins. Voyla pourquoy il les faut souuent remanier au iour, d'vne main impiteuse: les ouurir et arracher du creus de nostre poitrine. Comme en matiere de biens faicts, de mesme en matiere de mesfaicts, c'est par fois satisfaction que la seule confession. Est-il quelque laideur au faillir, qui nous dispense de nous en confesser? Ie souffre peine à me feindre: si que i'euite de prendre les secrets d'autruy en garde, n'ayant pas bien le cœur de desaduouer ma science. Ie puis la taire, mais la nyer, ie ne puis sans effort et desplaisir. Pour estre bien secret, il le faut estre par nature, non par obligation.

C'est peu, au seruice des Princes, d'estre secret, si on n'est menteur encore. Celuy qui s'enquestoit à Thales Milesius, s'il deuoit solemnellement nyer d'auoir paillardé, s'il se fust addressé à moy, ie luy eusse respondu, qu'il ne le deuoit pas faire, car le mentir me semble encore pire que la paillardise. Thales luy conseilla tout autrement, et qu'il iurast, pour garentir le plus, par le moins. Toutesfois ce conseil n'estoit pas tant election de vice, que multiplication. Sur quoy disons ce mot en passant, qu'on fait bon marché à vn homme de conscience, quand on luy propose quelque difficulté au contrepoids du vice: mais quand on l'enferme entre deux vices, on le met à vn rude choix.

Comme on fit Origene: ou qu'il idolatrast, ou qu'il se souffrist iouyr charnellement, à vn grand vilain Æthiopien qu'on luy presenta. Il subit la premiere condition: et vitieusement, dit-on. Pourtant ne seroient pas sans goust, selon leur erreur, celles qui nous

ENGLISH

ardly, put-on virtues born of our imperfections; that at the expense of my immoderation I may draw them as far as the point of reason. One must see one's vice and study it in order to tell it. Those who hide it from others usually hide it from themselves, and do not think it well enough covered if they themselves can see it; they withdraw it from their own conscience and disguise it. *Why does no one confess his vices? Because he is still in them; it takes a man awake to tell his dream.* The ills of the body become clearer as they grow. We find that what we were calling a cold or a sprain is gout.[8]

The ills of the soul grow darker as they gain strength; the sickest man feels them least. That is why they must often be handled again in daylight with a pitiless hand, opened up and torn out of the hollow of our breast. As with good deeds, so with misdeeds: confession alone is sometimes amends. Is there any ugliness in doing wrong that excuses us from confessing it? I find it painful to dissemble, so much so that I avoid taking other people's secrets into my keeping, not having the heart to deny what I know. I can keep quiet about it, but deny it I cannot, without effort and displeasure. To be truly secret, one must be so by nature, not by obligation.

In the service of princes it is not much to be secret if one is not also a liar. If the man who asked Thales of Miletus whether he should solemnly deny having committed adultery had come to me, I would have answered that he should not do so, for lying seems to me even worse than lechery. Thales advised him quite otherwise: that he should swear it, so as to cover the greater by the lesser. Yet this advice was not so much a choice of vice as a multiplication of it. On which, let us say a word in passing: a man of conscience is let off cheaply when he is offered some difficulty to set against a vice; but when he is shut in between two vices, he is put to a hard choice.

As was done to Origen: either he must commit idolatry or let himself be carnally enjoyed by a big, ugly Ethiopian who was brought before him. He submitted to the first condition—and sinfully, they say. And yet, by their own error, those women would not be without taste who protest to us these

7 Love epigrams addressed to these persons were attributed to Plato (Diogenes Laertius III); "Stella" renders the Greek name Aster.
8 Seneca, Letters 53.

FRENCH

protestent en ce temps, qu'elles aymeroient mieux charger leur conscience de dix hommes, que d'vne messe.

3.5.7 Si c'est indiscretion de publier ainsi ses erreurs, il n'y a pas grand danger qu'elle passe en exemple et vsage. Car Ariston disoit, que les vens que les hommes craignent le plus, sont ceux qui les descouurent. Il faut rebrasser ce sot haillon qui cache nos mœurs. Ils enuoyent leur conscience au bordel, et tiennent leur contenance en regle. Iusques aux traistres et assassins, ils espousent les loix de la ceremonie, et attachent là leur deuoir. Si n'est-ce, ny à l'iniustice de se plaindre de l'inciuilité, ny à la malice de l'indiscretion. C'est dommage qu'vn meschant homme ne soit encore vn sot, et que la decence pallie son vice. Ces incrustations n'appartiennent qu'à vne bonne et saine paroy, qui merite d'estre conseruee, d'être blanchie.

3.5.8 En faueur des Huguenots, qui accusent nostre confession auriculaire et priuee, ie me confesse en publiq, religieusement et purement. Sainct Augustin, Origene, et Hippocrates, ont publié les erreurs de leurs opinions: moy encore de mes mœurs. Ie suis affamé de me faire congnoistre: et ne me chaut à combien, pourueu que ce soit veritablement. Ou pour dire mieux, ie n'ay faim de rien: mais ie fuis mortellement, d'estre pris en eschange, par ceux à qui il arriue de congnoistre mon nom. Celuy qui fait tout pour l'honneur et pour la gloire, que pense-il gaigner, en se produisant au monde en masque, desrobant son vray estre à la congnoissance du peuple?

Louez un bossu de sa belle taille, il le doit receuoir à iniure: si vous estes couard, et qu'on vous honnore pour vn vaillant homme, est-ce de vous qu'on parle? On vous prend pour vn autre. I'aymeroy aussi cher, que celuy-là se gratifiast des bonnetades qu'on luy faict, pensant qu'il soit maistre de la trouppe, luy qui est des moindres de la suitte. Archelaus Roy de Macedoine, passant par la ruë, quelqu'vn versa de l'eau sur luy: les assistans disoient qu'il deuoit le punir. Voyre mais, fit-il, il n'a pas versé l'eau sur moy, mais sur celuy qu'il pensoit que ie fusse. Socrates à celuy, qui l'aduertissoit: qu'on mesdisoit de luy. Point, dit-il: il n'y a rien en moy de ce qu'ils disent.

ENGLISH

days that they would rather burden their conscience with ten men than with one Mass.[9]

If it is indiscretion to publish one's faults this way, there is not much danger of its becoming an example and a practice. For Ariston used to say that the winds men fear most are those that uncover them. We must pull back this foolish rag that hides our morals. They send their conscience to the brothel and keep their countenance in good order. Even traitors and assassins espouse the laws of ceremony and fasten their duty there. Still, it is not for injustice to complain of incivility, nor for malice to complain of indiscretion. It is a pity that a wicked man is not also a fool, and that decency should cloak his vice. Such plasterwork belongs only on a good, sound wall that deserves to be preserved and whitewashed.

As a favor to the Huguenots, who condemn our private, whispered confession, I confess myself in public, religiously and purely. Saint Augustine, Origen and Hippocrates published the errors of their opinions; I, besides, those of my morals. I am hungry to make myself known, and I do not care to how many, provided it is truly. Or, to put it better, I am hungry for nothing; but I have a mortal fear of being mistaken for someone else by those who happen to know my name. The man who does everything for honor and glory, what does he think he gains by showing himself to the world in a mask, hiding his true being from people's knowledge?

Praise a man with a crooked back for his fine figure: he ought to take it as an insult. If you are a coward and people honor you as a valiant man, is it you they are talking about? They take you for someone else. I would as soon see a man take pleasure in the caps doffed to him, thinking he is master of the troop, when he is one of the least in the retinue. As Archelaus, king of Macedon, was passing along the street, someone poured water on him; the bystanders said he ought to punish the man. "Yes, but," said he, "he did not pour the water on me, but on the man he thought I was." Socrates, to someone who told him that people were speaking ill of him: "Not at all," he said, "there is nothing in me of what they say."

9 The women are Protestants of Montaigne's day.

FRENCH

Pour moy, qui me loüeroit d'estre bon pilote, d'estre bien modeste, ou d'estre bien chaste, ie ne luy en deurois nul grammercy. Et pareillement, qui m'appelleroit traistre, voleur, ou yurongne, ie me tiendroy aussi peu offencé. Ceux qui se mescognoissent, se peuuent paistre de fauces approbations: non pas moy, qui me voy, et qui me recherche iusques aux entrailles, qui sçay bien ce qu'il m'appartient. Il me plaist d'estre moins loué, pourueu que ie soy mieux congneu. On me pourroit tenir pour sage en telle condition de sagesse, que ie tien pour sottise. Ie m'ennuye que mes Essais seruent les dames de meuble commun seulement, et de meuble de sale: ce chapitre me fera du cabinet.

I'ayme leur commerce vn peu priué: le publique est sans faueur et saueur. Aux adieux, nous eschauffons outre l'ordinaire l'affection enuers les choses que nous abandonnons. Ie prens l'extreme congé des ieux du monde: voicy nos dernieres accolades.

ENGLISH

For my part, if someone praised me for being a good pilot, or very modest, or very chaste, I would owe him no thanks. And likewise, if someone called me a traitor, a thief or a drunkard, I would consider myself just as little offended. Those who do not know themselves can feed on false approval; not I, who see myself and search myself to the very entrails, and know well what belongs to me. I am content to be less praised, provided I am better known. I might be taken for wise in a kind of wisdom that I consider folly. It annoys me that my Essays serve the ladies only as a common piece of furniture, furniture for the drawing room. This chapter will get me into the boudoir.

I like their company when it is somewhat private; in public it has neither favor nor flavor. At farewells we feel more than ordinary warmth toward the things we are leaving. I am taking my final leave of the world's games: these are our last embraces.

THE UNSPOKEN ACT

Why the sexual act, so natural and necessary, is the one thing we dare not name.

FRENCH

3.5.9 Mais venons à mon theme. Qu'a faict l'action genitale aux hommes, si naturelle, si necessaire, et si iuste, pour n'en oser parler sans vergongne, et pour l'exclurre des propos serieux et reglez? Nous prononçons hardiment, tuer, desrober, trahir: et cela, nous n'oserions qu'entre les dents. Est-ce à dire, que moins nous en exhalons en parole, d'autant nous auons loy d'en grossir la pensee? Car il est bon, que les mots qui sont le moins en vsage, moins escrits, et mieux teuz, sont les mieux sceus, et plus generalement cognus. Nul aage, nulles mœurs l'ignorent non plus que le pain. Ils s'impriment en chascun, sans estre exprimez, et sans voix et sans figure.

Et le sexe qui le fait le plus, a charge de le taire le plus. C'est vne action, que nous auons mis en la franchise du silence, d'où c'est crime de l'arracher. Non pas pour l'accuser et iuger. Ny n'osons la fouëtter, qu'en periphrase et peinture. Grand faueur à vn criminel, d'estre si execrable, que la iustice estime iniuste, de le toucher et de le veoir: libre et sauué par le benefice de l'aigreur de sa condamnation. N'en va-il pas comme en matiere de liures, qui se rendent d'autant plus venaux et

ENGLISH

But let us come to my theme. What has the sexual act, so natural, so necessary and so just, done to men, that they dare not speak of it without shame and exclude it from serious and orderly conversation? We boldly pronounce "kill," "rob," "betray"; and this we would dare to say only between our teeth. Does that mean that the less we breathe of it in words, the more right we have to swell it in our thoughts? For it is a fine joke that the words least used, least written and best kept quiet are the best known and the most widely understood. No age, no manners are ignorant of them, any more than of bread. They imprint themselves on each of us without being expressed, without voice and without shape.

And the sex that does it most is charged with keeping most quiet about it. It is an act we have placed in the sanctuary of silence, from which it is a crime to drag it—even in order to accuse and judge it. Nor do we dare to whip it except in roundabout phrases and pictures. A great favor to a criminal, to be so execrable that justice thinks it unjust to touch him or look at him: free and saved by the

FRENCH

publiques, de ce qu'ils sont supprimez? Ie m'en vay pour moy, prendre au mot l'aduis d'Aristote, qui dit, L'estre honteux, seruir d'ornement à la ieunesse, mais de reproche à la vieillesse.

Ces vers se preschent en l'escole ancienne: escole à laquelle ie me tien bien plus qu'à la moderne: ses vertus me semblent plus grandes, ses vices moindres. *Ceux qui par trop fuyant Venus estriuent,*
Faillent autant que ceux qui trop la suiuent.
Tu, Dea, tu rerum naturam sola gubernas,
Nec sine te quicquam dias in luminis oras
Exoritur, neque fit lætum, nec amabile quicquam.

3.5.10 Ie ne sçay qui a peu mal mesler Pallas et les Muses, auec Venus, et les refroidir enuers l'amour: mais ie ne voy aucunes deitez qui s'auiennent mieux, ny qui s'entredoiuent plus. Qui ostera aux muses les imaginations amoureuses, leur desrobera le plus bel entretien qu'elles ayent, et la plus noble matiere de leur ouurage: et qui fera perdre à l'amour la communication et seruice de la poësie l'affoiblira de ses meilleures armes. Par ainsin on charge le Dieu d'accointance, et de bien-vueillance, et les Deesses protectrices d'humanité et de iustice, du vice d'ingratitude et de mescognoissance.

Ie ne suis pas de si long temps cassé de l'estat et suitte de ce Dieu, que ie n'aye la memoire informee de ses forces et valeurs: *Agnosco veteris vestigia flammæ.* Il y a encore quelque demeurant d'emotion et chaleur apres la fiéure. *Nec mihi deficiat calor hic, hyemantibus annis.* Tout asseché que ie suis, et appesanty, ie sens encore quelques tiedes restes de cette ardeur passee.

Qual l'alto Ægeo per che Aquilone o Noto
Cessi, che tutto prima il vuolse et scosse,
Non s'accheta ei perto, ma'l sono el' moto,
Ritien dell' onde anco agitate è grosse. Mais de ce que ie m'y entends, les forces et valeur de ce Dieu, se trouuent plus vifues et plus animees, en la peinture de la poësie, qu'en leur propre essence. *Et versus digitos habet.* Elle represente ie ne sçay quel air, plus amoureux que l'amour mesme. Venus n'est pas si belle toute nüe, et viue, et haletante,

ENGLISH

benefit of the harshness of his condemnation. Isn't it as with books, which become all the more salable and public for being suppressed? For my part, I am going to take Aristotle at his word when he says that bashfulness is an ornament to youth but a reproach to old age.

These lines are preached in the ancient school, a school to which I hold much more than to the modern one: its virtues seem to me greater, its vices smaller. *Those who strive too hard to flee from Venus*
Go as far wrong as those who follow her too much.
You, Goddess, you alone govern the nature of things,
Nor without you does anything rise into the shining shores of light,
Nor is anything made joyful or lovely.[10]

I do not know who can have set Pallas and the Muses at odds with Venus and made them cool toward love; but I see no deities that suit each other better or owe each other more. Whoever takes amorous imaginings away from the Muses will rob them of the finest subject they have and the noblest matter of their work; and whoever deprives love of the fellowship and service of poetry will strip it of its best weapons. In this way the god of intimacy and goodwill, and the goddesses who protect humanity and justice, are charged with the vice of ingratitude and of failing to acknowledge what they owe.

I have not been so long dismissed from the service and train of this god that my memory is not informed of his strength and worth: *I recognize the traces of the old flame.* There is still some remnant of emotion and heat after the fever. *May this warmth not fail me in my wintry years.* Dried up and weighed down as I am, I still feel some lukewarm remains of that past ardor.[11]

As the deep Aegean, though the north or south wind
Has died down that first tossed and shook it all,
Does not grow calm for that, but keeps the roar and motion
Of its waves still stirred and swollen. But from what I understand of it, the strength and worth of this god are found more lively and animated in the painting of poetry than in their own essence. *And*

10 The French couplet comes from Amyot's translation of Plutarch; the Latin is Lucretius, On the Nature of Things I.
11 Virgil, Aeneid IV, then Johannes Secundus.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
	comme elle est icy chez Virgile. Dixerat, et niueis hinc atque hinc Diua lacertis Cunctantem amplexu molli fouet.	*verse has fingers.* Poetry conveys some air or other more amorous than love itself. Venus is not so beautiful all naked, alive and panting, as she is here in Virgil: She had spoken; and, as he hesitated, the goddess, flinging her snowy arms around him on either side, Warms him in a soft embrace.[12]
	Ille repente Accepit solitam flammam, notúsque medullas Intrauit calor, et labefacta per ossa cucurrit. Non secus atque olim tonitru cùm rupta corusco Ignea rima micans percurrit lumine nimbos. . . . . . Ea verba loquutus, Optatos dedit amplexus, placidúmque petiuit Coniugis infusus gremio per membra soporem.	He suddenly Caught the familiar flame, and the well-known heat Entered his marrow and ran through his melting bones, Just as sometimes, when the thunder bursts, a fiery rift Runs flashing with light through the storm clouds. . . . . . Having spoken these words, He gave her the embraces she longed for, and sought calm sleep Through his limbs, lying poured out on his wife's lap.

MARRIAGE AND LOVE

A good marriage is built on friendship, not on love, which hates any other bond.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
3.5.11	Ce que i'y trouue à considerer, c'est qu'il la peinct vn peu bien esmeüe pour vne Venus maritale. En ce sage marché, les appetits ne se trouuent pas si follastres: ils sont sombres et plus mousses. L'amour hait qu'on se tienne par ailleurs que par luy, et se mesle laschement aux accointances qui sont dressees et entretenues soubs autre titre: comme est le mariage. L'alliance, les moyens, y poisent par raison, autant ou plus, que les graces et la beauté. On ne se marie pas pour soy, quoy qu'on die: on se marie autant ou plus, pour sa posterité, pour sa famille. L'vsage et l'interest du mariage touche nostre race, bien loing par delà nous.	What I find worth noting here is that he paints her as rather too aroused for a married Venus. In this sensible bargain the appetites are not so frolicsome; they are somber and duller. Love hates people to be bound to each other by anything but itself, and takes only a slack part in relationships formed and kept up under some other title, as marriage is. Connections and means rightly weigh as much there as charms and beauty, or more. We do not marry for ourselves, whatever people say; we marry as much or more for our posterity, for our family. The use and interest of marriage concern our line, far beyond ourselves.
	Pourtant me plaist cette façon, qu'on le conduise plustost par main tierce, que par les propres: et par le sens d'autruy, que par le sien. Tout cecy, combien à l'opposite des conuentions amoureuses? Aussi est-ce vne espece d'inceste, d'aller employer à ce parentage venerable et sacré, les efforts et les extrauagances de la licence amoureuse, comme il me semble auoir dict ailleurs. Il faut, dit Aristote, toucher sa femme prudemment et	That is why I like the practice of having it arranged by a third hand rather than by one's own, and by someone else's sense rather than one's own. How opposite all this is to the conventions of love! And so it is a kind of incest to bring into this venerable and sacred kinship the efforts and extravagances of amorous license, as I think I have said elsewhere. One must, says Aristotle, touch

12 Tasso, Jerusalem Delivered XII; Juvenal, Satires VI; Virgil, Aeneid VIII, where Venus coaxes her husband Vulcan to forge arms for Aeneas.

FRENCH

seuerement, de peur qu'en la chatouillant trop lasciuement, le plaisir ne la face sortir hors des gons de raison. Ce qu'il dit pour la conscience, les medecins le disent pour la santé. Qu'vn plaisir excessiuement chaud, voluptueux, et assidu, altere la semence, et empesche la conception.

Disent d'autre part, qu'à vne congression languissante, comme celle là est de sa nature: pour la remplir d'vne iuste et fertile chaleur, il s'y faut presenter rarement, et à notables interualles; *Quo rapiat sitiens Venerem interiúsque recondat.* Ie ne voy point de mariages qui faillent plustost, et se troublent, que ceux qui s'acheminent par la beauté, et desirs amoureux. Il y faut des fondemens plus solides, et plus constans, et y marcher d'aguet: cette boüillante allegresse n'y vaut rien.

3.5.12 Ceux qui pensent faire honneur au mariage, pour y ioindre l'amour, font, ce me semble, de mesme ceux, qui pour faire faueur à la vertu, tiennent que la noblesse n'est autre chose que vertu. Ce sont choses qui ont quelque cousinage: mais il y a beaucoup de diuersité: on n'a que faire de troubler leurs noms et leurs tiltres. On fait tort à l'vne ou à l'autre de les confondre. La noblesse est vne belle qualité, et introduite auec raison: mais d'autant que c'est vne qualité dependant d'autruy, et qui peut tomber en vn homme vicieux et de neant, elle est en estimation bien loing au dessoubs de la vertu.

C'est vne vertu, si ce l'est, artificielle et visible: dependant du temps et de la fortune: diuerse en forme selon les contrees, viuante et mortelle: sans naissance, non plus que la riuiere du Nil: genealogique et commune; de suite et de similitude: tiree par consequence, et consequence bien foible. La science, la force, la bonté, la beauté, la richesse, toutes autres qualitez, tombent en communication et en commerce: cetty-cy se consomme en soy, de nulle emploite au seruice d'autruy.

On proposoit à l'vn de nos Roys, le choix de deux competiteurs, en vne mesme charge, desquels l'vn estoit Gentil'homme, l'autre ne l'estoit point: il ordonna que sans respect de cette qualité, on choisist celuy qui auroit le plus de merite: mais où la valeur seroit entierement pareille, qu'alors on eust respect à la noblesse: c'estoit iustement luy donner son rang. Antigonus à vn ieune

ENGLISH

one's wife prudently and soberly, for fear that if she is tickled too lasciviously, pleasure may carry her off the hinges of reason. What he says for conscience's sake, the doctors say for health's sake: that excessively hot, voluptuous and assiduous pleasure alters the seed and hinders conception.

They say on the other hand that in a languid coupling, as that one is by nature, if it is to be filled with a proper and fruitful heat, one must present oneself rarely and at considerable intervals: *So that it may seize Venus thirstily and store her deep within.* I see no marriages that fail sooner, or are more troubled, than those that are brought about by beauty and amorous desire. Marriage needs more solid and more constant foundations, and must be approached warily; that boiling ardor is no good for it.[13]

Those who think they honor marriage by joining love to it act, it seems to me, like those who, to do virtue a favor, hold that nobility is nothing other than virtue. These things are related, but there is a great deal of difference between them, and there is no point in mixing up their names and titles. We wrong one or the other by confusing them. Nobility is a fine quality, and introduced for good reason. But since it is a quality that depends on others, and can fall to a vicious and worthless man, it is valued far below virtue.

It is a virtue, if it is one at all, that is artificial and visible. It depends on time and fortune, differs in form from country to country, and is living and mortal. Like the river Nile, it has no source. It is genealogical and shared, a matter of succession and resemblance, drawn by inference, and a very weak inference at that. Learning, strength, goodness, beauty, wealth, all other qualities, can be communicated and exchanged. This one is used up in itself, and is of no use in the service of others.[14]

One of our kings was offered the choice between two candidates for the same office, one a gentleman and the other not. He ordered that they should choose the one with more merit, without regard to that quality. Only where their worth was entirely equal should nobility be taken into ac-

13 Virgil, Georgics III, on the breeding of mares.
14 The source of the Nile was unknown to the ancients.

FRENCH

homme incogneu, qui luy demandoit la charge de son pere, homme de valeur, qui venoit de mourir: Mon amy, dit-il, en tels bien faicts, ie ne regarde pas tant la noblesse de mes soldats, comme ie fais leur proüesse.

De vray, il n'en doibt pas aller comme des officiers des Roys de Sparte, trompettes, menestriers, cuisiniers, à qui en leurs charges succedoient les enfants, pour ignorants qu'ils fussent, auant les mieux experimentez du mestier. Ceux de Callicut font des nobles, vne espece par dessus l'humaine. Le mariage leur est interdit, et toute autre vacation que bellique. De concubines, ils en peuuent auoir leur saoul: et les femmes autant de ruffiens: sans ialousie les vns des autres. Mais c'est vn crime capital et irremissible, de s'accoupler à personne d'autre condition que la leur. Et se tiennent pollus, s'ils en sont seulement touchez en passant: et, comme leur noblesse en estant merueilleusement iniuriee et interessee, tuent ceux qui seulement ont approché vn peu trop pres d'eux.

De maniere que les ignobles sont tenus de crier en marchant, comme les gondoliers de Venise, au contour des ruës, pour ne s'entreheurter: et les nobles leur commandent de se ietter au quartier qu'ils veulent. Ceux cy euitent par là, cette ignominie, qu'ils estiment perpetuelle; ceux là vne mort certaine. Nulle duree de temps, nulle faueur de Prince, nul office, ou vertu, ou richesse peut faire qu'vn roturier deuienne noble. A quoy ayde cette coustume, que les mariages sont defendus de l'vn mestier à l'autre. Ne peut vne de race cordonniere, espouser vn charpentier: et sont les parents obligez de dresser les enfants à la vacation des peres, precisement, et non à autre vacation: par où se maintient la distinction et continuation de leur fortune.

3.5.13 Vn bon mariage, s'il en est, refuse la compagnie et conditions de l'amour: il tasche à representer celles de l'amitié. C'est vne douce societé de vie, pleine de constance, de fiance, et d'vn nombre infiny d'vtiles et solides offices, et obligations mutuelles. Aucune femme qui en sauoure le goust, *Optato quam iunxit lumine tæda,* ne voudroit tenir lieu de maistresse à son mary. Si elle est

ENGLISH

count. That was giving it exactly its proper rank. An unknown young man asked Antigonus for the post of his father, a man of valor who had just died. "My friend," he said, "in granting such favors I do not look so much at my soldiers' nobility as at their prowess."[15]

Indeed, it should not be as it was with the officers of the kings of Sparta, the trumpeters, minstrels and cooks. Their children succeeded to their posts, however ignorant they might be, ahead of the most experienced in the trade. The people of Calicut make their nobles a species above the human. Marriage is forbidden to them, and so is every calling but war. They may have their fill of concubines, and the women as many lovers, with no jealousy among them. But it is a capital and unpardonable crime to couple with anyone of a different condition from their own. They consider themselves polluted if such a person merely brushes against them in passing. And, as if their nobility were wonderfully insulted and injured by it, they kill those who have merely come a little too close to them.[16]

So the commoners are obliged to call out as they walk, like the gondoliers of Venice at street corners, so as not to collide. The nobles then order them to step aside to whatever side they please. In this way the nobles avoid a disgrace they consider permanent, and the commoners avoid certain death. No length of time, no prince's favor, no office, virtue or wealth can make a commoner noble. They are helped in this by the custom that forbids marriage between one trade and another. A girl from a family of shoemakers may not marry a carpenter. And parents are obliged to train their children for their fathers' calling, precisely that one and no other. By this means the distinction and continuance of their lot is kept up.

A good marriage, if there is such a thing, rejects the company and conditions of love and tries to reproduce those of friendship. It is a sweet partnership in life, full of constancy and trust, and of countless useful and solid services and mutual obligations. No woman who savors its taste, *whom the marriage torch has joined with its longed-for light,* would want to stand as a mistress to her husband.

15 Antigonus I (c. 382–301 BC), one of Alexander's generals and later king; the story is in Plutarch.
16 Calicut (Kozhikode), on the Malabar coast of India; the nobles described are the Nairs.

FRENCH

logee en son affection, comme femme, elle y est bien plus honorablement et seurement logee.

Quand il fera l'esmeu ailleurs, et l'empressé, qu'on luy demande pourtant lors, à qui il aymeroit mieux arriuer vne honte, ou à sa femme ou à sa maistresse, de qui la desfortune l'affligeroit le plus, à qui il desire plus de grandeur: ces demandes n'ont aucun doubte en vn mariage sain.

3.5.14 Ce qu'il s'en voit si peu de bons, est signe de son prix et de sa valeur. A le bien façonner et à le bien prendre, il n'est point de plus belle piece en notre societé. Nous ne nous en pouuons passer, et l'allons auilissant. Il en aduient ce qui se voit aux cages, les oyseaux qui en sont dehors, desesperent d'y entrer; et d'vn pareil soing en sortir, ceux qui sont au dedans. Socrates, enquis, qui estoit plus commode, prendre, ou ne prendre point de femme: Lequel des deux, dit-il, on face, on s'en repentira. C'est vne conuention à laquelle se rapporte bien à point ce qu'on dit, *homo homini*, ou *Deus*, ou *lupus*.

Il faut le rencontre de beaucoup de qualitez à le bastir. Il se trouue en ce temps plus commode aux ames simples et populaires, où les delices, la curiosité, et l'oysiueté, ne le troublent pas tant. Les humeurs desbauchees, comme est la mienne, qui hay toute sorte de liaison et d'obligation, n'y sont pas si propres. *Et mihi dulce magis resoluto viuere collo.*

3.5.15 De mon dessein, i'eusse fuy d'espouser la sagesse mesme, si elle m'eust voulu. Mais nous auons beau dire: la coustume et l'vsage de la vie commune, nous emporte. La plus part de mes actions se conduisent par exemple, non par choix. Toutesfois ie ne m'y conuiay pas proprement. On m'y mena, et y fus porté par des occasions estrangeres. Car non seulement les choses incommodes, mais il n'en est aucune si laide et vitieuse et euitable, qui ne puisse deuenir acceptable par quelque condition et accident, tant l'humaine posture est vaine. Et y fus porté, certes plus preparé lors, et plus rebours, que ie ne suis à present, apres l'auoir essayé.

Et tout licencieux qu'on me tient, i'ay en verité plus seuerement obserué les loix de mariage, que ie n'auois ny promis ny esperé. Il n'est plus temps de regimber quand on s'est laissé entrauer. Il faut prudemment mesnager sa liberté: mais depuis qu'on s'est submis à l'obligation, il s'y

ENGLISH

If she is lodged in his affection as a wife, she is lodged there far more honorably and securely.[17]

When he plays the smitten and eager lover elsewhere, let him be asked even then which of the two he would rather have suffer some shame, his wife or his mistress. Whose misfortune would grieve him more? For whom does he wish greater advancement? In a sound marriage these questions leave no room for doubt.

That so few good ones are to be seen is a sign of its price and its worth. Well fashioned and rightly taken, there is no finer piece in our society. We cannot do without it, and yet we keep debasing it. What happens with it is what we see with cages: the birds outside despair of getting in, and those inside are just as anxious to get out. Socrates was asked which was better, to take a wife or not. "Whichever you do," he said, "you will regret it." It is an arrangement to which the saying fits very aptly: *man to man* is either *a god* or *a wolf*.

Building it takes the meeting of many qualities. In these times it suits simple, ordinary souls better, where luxuries, curiosity and idleness do not trouble it so much. Unruly temperaments like mine, which hate every sort of tie and obligation, are not so well fitted for it. *And to me it is sweeter to live with my neck unyoked.*[18]

Left to my own design, I would have avoided marrying wisdom herself, if she had wanted me. But say what we will, custom and the practice of ordinary life carry us along. Most of my actions are guided by example, not by choice. Still, I did not really invite myself to it. I was led to it, carried there by outside circumstances. For not only inconvenient things, but anything at all, however ugly, vicious and avoidable, can become acceptable through some condition or chance, so empty is the human stance. And I was carried there certainly more braced against it then, and more contrary, than I am now that I have tried it.

And licentious as I am thought to be, I have in truth kept the laws of marriage more strictly than I had either promised or hoped. It is too late to kick once you have let yourself be hobbled. You must manage your liberty prudently. But once you

17 Catullus, LXVI.
18 Maximianus (known in Montaigne's day as Cornelius Gallus), Elegies.

FRENCH

faut tenir soubs les loix du debuoir commun, aumoins s'en efforcer. Ceux qui entreprennent ce marché pour s'y porter auec hayne et mespris, font iniustement et incommodément.

Et cette belle regle que ie voy passer de main en main entre elles, comme vn sainct oracle, *Sers ton mary comme ton maistre, / Et t'en garde comme d'vn traistre:* qui est à dire: Porte toy enuers luy, d'vne reuerence contrainte, ennemye, et deffiante (cry de guerre et de deffi) est pareillement iniurieuse et difficile. Ie suis trop mol pour desseins si espineux. A dire vray, ie ne suis pas arriué à cette perfection d'habileté et galantise d'esprit, que de confondre la raison auec l'iniustice, et mettre en risee tout ordre et regle qui n'accorde à mon appetit. Pour hayr la superstition, ie ne me iette pas incontinent à l'irreligion.

Si on ne fait tousiours son debuoir, au moins le faut il tousiours aymer et recognoistre: c'est trahison, se marier sans s'espouser. Passons outre.

3.5.16 Nostre poëte represente vn mariage plein d'accord et de bonne conuenance, auquel pourtant il n'y a pas beaucoup de loyauté. A il voulu dire, qu'il ne soit pas impossible de se rendre aux efforts de l'amour, et ce neantmoins reseruer quelque deuoir enuers le mariage: et qu'on le peut blesser, sans le rompre tout à faict? Tel valet ferre la mule au maistre qu'il ne hayt pas pourtant.

La beauté, l'oportunité, la destinee (car la destinee y met aussi la main) *Fatum est in partibus illis*
Quas sinus abscondit: nam si tibi sidera cessent,
Nil faciet longi mensura incognita nerui, l'ont attachée à vn estranger: non pas si entiere peut estre, qu'il ne luy puisse rester quelque liaison par où elle tient encore à son mary. Ce sont deux desseins, qui ont des routes distinguees, et non confondues. Vne femme se peut rendre à tel personnage, que nullement elle ne voudroit auoir espousé: ie ne dy pas pour les conditions de la fortune, mais pour celles mesmes de la personne. Peu de gens ont espousé des amies qui ne s'en soient repentis.

Et iusques en l'autre monde, quel mauuais mesnage fait Iupiter avec sa femme, qu'il auoit premierement pratiquee et iouyë par amourettes? C'est ce qu'on dit,

ENGLISH

have submitted to the obligation, you must hold to it under the laws of common duty, or at least try to. Those who enter into this bargain only to conduct themselves in it with hatred and contempt act unjustly, and to their own harm.

And there is that fine rule which I see passed from hand to hand among the women like a holy oracle: *Serve your husband as your master, / And guard yourself from him as from a traitor.* That is to say: "Bear yourself toward him with a reverence that is forced, hostile and distrustful" (a war cry and a challenge). It is just as insulting as it is hard. I am too soft for such thorny designs. To tell the truth, I have not reached that perfection of cleverness and gallantry of mind that confuses reason with injustice and laughs at every order and rule that does not suit my appetite. Hating superstition does not make me rush straight into irreligion.

If we do not always do our duty, we must at least always love it and acknowledge it. It is treachery to marry without espousing. Let us move on.

Our poet portrays a marriage full of harmony and good understanding, in which, however, there is not much loyalty. Did he mean that it is not impossible to yield to the assaults of love and still keep some duty toward marriage? That one can wound it without breaking it altogether? Many a servant skims off his master without hating him for all that.

Beauty, opportunity and destiny have attached her to a stranger, for destiny too has a hand in it: *Fate rules those parts*
That the clothing hides: for if the stars desert you,
The unheard-of length of your member will do nothing. Yet perhaps not so wholly that there cannot remain some bond by which she still holds to her husband. These are two designs that travel separate roads, not one. A woman may give herself to a man she would by no means have wanted to marry. I do not mean because of his fortune, but because of the qualities of the person himself. Few men have married their mistresses without regretting it.[19]

And even in the other world, what a bad household Jupiter keeps with his wife, whom he had first courted and enjoyed in a love affair! That is

19 Juvenal, Satire IX.

FRENCH

chier dans le panier, pour apres le mettre sur sa teste. I'ay veu de mon temps en quelque bon lieu, guerir honteusement et deshonnestement, l'amour, par le mariage: les considerations sont trop autres. Nous aymons, sans nous empescher deux choses diuerses, et qui se contrarient. Isocrates disoit, que la ville d'Athenes plaisoit à la mode que font les dames qu'on sert par amour, chacun aymoit à s'y venir promener, et y passer son temps: nul ne l'aymoit pour l'espouser: c'est à dire, pour s'y habituer et domicilier.

I'ay auec despit, veu des maris hayr leurs femmes, de ce seulement, qu'ils leur font tort. Aumoins ne les faut il pas moins aymer, de nostre faute: par repentance et compassion aumoins, elles nous en deuroient estre plus cheres.

3.5.17 Ce sont fins differentes, et pourtant compatibles, dit-il, en quelque façon. Le mariage a pour sa part, l'vtilité, la iustice, l'honneur, et la constance: vn plaisir plat, mais plus vniuersel. L'amour se fonde au seul plaisir: et l'a de vray plus chatouilleux, plus vif, et plus aigu: vn plaisir attizé par la difficulté: il y faut de la piqueure et de la cuison. Ce n'est plus amour, s'il est sans fleches et sans feu. La liberalité des dames est trop profuse au mariage, et esmousse la poincte de l'affection et du desir. Pour fuïr à cet inconuenient, voyez la peine qu'y prennent en leurs loix Lycurgus et Platon.

ENGLISH

what the saying calls fouling the basket and then putting it on your head. In my time I have seen love shamefully and dishonorably cured by marriage, in a certain good family. The considerations are too different. We love two different and opposed things without being troubled by it. Isocrates said that the city of Athens pleased people the way ladies do whom men court for love. Everyone liked to come and stroll there and pass the time; no one loved it enough to marry it, that is, to settle there and make it his home.

It has made me indignant to see husbands hate their wives simply because they are wronging them. At least we should not love them less for our own fault. Out of repentance and compassion, at least, they ought to be dearer to us for it.

These are different ends, he says, and yet compatible in some way. Marriage has as its share utility, justice, honor and constancy: a flat pleasure, but a more universal one. Love is founded on pleasure alone, and its pleasure is in truth more tickling, livelier and keener, a pleasure stirred up by difficulty. There must be sting and smart in it. It is no longer love if it is without arrows and without fire. The ladies' generosity is too lavish in marriage and blunts the edge of affection and desire. See what pains Lycurgus and Plato take in their laws to avoid this drawback.

RULES MADE BY MEN

Men demand of women a chastity they neither practice nor make easy.

FRENCH

3.5.18 Les femmes n'ont pas tort du tout, quand elles refusent les regles de vie, qui sont introduites au monde: d'autant que ce sont les hommes qui les ont faictes sans elles. Il y a naturellement de la brigue et riotte entre elles et nous. Le plus estroit consentement que nous ayons auec elles, encores est-il tumultuaire et tempestueux. A l'aduis de nostre autheur, nous les traictons inconsiderément en cecy.

Apres que nous auons cogneu, qu'elles sont sans comparaison plus capables et ardentes aux effects de l'amour que nous, et que ce prestre ancien l'a ainsi tesmoigné, qui auoit esté tantost homme, tantost femme: *Venus huic erat vtraque nota.* Et en outre, que nous auons appris de leur propre bouche, la preuue qu'en firent autrefois, en diuers siecles, vn Empereur et vne

ENGLISH

Women are not entirely wrong when they reject the rules of life that have been introduced into the world, since it is men who made them, without women. There is naturally intrigue and squabbling between them and us. Even the closest agreement we have with them is turbulent and stormy. In our author's opinion, we treat them thoughtlessly in this matter.

We have recognized that they are incomparably more capable and ardent than we are in the acts of love. That ancient priest who had been now a man, now a woman, bore witness to it: *Venus of both kinds was known to him.* Besides, we have learned from their own mouths the proof given long ago, in different centuries, by an emperor

FRENCH

Emperiere de Rome, maistres ouuriers et fameux en cette besongne: luy despucela bien en vne nuict dix vierges Sarmates ses captiues: mais elle fournit reelement en vne nuict, à vingt et cinq entreprinses, changeant de compagnie selon son besoing et son goust, *Adhuc ardens rigidæ tentigine vuluæ: / Et lassata viris, nondum satiata recessit.* Et que sur le different aduenu à Cateloigne, entre vne femme, se plaignant des efforts trop assiduelz de son mary (non tant à mon aduis qu'elle en fust incommodee, car ie ne crois les miracles qu'en foy, comme pour retrancher soubs ce pretexte, et brider en ce mesme, qui est l'action fondamentale du mariage, l'authorité des maris enuers leurs femmes:

et pour montrer que leurs hergnes, et leur malignité passent outre la couche nuptiale, et foulent aux pieds graces et douceurs mesmes de Venus) à laquelle plainte, le mary respondoit, homme vrayement brutal et desnaturé, qu'aux iours mesme de ieusne il ne s'en sçauroit passer à moins de dix: interuint ce notable arrest de la Royne d'Aragon: par lequel, apres meure deliberation de conseil, cette bonne Royne, pour donner regle et exemple à tout temps, de la moderation et modestie requise en vn iuste mariage: ordonna pour bornes legitimes et necessaires, le nombre de six par iour: relaschant et quitant beaucoup du besoing et desir de son sexe, pour establir, disoit-elle, vne forme aysee, et par consequent permanante et immuable.

En quoy s'escrient les docteurs, quel doit estre l'appetit et la concupiscence feminine, puisque leur raison, leur reformation, et leur vertu, se taille à ce prix? considerans le diuers iugement de nos appetits. Car Solon patron de l'eschole legiste ne taxe qu'à trois fois par mois, pour ne faillir point, cette hantise coniugale. Apres avoir creu, dis-ie, et presché cela, nous sommes allez, leur donner la continence peculierement en partage: et sur peines dernieres et extremes.

3.5.19 Il n'est passion plus pressante, que cette cy, à laquelle nous voulons qu'elles resistent seules: non simplement, comme à vn vice de sa mesure: mais comme à l'abomination et execration plus qu'à l'irreligion et au parricide: et nous nous y rendons ce pendant sans coulpe et reproche. Ceux mesme d'entre nous, qui ont essayé

ENGLISH

and an empress of Rome, master craftsmen famous in this work. He did indeed deflower ten Sarmatian virgins, his captives, in one night. But she actually took on twenty-five bouts in one night, changing company as her need and taste required, *Still burning with the stiff tension of her vulva, / She withdrew exhausted by men, but not yet satisfied.* Then there was the dispute that arose in Catalonia. A woman complained of her husband's too frequent efforts. In my opinion this was not so much because they troubled her, for I believe in miracles only in matters of faith. It was rather to curtail, on this pretext, the authority of husbands over their wives, and to curb it in the very act that is fundamental to marriage;[20]

and to show that women's sulks and malice go beyond the marriage bed and trample underfoot even the graces and sweetnesses of Venus. To her complaint the husband, a truly brutish and unnatural man, replied that even on fast days he could not make do with fewer than ten. Then came that notable decree of the Queen of Aragon. After mature deliberation in council, this good queen, to give all ages a rule and example of the moderation and modesty required in a proper marriage, set the number at six a day as the legitimate and necessary limit. In doing so she gave up and relinquished much of the need and desire of her sex, in order, she said, to establish an easy standard, and therefore a lasting and unchangeable one.

At which the learned exclaim: what must female appetite and lust be, if their reason, their reform and their virtue are cut to this measure? They are thinking of how differently our own appetites are judged. For Solon, the master of the school of law, rates this conjugal intercourse at only three times a month, so as not to fall short. After believing and preaching all this, I say, we have gone and given them continence as their special portion, and under the last and most extreme penalties.

There is no passion more pressing than this one, and we want them alone to resist it. Not simply as a vice of its own size, but as an abomination and an execration, worse than irreligion and parricide; and meanwhile we give in to it ourselves without guilt or reproach. Even those of us who have tried

20 The priest is Tiresias (Ovid, Metamorphoses III); the emperor is Proculus, and the empress Messalina, described in Juvenal, Satire VI.

FRENCH

d'en venir à bout, ont assez auoué quelle difficulté, ou plustost impossibilité il y auoit, vsant de remedes materiels, à mater, affoiblir et refroidir le corps. Nous au contraire, les voulons saines, vigoreuses, en bon point, bien nourries, et chastes ensemble: c'est à dire, et chaudes et froides. Car le mariage, que nous disons auoir charge de les empescher de bruler, leur aporte peu de refraichissement selon nos mœurs.

Si elles en prennent vn, à qui la vigueur de l'aage boult encores, il fera gloire de l'espandre ailleurs. *Sit tandem pudor, aut eamus in ius,*
Multis mentula millibus redempta,
Non est hæc tua, Basse, vendidisti. Le philosophe Polemon fut iustement appellé en iustice par sa femme, de ce qu'il alloit semant en vn champ sterile le fruict deu au champ genital. Si c'est de ces autres cassez, les voyla en plein mariage, de pire condition que vierges et vefues. Nous les tenons pour bien fournies, par ce qu'elles ont vn homme aupres. Comme les Romains tindrent pour viollee Clodia Læta, vestale, que Caligula auoit approchée, encore qu'il fust aueré, qu'il ne l'auoit qu'approchée.

Mais au rebours; on recharge par là, leur necessité: d'autant que l'attouchement et la compagnie de quelque masle que ce soit, esueille leur chaleur, qui demeureroit plus quiete en la solitude. Et à cette fin, comme il est vray-semblable, de rendre par cette circonstance et consideration, leur chasteté plus meritoire. Boleslaus et Kinge sa femme, Roys de Poulongne, la vouërent d'vn commun accord, couchez ensemble, le iour mesme de leurs nopces: et la maintindrent à la barbe des commoditez maritales.

3.5.20 Nous les dressons dés l'enfance, aux entremises de l'amour: leur grace, leur attiffeure, leur science, leur parole, toute leur instruction, ne regarde qu'à ce but. Leurs gouuernantes ne leur impriment autre chose que le visage de l'amour, ne fust qu'en le leur representant continuellement pour les en desgouster. Ma fille, c'est tout ce que i'ay d'enfans, est en l'aage auquel les loix excusent les plus eschauffees de se marier. Elle est d'vne complexion tardiue, mince et molle, et a esté par sa mere esleuee de mesme, d'vne forme retiree et particuliere: si qu'elle ne commence encore qu'à se desniaiser de la naifueté de l'enfance.

ENGLISH

to master it have admitted readily enough how difficult, or rather impossible, it was to subdue, weaken and cool the body with material remedies. We, on the contrary, want them healthy, vigorous, plump, well fed and chaste all at once, that is to say, both hot and cold. For marriage, which we say has the task of keeping them from burning, brings them little cooling, as our ways go.[21]

If they take a man in whom the vigor of youth still boils, he will make it his glory to spend it elsewhere. *Have some shame at last, or let us go to court:*
Your member, bought by me for many thousands,
Is not yours, Bassus; you have sold it. The philosopher Polemon was rightly sued by his wife for going about sowing in a barren field the fruit owed to the field of generation. If they take one of those other, worn-out men, there they are, in full marriage, worse off than virgins and widows. We consider them well provided for because they have a man beside them. In the same way the Romans held that Clodia Laeta, a Vestal, had been violated because Caligula had approached her, though it was proved that he had only approached her.[22]

But on the contrary, this only increases their need, since the touch and company of any male whatever awakens their heat, which would stay quieter in solitude. And it was probably to this end, to make their chastity more meritorious through this circumstance and consideration, that Boleslaus and his wife Kinga, king and queen of Poland, vowed it by common accord. They did so lying together on their very wedding day, and kept it in the teeth of marital opportunities.[23]

We train them from childhood in the business of love. Their grace, their finery, their learning, their speech, all their instruction aims at that one goal. Their governesses imprint nothing on them but the face of love, if only by depicting it to them continually to put them off it. My daughter (she is the only child I have) is at the age at which the laws allow the most hot-blooded girls to marry. She is of a slow-developing constitution, slight and soft, and her mother has brought her up accordingly, in a secluded and private way. So she is only now beginning to shed the innocence of childhood.

21 An allusion to Saint Paul: "it is better to marry than to burn" (1 Corinthians 7:9).
22 Martial, Epigrams XII.
23 Boleslaus V the Chaste of Poland (1226–1279) and his wife Saint Kinga.

FRENCH

Elle lisoit vn liure François deuant moy: le mot de, fouteau, s'y rencontra, nom d'vn arbre cogneu: la femme qu'ell' a pour sa conduitte, l'arresta tout court, vn peu rudement, et la fit passer par dessus ce mauuais pas. Ie la laissay faire, pour ne troubler leurs regles: car ie ne m'empesche aucunement de ce gouuernement. La police feminine a vn train mysterieux, il faut le leur quitter. Mais si ie ne me trompe, le commerce de vingt laquays, n'eust sçeu imprimer en sa fantasie, de six moys, l'intelligence et vsage, et toutes les consequences du son de ces syllabes scelerees, comme fit cette bonne vieille, par sa reprimende et son interdiction.

Motus doceri gaudet Ionicos
Matura virgo, et frangitur artubus,
Iam nunc, et incestos amores
De tenero meditatur vngui, Qu'elles se dispensent vn peu de la ceremonie, qu'elles entrent en liberté de discours, nous ne sommes qu'enfans au prix d'elles, en cette science. Oyez leur representer nos poursuittes et nos entretiens: elles vous font bien cognoistre que nous ne leur apportons rien, qu'elles n'ayent sçeu et digeré sans nous. Seroit-ce ce que dit Platon, qu'elles ayent esté garçons desbauchez autresfois? Mon oreille se rencontra vn iour en lieu, où elle pouuoit desrober aucun des discours faicts entre elles sans soupçon: que ne puis-ie le dire?

Nostre dame, (fis-ie), allons à cette heure estudier des frases d'Amadis, et des registres de Boccace et de l'Aretin, pour faire les habiles: nous employons vrayement bien notre temps: il n'est ny parole, ny exemple, ny démarche qu'elles ne sçachent mieux que nos liures. C'est vne discipline qui naist dans leurs veines, *Et mentem Venus ipsa dedit,* que ces bons maistres d'escole, nature, ieunesse, et santé, leur soufflent continuellement dans l'ame. Elles n'ont que faire de l'apprendre, elles l'engendrent. *Nec tantum niueo gauisa est ulla columbo*
Compar, vel si quid dicitur improbius,
Oscula mordenti semper decerpere rostro,
Quantum præcipuè multiuola est mulier.

3.5.21 Qui n'eust tenu vn peu en bride cette naturelle violence de leur desir, par la crainte et honneur, dequoy on les a pourueuës, nous estions diffamez. Tout le mouuement du

ENGLISH

She was reading a French book in front of me when the word *fouteau* came up, the name of a well-known tree. The woman she has as her governess stopped her short, rather roughly, and made her skip over that bad step. I let her do it, so as not to upset their rules, for I do not meddle in that government at all. Feminine administration has a mysterious way of proceeding; we must leave it to them. But if I am not mistaken, the company of twenty lackeys could not in six months have imprinted on her mind the meaning, the use and all the implications of the sound of those wicked syllables as well as that good old woman did with her reprimand and her prohibition.[24]

The ripening maiden loves to be taught Ionian dances,
And makes her limbs supple,
And even now, from her tenderest years,
Dreams of unchaste loves. Let them drop the ceremony a little and talk freely, and we are mere children compared with them in this science. Listen to them describe our pursuits and our conversations: they make it quite plain that we bring them nothing they have not known and digested without us. Could it be, as Plato says, that they were once dissolute boys? One day my ear happened to be in a place where it could steal some of their talk among themselves without their suspecting. If only I could repeat it![25]

By Our Lady, I said, let us go now and study phrases from Amadis and the stories of Boccaccio and Aretino, to make ourselves clever! We are really putting our time to good use! There is no word, no example, no move that they do not know better than our books. It is a discipline born in their veins, *And Venus herself gave them the mind,* which those good schoolmasters, nature, youth and health, keep breathing into their souls. They do not need to learn it; they generate it. *No dove ever so delighted in her snow-white mate—*
Or any creature said to be more wanton—
Always plucking kisses with her biting beak,
As does a woman whose desires are many.[26]

If this natural violence of their desire had not been held a little in check by the fear and honor they have been given, we men would be disgraced.

24 *Fouteau* means "beech tree," but sounds like a coarse French verb for sexual intercourse.
25 Horace, Odes III.6. Plato's idea is in the Timaeus, where cowardly men are reborn as women.
26 The quotations are from Virgil, Georgics III, and Catullus, LXVIII.

FRENCH

monde se resoult et rend à cet accouplage: c'est vne matiere infuse par tout: c'est vn centre où toutes choses regardent. On void encore des ordonnances de la vieille et sage Rome, faictes pour le seruice de l'amour: et les preceptes de Socrates, à instruire les courtisanes. *Necnon libelli Stoici inter sericos / Iacere puluillos amant.* Zenon parmy les loix, regloit aussi les escarquillemens, et les secousses du depucelage. De quel sens estoit le liure du philosophe Strato, de la conionction charnelle? Et dequoy traittoit Theophraste, en ceux qu'il intitula, l'vn l'Amoureux, l'autre de l'Amour?

Dequoy Aristippus au sien, des anciennes delices? Que veulent pretendre les descriptions si estendues et viues en Platon, des amours de son temps? Et le liure de l'Amoureux, de Demetrius Phalereus: et Clinias, ou l'Amoureux forcé de Heraclides Ponticus? Et d'Antisthenes, celuy de faire les enfants, ou des nopces: et l'autre, du maistre ou de l'Amant? Et d'Aristo, celuy, des exercices amoureux? de Cleanthes, vn de l'Amour, l'autre de l'art d'aymer? Les dialogues amoureux de Spherus? Et la fable de Iupiter et Iuno de Chrysippus, eshontee au delà de toute souffrance? Et ses cinquante epistres si lasciues? Ie veux laisser à part les escrits des philosophes, qui ont suiuy la secte d'Epicurus protectrice de la volupté.

Cinquante deitez estoient au temps passé asseruies à cet office. Et s'est trouué nation, où pour endormir la concupiscence de ceux qui venoient à la deuotion, on tenoit aux temples des garses à iouyr et estoit acte de ceremonie de s'en seruir auant venir à l'office: *Nimirum propter continentiam incontinentia necessaria est, incendium ignibus extinguitur.*

3.5.22 En la plus part du monde, cette partie de nostre corps estoit deifiee. En mesme prouince, les vns se l'escorchoient pour en offrir et consacrer vn lopin: les autres offroient et consacroient leur semence. En vne autre, les ieunes hommes se le perçoient publiquement, et ouuroient en diuers lieux entre chair et cuir, et trauersoient par ces ouuertures, des brochettes, les plus longues et grosses qu'ils pouuoient souffrir: et de ces brochettes faisoient apres du feu, pour offrande à leurs Dieux: estimez peu vigoureux et peu chastes, s'ils

ENGLISH

All the motion of the world resolves itself into this coupling and yields to it. It is a matter infused everywhere, a center toward which all things look. We can still see ordinances of old and wise Rome made for the service of love, and Socrates' precepts for instructing courtesans. *And Stoic pamphlets love / To lie among silken cushions.* Zeno, among his laws, also regulated the spreading of legs and the thrusts of deflowering. What was the drift of the philosopher Strato's book on carnal union? And what did Theophrastus treat in the books he entitled, one The Lover, the other On Love?[27]

What did Aristippus treat in his On Ancient Pleasures? What are Plato's long and vivid descriptions of the loves of his time meant to convey? And the book The Lover by Demetrius of Phalerum, and Clinias, or The Lover Forced, by Heraclides of Pontus? And Antisthenes' book On Begetting Children, or On Weddings, and his other one, On the Master, or The Lover? And Aristo's On Amorous Exercises? And Cleanthes' two books, one On Love, the other On the Art of Loving? The amorous dialogues of Sphaerus? And Chrysippus' fable of Jupiter and Juno, shameless beyond all bearing? And his fifty letters, so lascivious? I mean to leave aside the writings of the philosophers who followed the sect of Epicurus, the protector of pleasure.[28]

In times past, fifty deities were bound to this office. And there was once a nation where, to lull the lust of those who came to worship, young women were kept in the temples for enjoyment, and it was a ceremonial act to make use of them before attending the service: *Doubtless incontinence is necessary for the sake of continence; a blaze is put out by fire.*

In most of the world, this part of our body was deified. In one and the same province, some flayed it to offer and consecrate a piece of it, while others offered and consecrated their seed. In another, the young men pierced it publicly, opening it in various places between the flesh and the skin. Through these openings they passed skewers, the longest and thickest they could bear, and afterward they burned these skewers as an offering to their gods. Anyone who fainted from the force of

27 Horace, Epodes VIII. Socrates' advice to the courtesan Theodote is in Xenophon, Memorabilia III.
28 These titles come from Diogenes Laertius, Lives of the Philosophers.

FRENCH

venoient à s'estonner par la force de cette cruelle douleur. Ailleurs, le plus sacré magistrat, estoit reueré et recogneu par ces parties là.

Et en plusieurs ceremonies l'effigie en estoit portee en pompe, à l'honneur de diuerses diuinitez. Les dames Ægyptiennes en la feste des Bacchanales, en portoient au col vn de bois, exquisement formé, grand et pesant, chacune selon sa force: outre ce que la statue de leur Dieu, en representoit, qui surpassoit en mesure le reste du corps. Les femmes mariées icy pres, en forgent de leur couurechef vne figure sur leur front, pour se glorifier de la iouyssance qu'elles en ont: et venant à estre vefues, le couchent en arriere, et enseuelissent soubs leur coiffure. Les plus sages matrones à Rome, estoient honnorees d'offrir des fleurs et des couronnes au Dieu Priapus.

Et sur ses parties moins honnestes, faisoit-on soir les vierges, au temps de leurs nopces. Encore ne sçay-ie si i'ay veu en mes iours quelque air de pareille deuotion. Que vouloit dire cette ridicule piece de la chaussure de nos peres, qui se voit encore en nos Suysses? A quoy faire, la montre que nous faisons à cette heure de nos pieces en forme, soubs nos grecgues: et souuent, qui pis est, outre leur grandeur naturelle, par fauceté et imposture? Il me prend enuie de croire, que cette sorte de vestement fut inuentee aux meilleurs et plus conscientieux siecles, pour ne piper le monde: pour que chacun rendist en publiq compte de son faict. Les nations plus simples, l'ont encore aucunement rapportant au vray.

Lors on instruisoit la science de l'ouurier, comme il se faict, de la mesure du bras ou du pied. Ce bon homme qui en ma ieunesse, chastra tant de belles et antiques statues en sa grande ville, pour ne corrompre la veuë, suyuant l'aduis de cet autre antien bon homme, *Flagitij principium est nudare inter ciues corpora:* se deuoit aduiser, comme aux mysteres de la bonne Deesse, toute apparence masculine en estoit forclose, que ce n'estoit rien auancer, s'il ne faisoit encore chastrer, et cheuaux, et asnes, et nature en fin.

Omne adeo genus in terris, hominùmque, ferarúmque,
Et genus æquoreum, pecudes pictæque volucres,

ENGLISH

that cruel pain was thought to have little vigor and little chastity. Elsewhere the most sacred magistrate was revered and recognized by those parts.

In several ceremonies its effigy was carried in procession in honor of various divinities. At the feast of the Bacchanalia, the Egyptian ladies wore one around their necks, exquisitely carved in wood, large and heavy, each according to her strength. Besides this, the statue of their god displayed one that was bigger than the rest of his body. The married women in these parts fashion a figure of it on their foreheads out of their kerchiefs, to glory in the enjoyment they have of it. When they become widows, they lay it back and bury it under their headdress. In Rome the most virtuous matrons were honored to offer flowers and garlands to the god Priapus.

And at the time of their weddings, virgins were made to sit on his less decent parts. And I wonder whether I have not seen in my own day some trace of a similar devotion. What was the meaning of that ridiculous piece of our fathers' breeches, which can still be seen on our Swiss? Why do we now make a display of our parts, shaped, under our breeches, and often, what is worse, larger than their natural size, by falsehood and imposture? I am tempted to believe that this sort of garment was invented in better and more conscientious ages so as not to cheat people, so that each man should give a public account of his case. The simpler nations still wear it in a form that corresponds somewhat to the truth.[29]

In those days people were informed of the workman's capacity as one is by measuring an arm or a foot. That good man who, in my youth, castrated so many fine ancient statues in his great city, so as not to corrupt the eye, followed the advice of that other good man of antiquity: *It is the beginning of vice to bare bodies among citizens.* He should have reflected that, just as in the mysteries of the Good Goddess every masculine semblance was shut out, he was getting nowhere unless he also had horses and asses castrated, and in the end nature itself.[30]

So it is that every race on earth, of men and beasts,
The race of the sea, the flocks and the painted birds,

29 The codpiece.
30 Probably Pope Paul IV, in Rome; the line is Ennius, quoted by Cicero, Tusculan Disputations IV. Men were excluded from the rites of the Bona Dea, the "Good Goddess."

FRENCH

In furias ignémque ruunt. Les Dieux, dit Platon, nous ont fourni d'vn membre inobedient et tyrannique: qui, comme vn animal furieux, entreprend par la violence de son appetit, sousmettre tout à soy. De mesmes aux femmes le leur, comme vn animal glouton et auide, auquel si on refuse aliments en sa saison, il forcene impatient de delay; et soufflant sa rage en leurs corps, empesche les conduits, arreste la respiration, causant mille sortes de maux: iusques à ce qu'ayant humé le fruit de la soif commune, il en ayt largement arrousé et ensemencé le fond de leur matrice.

3.5.23 Or se deuoit aduiser aussi mon legislateur, qu'à l'auanture est-ce vn plus chaste et fructueux vsage, de leur faire de bonne heure cognoistre le vif, que de le leur laisser deuiner, selon la liberté, et chaleur de leur fantasie. Au lieu des parties vrayes, elles en substituent par desir et par esperance, d'autres extrauagantes au triple. Et tel de ma cognoissance s'est perdu, pour auoir faict la descouuerte des siennes, en lieu où il n'estoit encore au propre de les mettre en possession de leur plus serieux vsage. Quel dommage ne font ces enormes pourtraicts, que les enfants vont semant aux passages et escalliers des maisons Royalles? De là leur vient vn cruel mespris de nostre portee naturelle.

Que sçait-on, si Platon ordonnant apres d'autres republiques bien instituees que les hommes, femmes, vieux, ieunes, se presentent nuds à la veuë les vns des autres, en ses gymnastiques, n'a pas regardé à cela? Les Indiennes qui voyent les hommes à crud, ont aumoins refroidy le sens de la veuë.

Et quoy que dient les femmes de ce grand royaume du Pegu, qui au dessous de la ceinture, n'ont à se couurir qu'vn drap fendu par le deuant: et si estroit, que quelque cerimonieuse decence qu'elles y cerchent, à chasque pas on les void toutes; que c'est vne inuention trouuee aux fins d'attirer les hommes à elles, et les retirer des masles, à quoy cette nation est du tout abandonnee: il se pourroit dire, qu'elles y perdent plus qu'elles n'auancent: et qu'vne faim entiere, est plus aspre, que celle qu'on a rassasiee, au moins par les yeux. Aussi disoit Liuia, qu'à vne femme de bien, vn homme nud, n'est non plus qu'vne image.

Les Lacedemoniennes, plus vierges femmes, que ne sont noz filles, voyoyent tous les iours les ieunes hommes de

ENGLISH

Rush into this fury and fire. The gods, says Plato, have furnished us with a disobedient and tyrannical member, which, like a furious animal, tries by the violence of its appetite to bring everything under its sway. In the same way, women's member is like a greedy and ravenous animal. If it is refused food in its season, it goes mad, impatient of delay, and breathes its rage into their bodies. It blocks the passages and stops the breathing, causing a thousand kinds of ills, until it has drunk in the fruit of the common thirst and abundantly watered and sown the depths of their womb.

Now my lawgiver should also have considered that it may be a more chaste and fruitful practice to let them know the living thing early than to leave them to guess at it according to the freedom and heat of their fancy. In place of the real parts, they substitute, through desire and hope, others three times as extravagant. And a man I know ruined his chances by revealing his in a situation where it was not yet proper to put them to their most serious use. What harm those enormous drawings do, which boys scatter over the passages and staircases of royal houses! From them women get a cruel contempt for our natural capacity.

Who knows whether Plato did not have this in mind when, following other well-ordered republics, he ordained that men and women, old and young, should present themselves naked to one another's view in his gymnastics? The Indian women, who see men in the raw, have at least cooled the sense of sight.

Then there are the women of that great kingdom of Pegu. Below the waist they have nothing to cover themselves with but a cloth slit in front, and so narrow that, whatever ceremonious decency they try for, they can be seen entirely at every step. They say it is a device invented to draw men to them and away from males, to whom that nation is wholly given over. Whatever they may say, it could be argued that they lose more by it than they gain, and that a total hunger is sharper than one that has been satisfied, if only by the eyes. So Livia said that to a virtuous woman a naked man is no more than a statue.[31]

The Spartan women, more virginal as wives than our girls are, saw the young men of their city

FRENCH

leur ville, despouillez en leurs exercices: peu exactes elles mesmes à couurir leurs cuisses en marchant: s'estimants, comme dit Platon, assez couuertes de leur vertu sans vertugade. Mais ceux là, desquels parle Sainct Augustin, ont donné vn merueilleux effort de tentation à la nudité, qui ont mis en doubte, si les femmes au iugement vniuersel, resusciteront en leur sexe, et non plustost au nostre, pour ne nous tenter encore en ce sainct estat. On les leurre en somme, et acharne, par tous moyens. Nous eschauffons et incitons leur imagination sans cesse, et puis nous crions au ventre.

Confessons le vray, il n'en est guere d'entre nous, qui ne craigne plus la honte, qui luy vient des vices de sa femme, que des siens: qui ne se soigne plus (esmerueillable charité) de la conscience de sa bonne espouse, que de la sienne propre: qui n'aymast mieux estre voleur et sacrilege, et que sa femme fust meurtriere et heretique, que si elle n'estoit plus chaste que son mary. Inique estimation de vices. Nous et elles sommes capables de mille corruptions plus dommageables et desnaturees, que n'est la lasciueté. Mais nous faisons et poisons les vices, non selon nature, mais selon nostre interest. Par où ils prennent tant de formes inegales.

3.5.24 L'aspreté de noz decrets, rend l'application des femmes à ce vice, plus aspre et plus vicieuse, que ne porte sa condition: et l'engage à des suittes pires que n'est leur cause. Elles offriront volontiers d'aller au palais querir du gain, et à la guerre de la reputation, plustost que d'auoir au milieu de l'oisiueté, et des delices, à faire vne si difficile garde. Voyent-elles pas, qu'il n'est ny marchant ny procureur, ny soldat, qui ne quitte sa besongne pour courre à cette autre: et le crocheteur, et le sauetier, tout harassez et hallebrenez qu'ils sont de trauail et de faim?

Num tu, quæ tenuit diues Achæmenes,
Aut pinguis Phrygiæ Mygdonias opes,
Permutare velis crine Licymniæ,
Plenas aut Arabum domos,
Dum fragrantia detorquet ad oscula

ENGLISH

every day, stripped for their exercises. They themselves were not very particular about covering their thighs as they walked, considering themselves, as Plato says, covered enough by their virtue without a farthingale. But those Saint Augustine speaks of attributed a marvelous power of temptation to nakedness. They questioned whether women, at the Last Judgment, will rise again in their own sex and not rather in ours, so as not to tempt us even in that holy state. In short, we lure them and goad them on by every means. We ceaselessly heat and stir up their imagination, and then we cry out against the belly.[32]

Let us confess the truth. There is hardly one of us who does not fear the shame that comes to him from his wife's vices more than from his own. Hardly one who does not take more care (wonderful charity!) of his good wife's conscience than of his own. Hardly one who would not rather be a thief and a committer of sacrilege, and have his wife a murderess and a heretic, than have her be no more chaste than her husband. An unjust valuation of vices! Both we and they are capable of a thousand corruptions more harmful and unnatural than lasciviousness. But we create and weigh vices not according to nature but according to our interest. That is why they take on so many unequal forms.

The harshness of our decrees makes women's devotion to this vice harsher and more vicious than its nature warrants, and leads it to consequences worse than their cause. They would willingly offer to go to the law courts to seek gain, and to war to seek reputation, rather than have to keep so difficult a guard in the midst of idleness and pleasures. Do they not see that there is no merchant, no attorney, no soldier who does not leave his work to run to this other business? And the porter and the cobbler too, however harassed and worn out they are with labor and hunger?

Would you exchange all that rich Achaemenes possessed,
Or the Mygdonian wealth of fertile Phrygia,
For a lock of Licymnia's hair,
Or the full houses of the Arabs,

31 Livia was the wife of the emperor Augustus.
32 The French plays on *vertu* (virtue) and *vertugade* (farthingale, a hooped petticoat). Augustine discusses the question in The City of God XXII.

FRENCH

Ceruicem, aut facili sœuitia negat,
Quæ poscente magis gaudeat eripi,
Interdum rapere occupet? Ie ne sçay si les exploicts de Cæsar et d'Alexandre surpassent en rudesse la resolution d'vne belle ieune femme, nourrie à nostre façon, à la lumiere et commerce du monde, battue de tant d'exemples contraires, se maintenant entiere, au milieu de mille continuelles et fortes poursuittes. Il n'y a point de faire, plus espineux, qu'est ce non faire, ny plus actif. Ie trouue plus aysé, de porter vne cuirasse toute sa vie, qu'vn pucelage.

Et est le vœu de la virginité, le plus noble de tous les vœux, comme estant le plus aspre. *Diaboli virtus in lumbis est*: dict Sainct Ierosme.

3.5.25 Certes le plus ardu et le plus vigoureux des humains deuoirs, nous l'auons resigné aux dames, et leur en quittons la gloire. Cela leur doit seruir d'vn singulier esguillon à s'y opiniastrer. C'est vne belle matiere à nous brauer, et à fouler aux pieds, cette vaine preeminence de valeur et de vertu, que nous pretendons sur elles. Elles trouueront, si elles s'en prennent garde, qu'elles en seront non seulement tres-estimees, mais aussi plus aymees. Vn galant homme n'abandonne point sa poursuitte, pour estre refusé, pourueu que ce soit vn refus de chasteté, non de choix. Nous auons beau iurer et menasser, et nous plaindre: nous mentons, nous les en aymons mieux. Il n'est point de pareil leurre, que la sagesse, non rude, et renfrongnee.

C'est stupidité et lascheté, de s'opiniastrer contre la hayne et le mespris. Mais contre vne resolution vertueuse et constante, meslee d'vne volonté recognoissante, c'est l'exercice d'vne ame noble et genereuse. Elles peuuent recognoistre nos seruices, iusques à certaine mesure, et nous faire sentir honnestement qu'elles ne nous desdaignent pas. Car cette loy qui leur commande de nous abominer, par ce que nous les adorons, et nous hayr de ce que nous les aymons: elle est certes cruelle, ne fust que de sa difficulté. Pourquoy n'orront elles noz offres et noz demandes, autant qu'elles se contiennent sous le deuoir de la modestie? Que va lon deuinant, qu'elles sonnent au dedans, quelque sens plus libre?

ENGLISH

While she bends her neck toward your burning kisses,
Or with easy cruelty refuses
What she would rather have snatched from her than asked for,
And sometimes is the first to snatch? I do not know whether the exploits of Caesar and Alexander surpass in toughness the resolution of a beautiful young woman. She has been brought up in our fashion, in the light and company of the world, assailed by so many contrary examples, and yet keeps herself intact in the midst of a thousand continual and strong pursuits. There is no doing more thorny, or more active, than this not doing. I find it easier to wear a suit of armor all one's life than a virginity.

And the vow of virginity is the noblest of all vows, as being the hardest. *The devil's strength is in the loins,* says Saint Jerome.

Certainly we have handed over to the ladies the most arduous and vigorous of human duties, and we leave them the glory of it. That ought to serve them as a singular spur to persist in it. It is a fine occasion for them to defy us and trample underfoot that empty pre-eminence in valor and virtue that we claim over them. They will find, if they take note, that it will make them not only highly esteemed but also more loved. A gallant man does not abandon his pursuit because he is refused, provided it is a refusal of chastity, not of choice. We may swear and threaten and complain all we like: we are lying; we love them the better for it. There is no lure like virtue, so long as it is not harsh and scowling.

It is stupidity and cowardice to persist against hatred and contempt. But to persist against a virtuous and constant resolution mingled with a grateful will is the exercise of a noble and generous soul. They may acknowledge our services up to a certain point and let us feel, decently, that they do not disdain us. For that law which commands them to abominate us because we adore them, and to hate us because we love them, is certainly cruel, if only because it is so hard. Why should they not listen to our offers and our requests, so long as they keep within the bounds of modesty? Why go guessing that inwardly they hear some freer meaning?

FRENCH

Vne Royne de nostre temps, disoit ingenieusement, que de refuser ces abbors, c'est tesmoignage de foiblesse, et accusation de sa propre facilité: et qu'vne dame non tentee, ne se pouuoit venter de sa chasteté. Les limites de l'honneur ne sont pas retranchez du tout si court: il a dequoy se relascher, il peut se dispenser aucunement sans se forfaire. Au bout de sa frontiere, il y a quelque estendue, libre, indifferente, et neutre. Qui l'a peu chasser et acculer à force, iusques dans son coin et son fort: c'est vn mal habile homme s'il n'est satisfaict de sa fortune. Le prix de la victoire se considere par la difficulté. Voulez vous sçauoir quelle impression a faict en son cœur, vostre seruitude et vostre merite?

mesurez-le à ses mœurs. Telle peut donner plus, qui ne donne pas tant. L'obligation du bien-faict, se rapporte entierement à la volonté de celuy qui donne: les autres circonstances qui tombent au bien faire, sont muettes, mortes et casueles. Ce peu luy couste plus à donner, qu'à sa compaigne son tout. Si en quelque chose la rareté sert d'estimation, ce doit estre en cecy. Ne regardez pas combien peu c'est, mais combien peu l'ont. La valeur de la monnoye se change selon le coin et, la merque du lieu. Quoy que le despit et l'indiscretion d'aucuns leur puisse faire dire, sur l'excez de leur mescontentement: tousiours la vertu et la verité regaigne son auantage.

I'en ay veu, desquelles la reputation a esté long temps interessee par iniure, s'estre remises en l'approbation vniuerselle des hommes, par leur seule constance, sans soing et sans artifice: chacun se repent et se desment, de ce qu'il en a creu. De filles vn peu suspectes, elles tiennent le premier rang entre les dames d'honneur. Quelqu'vn disoit à Platon: Tout le monde mesdit de vous. Laissez les dire, fit-il: ie viuray de façon, que ie leur feray changer de langage. Outre la crainte de Dieu, et le prix d'vne gloire si rare, qui les doibt inciter à se conseruer, la corruption de ce siecle les y force.

Et si i'estois en leur place, il n'est rien que ie ne fisse plustost que de commettre ma reputation en mains si dangereuses. De mon temps, le plaisir d'en comter (plaisir qui ne doit guere en douceur à celuy mesme de l'effect) n'estoit permis qu'à ceux qui auoient quelque amy fidelle et vnique: à present les entretiens ordinaires des assemblees et des tables, ce sont les vanteries des faueurs receuës, et liberalité secrette des dames.

ENGLISH

A queen of our time used to say, ingeniously, that refusing these approaches is a sign of weakness and an admission of one's own easiness, and that a lady who has not been tempted cannot boast of her chastity. The limits of honor are not cut so very short. It has room to relax; it can take some liberties without forfeiting itself. At the edge of its frontier there is a stretch that is free, indifferent and neutral. Whoever has managed to chase it and drive it by force right into its corner and its stronghold is a clumsy fellow if he is not satisfied with his luck. The prize of victory is measured by its difficulty. Do you want to know what impression your devotion and your merit have made on her heart?

Measure it by her character. One woman may give more who does not give as much. The obligation created by a benefit depends entirely on the will of the giver; the other circumstances that attend the giving are mute, dead and accidental. That little costs her more to give than her all costs her companion. If rarity is a ground for esteem in anything, it must be in this. Look not at how little it is, but at how few have had it. The value of a coin changes with the stamp and mark of the place. Whatever spite and indiscretion may make some men say in the excess of their discontent, virtue and truth always regain the advantage.

I have seen women whose reputation had long been damaged by slander win back the universal approval of men by their constancy alone, without effort and without artifice. Everyone repents and retracts what he had believed of them. From being girls under some suspicion, they hold the first rank among ladies of honor. Someone said to Plato, "Everyone speaks ill of you." "Let them talk," he said. "I will live in such a way that I make them change their tune." Besides the fear of God and the prize of so rare a glory, which should incite them to preserve themselves, the corruption of this age forces them to it.

And if I were in their place, there is nothing I would not do sooner than entrust my reputation to such dangerous hands. In my time, the pleasure of telling about it (a pleasure hardly less sweet than that of the act itself) was permitted only to those who had a single faithful friend. Nowadays the ordinary talk at gatherings and at table is all boasting about favors received and the secret generos-

FRENCH	ENGLISH
Vrayement c'est trop d'abiection, et de bassesse de cœur, de laisser ainsi fierement persecuter, paistrir, et fourrager ces tendres et mignardes douceurs, à des personnes ingrates, indiscretes, et si volages.	ity of ladies. Truly it is too abject and base-hearted to let those tender, dainty sweetnesses be so fiercely persecuted, kneaded and plundered by people so ungrateful, indiscreet and fickle.

JEALOUSY

Jealousy, the most futile of passions, makes cuckoldry worse and cannot be cured.

FRENCH	ENGLISH
3.5.26 Cette nostre exasperation immoderee, et illegitime, contre ce vice, naist de la plus vaine et tempesteuse maladie qui afflige les ames humaines, qui est la ialousie. *Quis vetat apposito lumen de lumine sumi? / Dent licet assiduè, nil tamen inde perit.* Celle-là, et l'enuie sa sœur, me semblent des plus ineptes de la trouppe. De cette-cy, ie n'en puis gueres parler: cette passion qu'on peint si forte et si puissante, n'a de sa grace aucune addresse en moy. Quant à l'autre, ie la cognois, au moins de veuë. Les bestes en ont ressentiment. Le pasteur Cratis estant tombé en l'amour d'vne cheure, son bouc, ainsi qu'il dormoit, luy vint par ialousie choquer la teste, de la sienne, et la luy escraza.	This immoderate and illegitimate exasperation of ours against this vice is born of the most futile and stormy malady that afflicts human souls, which is jealousy. *Who forbids taking light from a light set beside it? / Though they give constantly, nothing is lost by it.* Jealousy and its sister envy seem to me among the most foolish of the troop. Of envy I can hardly speak: that passion, painted as so strong and powerful, has kindly found no way into me. As for the other, I know it, at least by sight. Animals feel it. The shepherd Cratis fell in love with a she-goat, and while he slept her billy goat came out of jealousy and butted his head with its own, and crushed it.[33]
Nous auons monté l'excez de cette fieure, à l'exemple d'aucunes nations barbares. Les mieux disciplinees en ont esté touchees: c'est raison: mais non pas transportees: *Ense maritali nemo confossus adulter, / Purpureo Stygias sanguine tinxit aquas.* Lucullus, Cæsar, Pompeius, Antonius, Caton, et d'autres braues hommes, furent cocus, et le sçeurent, sans en exciter tumulte. Il n'y eut en ce temps là, qu'vn sot de Lepidus, qui en mourut d'angoisse. Ah!	We have raised the excess of this fever after the example of certain barbarous nations. The best-disciplined nations have been touched by it, which is reasonable, but not carried away by it: *No adulterer, pierced by a husband's sword, / Has dyed the waters of the Styx with his crimson blood.* Lucullus, Caesar, Pompey, Antony, Cato and other brave men were cuckolds and knew it, without making a commotion about it. In those days there was only one fool, Lepidus, who died of anguish over it. Ah![34]
tum te miserum malique fati, Quem attractis pedibus, patente porta, Percurrent mugilésque raphanique. *Et le Dieu de nostre poëte, quand il surprint auec sa femme l'vn de ses compagnons, se contenta de leur en faire honte:* Atque aliquis de Diis non tristibus optat, Sic fieri turpis. *Et ne laisse pourtant de s'eschauffer des molles caresses, qu'elle luy offre: se plaignant qu'elle soit pour cela entree en deffiance de son affection:* Quid causas petis ex alto? fiducia cessit Quo tibi, Diua, mei? *Voyre elle luy fait requeste pour vn sien bastard,* Arma rogo genitrix nato: *qui luy est liberalement accordee. Et parle Vulcan d'Æneas auec honneur:* Arma acri	then, poor wretch, of evil fate, With your legs pulled apart and the door wide open, Mullets and radishes will run you through! *And our poet's god, when he caught one of his companions with his wife, was content to put them to shame:* And one of the gods, not among the gloomy ones, wishes He might be so disgraced. *Yet he still warms to the soft caresses she offers him, and complains that she has come to distrust his affection on that account:* Why seek reasons from so far back? Where, goddess, Has your trust in me gone? *She even makes a request*

33 Ovid, The Art of Love III.
34 Johannes Secundus, Elegies. Marcus Aemilius Lepidus, consul in 78 BC.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
	facienda viro. D'vne humanité à la verité plus qu'humaine.	*of him for an illegitimate son of hers,* Arms I ask, a mother for her son, *which he generously grants. And Vulcan speaks of Aeneas with honor:* Arms must be made for a valiant man. A humanity, in truth, more than human.[35]
	Et cet excez de bonté, ie consens qu'on le quitte aux Dieux: *Nec diuis homines componier æquum est.*	And this excess of goodness I agree to leave to the gods: *Nor is it right to compare men with gods.*
3.5.27	Quant à la confusion des enfans, outre ce que les plus graues legislateurs l'ordonnent et l'affectent en leurs republiques, elle ne touche pas les femmes, où cette passion est ie ne sçay comment encore mieux en siege. *Sæpe etiam Iuno, maxima cælicolum, / Coniugis in culpa flagrauit quotidiana.* Lors que la ialousie saisit ces pauures ames, foibles, et sans resistance, c'est pitié, comme elle les tirasse et tyrannise cruellement. Elle s'y insinue sous tiltre d'amitié: mais depuis qu'elle les possede, les mesmes causes qui seruoient de fondement à la bien-vueillance, seruent de fondement de hayne capitale: c'est des maladies d'esprit celle, à qui plus de choses seruent d'aliment, et moins de choses de remede.	As for the confusion of children, the gravest law-givers ordain and favor it in their republics. Besides, it does not concern women, in whom this passion is, I know not how, even more firmly seated. *Often even Juno, greatest of the heaven-dwellers, / Has blazed with anger at her husband's daily faults.* When jealousy seizes these poor souls, weak and without resistance, it is pitiful to see how cruelly it pulls them about and tyrannizes them. It creeps in under the name of affection. But once it possesses them, the very causes that served as the foundation of goodwill serve as the foundation of mortal hatred. Of all the diseases of the mind, it is the one that the most things feed and the fewest things cure.[36]
	La vertu, la santé, le merite, la reputation du mary, sont les boutefeux de leur maltalent et de leur rage. *Nullæ sunt inimicitiæ, nisi amoris, acerbæ.* Cette fiéure laidit et corrompt tout ce qu'elles ont de bel et de bon d'ailleurs. Et d'vne femme ialouse, quelque chaste qu'elle soit, et mesnagere, il n'est action qui ne sente l'aigre et l'importun. C'est vne agitation enragee, qui les reiette à vne extremité du tout contraire à sa cause. Il fut bon d'vn Octauius à Rome. Ayant couché auec Pontia Posthumia, il augmenta son affection par la iouyssance, et poursuyuit à toute instance de l'espouser: ne la pouuant persuader, cet amour extreme le precipita aux effects de la plus cruelle et mortelle inimitié: il la tua.	The husband's virtue, health, merit and reputation are the firebrands of their spite and their rage. *No enmities are bitter but those of love.* This fever disfigures and corrupts all that is otherwise fine and good in them. In a jealous woman, however chaste and however good a housekeeper she may be, there is no action that does not smack of sourness and nagging. It is a frenzied agitation that throws them to an extreme wholly contrary to its cause. A fine example was one Octavius in Rome. He had lain with Pontia Postumia, and his affection grew through enjoyment, so that he pressed her with all urgency to marry him. Unable to persuade her, this extreme love drove him headlong into acts of the cruelest and deadliest enmity: he killed her.[37]
	Pareillement les symptomes ordinaires de cette autre maladie amoureuse, ce sont haines intestines, monopoles, coniurations: *Notumque, furens quid fœmina possit:* et vne rage, qui se ronge d'autant plus, qu'elle est contraincte de s'excuser du pretexte de bien-vueillance.	Likewise, the usual symptoms of this other amorous malady are internal hatreds, cabals and conspiracies, *And it is known what a raging woman can do,* and a rage that gnaws at itself all the more for being forced to excuse itself under the pretext of goodwill.
3.5.28	Or le deuoir de chasteté, a vne grande estendue. Est-ce la volonté que nous voulons qu'elles brident? C'est vne	Now the duty of chastity covers a lot of ground. Is it the will that we want them to rein in? That is a

35 Catullus, XV. Vulcan caught his wife Venus with Mars; the lines are from Ovid, Metamorphoses IV, and Virgil, Aeneid VIII.
36 Plato's Republic prescribes that children be held in common. The verse is from Catullus, LXVIII.

FRENCH

piece bien soupple et actiue. Elle a beaucoup de promptitude pour la pouuoir arrester. Comment? si les songes les engagent par fois si auant, qu'elles ne s'en puissent desdire. Il n'est pas en elles, ny à l'aduanture en la chasteté mesme, puis qu'elle est femelle, de se deffendre des concupiscences et du desirer. Si leur volonté seule nous interesse où en sommes nous? Imaginez la grand' presse, à qui auroit ce priuilege, d'estre porté tout empenné, sans yeux, et sans langue, sur le poinct de chacune qui l'accepteroit.

Les femmes Scythes creuoyent les yeux à touts leurs esclaues et prisonniers de guerre, pour s'en seruir plus librement et couuertement. O le furieux aduantage que l'opportunité! Qui me demanderoit la premiere partie en l'amour, ie respondrois, que c'est sçauoir prendre le temps: la seconde de mesme: et encore la tierce. C'est vn poinct qui peut tout. I'ay eu faute de fortune souuent, mais par fois aussi d'entreprise. Dieu gard' de mal qui peut encores s'en moquer. Il y faut en ce siecle plus de temerité: laquelle nos ieunes gens excusent sous pretexte de chaleur. Mais si elles y regardoyent de pres, elles trouueroyent qu'elle vient plustost de mespris. Ie craignois superstitieusement d'offenser: et respecte volontiers, ce que i'ayme.

Outre ce qu'en cette marchandise, qui en oste la reuerence, en efface le lustre. I'ayme qu'on y face vn peu l'enfant, le craintif et le seruiteur. Si ce n'est du tout en cecy, i'ay d'ailleurs quelques airs de la sotte honte dequoy parle Plutarque: et en a esté le cours de ma vie blessé et taché diuersement. Qualité bien mal auenante à ma forme vniuerselle. Qu'est-il de nous aussi, que sedition et discrepance? I'ay les yeux tendres à soustenir vn refus, comme à refuser. Et me poise tant de poiser à autruy, qu'és occasions où le deuoir me force d'essayer la volonté de quelqu'vn, en chose doubteuse et qui lui couste, ie le fais maigrement et enuis.

Mais si c'est pour mon particulier, (quoy que die veritablement Homere, qu'à vn indigent c'est vne sotte vertu que la honte) i'y commets ordinairement vn tiers, qui rougisse en ma place: et esconduis ceux qui m'emploient, de pareille difficulté: si qu'il m'est aduenu

ENGLISH

very supple and active piece, far too quick to be stopped. What then, if dreams sometimes engage them so deeply that they cannot disown them? It is not in their power, nor perhaps in the power of Chastity herself, since she is female, to defend themselves against lusts and desiring. If their will alone concerns us, where are we? Imagine the great crush of men competing for the privilege of being carried, fully winged, with no eyes and no tongue, to each woman at the moment she would accept him.

The Scythian women put out the eyes of all their slaves and prisoners of war, so as to make use of them more freely and secretly. Oh, what a tremendous advantage opportunity is! If anyone asked me what comes first in love, I would answer: knowing how to seize the moment. The second thing likewise, and the third as well. It is a point that can do everything. I have often lacked luck, but sometimes also enterprise. God keep from harm anyone who can still laugh at that! In this age it takes more boldness, which our young men excuse on the pretext of ardor. But if women looked at it closely, they would find that it comes rather from contempt. I was superstitiously afraid of giving offense, and I gladly respect what I love.

Besides, in this traffic, take away reverence and you rub off its luster. I like a man to play the child a little in it, the timid one, the servant. If not altogether in this, then in other respects I have something of that foolish bashfulness Plutarch speaks of, and it has wounded and stained the course of my life in various ways. It is a quality that fits very badly with my general make-up. But then, what are we but sedition and discord? My eyes are as tender at bearing a refusal as at giving one. And it weighs on me so much to be a weight on others that when duty forces me to test someone's willingness in a doubtful matter that costs him something, I do it sparingly and reluctantly.[38]

But if it is for my own sake (though Homer truly says that in a needy man shame is a foolish virtue), I usually hand the task to a third party, who blushes in my place. And I turn down those who call on my services with the same difficulty, so

37 Propertius, Elegies II. The story of Octavius is in Tacitus, Annals XIII.
38 Plutarch's essay "On Compliancy" (or "On False Shame").

FRENCH

par fois, d'auoir la volonté de nier, que ie n'en auois pas la force.

3.5.29 C'est donc folie, d'essayer à brider aux femmes vn desir qui leur est si cuysant et si naturel. Et quand ie les oye se vanter d'auoir leur volonté si vierge et si froide, ie me moque d'elles. Elles se reculent trop arriere. Si c'est vne vieille esdentee decrepite, ou vne ieune seche et pulmonique: s'il n'est du tout croyable, aumoins elles ont apparence de le dire. Mais celles qui se meuuent et qui respirent encores, elles en empirent leur marché. D'autant que les excuses inconsiderees seruent d'accusation.

Comme vn Gentilhomme de mes voysins, qu'on soupçonnoit d'impuissance: *Languidior tenera cui pendens sicula beta, / Numquam se mediam sustulit ad tunicam:* trois ou quatre iours apres ses nopces, alla iurer tout hardiment, pour se iustifier, qu'il auoit faict vingt postes la nuict precedente: dequoy on s'est seruy depuis à le conuaincre de pure ignorance, et à le desmarier. Outre, que ce n'est rien dire qui vaille. Car il n'y a ny continence ny vertu, s'il n'y a de l'effort au contraire. Il est vray, faut-il dire, mais ie ne suis pas preste à me rendre. Les saincts mesmes parlent ainsi.

S'entend, de celles qui se vantent en bon escient, de leur froideur et insensibilité, et qui veulent en estre creuës d'vn visage serieux: car quand c'est d'vn visage affeté, où les yeux dementent leurs parolles, et du iargon de leur profession, qui porte coup à contrepoil, ie le trouue bon. Ie suis fort seruiteur de la nayfueté et de la liberté: mais il n'y a remede, si elle n'est du tout niaise ou enfantine, elle est inepte, et messeante aux dames en ce commerce: elle gauchit incontinent sur l'impudence. Leurs desguisements et leurs figures ne trompent que les sots: le mentir y est en siege d'honneur: c'est vn destour qui nous conduit à la verité, par vne fauce porte.

Si nous ne pouuons contenir leur imagination, que voulons nous d'elles? les effects? Il en est assez qui eschappent à toute communication estrangere, par lesquels la chasteté peult estre corrompue. *Illud sæpe facit, quod sine teste facit.* Et ceux que nous craignons le moins, sont à l'auanture les plus à craindre. Leurs pechez muets sont les pires. *Offendor mœcha simpliciore minus.* Il est des effects, qui peuuent perdre sans impudicité leur pudicité:

ENGLISH

that it has sometimes happened that I had the will to refuse but not the strength.[39]

It is folly, then, to try to bridle in women a desire so burning and so natural to them. And when I hear them boast that their will is so virginal and so cold, I laugh at them. They draw back too far. If it is a toothless, decrepit old woman, or a young one who is dried up and consumptive, then even if it is not quite believable, at least they have some plausibility in saying it. But those who still move and breathe only make their bargain worse, since rash excuses serve as accusations.

Take a gentleman, a neighbor of mine, who was suspected of impotence: *whose little dagger, hanging limper than a tender beet, / never once rose as high as the middle of his tunic.* Three or four days after his wedding he went and swore quite boldly, to clear himself, that he had ridden twenty stages the night before. This was later used to convict him of sheer ignorance and to unmarry him. Besides, such talk is worth nothing. For there is neither continence nor virtue if there is no effort to the contrary. "It is true," they should say, "but I am not ready to surrender." Even the saints talk like this.[40]

I mean those who boast in earnest of their coldness and insensibility and want to be believed with a straight face. When it is with an affected face, where the eyes give the lie to their words, and in the jargon of their profession, which hits home by working against the grain, I find it fine. I am a great devotee of naturalness and freedom; but there is no help for it: unless it is altogether simple or childlike, it is inept and unbecoming to ladies in these dealings, and it swerves at once into impudence. Their disguises and figures of speech deceive only fools. Lying there holds the place of honor: it is a detour that leads us to the truth by a back door.

If we cannot restrain their imagination, what do we want from them? Deeds? There are plenty that escape any outside knowledge, by which chastity can be corrupted. *She often does it—the thing she does without a witness.* And the deeds we fear least are perhaps the most to be feared. Their silent sins are the worst. *A more open adulteress offends me less.*

39 Homer, Odyssey XVII.
40 The Latin is from Catullus.

FRENCH

et qui plus est, sans leur sçeu. *Obstetrix, virginis cuiusdam integritatem manu velut explorans, siue maleuolentia, siue inscitia, siue casu, dum inspicit, perdidit.* Telle a adiré sa virginité, pour l'auoir cerchee: telle s'en esbattant l'a tuee. Nous ne sçaurions leur circonscrire precisement les actions que nous leur deffendons.

Il faut conceuoir nostre loy, soubs parolles generalles et incertaines. L'idee mesme que nous forgeons à leur chasteté est ridicule. Car entre les extremes patrons que i'en aye, c'est Fatua femme de Faunus, qui ne se laissa voir oncques puis ses nopces à masle quelconque. Et la femme de Hieron, qui ne sentoit pas son mary punais, estimant que ce fust vne qualité commune à tous hommes. Il faut qu'elles deuiennent insensibles et inuisibles, pour nous satisfaire.

3.5.30 Or confessons que le neud du iugement de ce deuoir, gist principallement en la volonté. Il y a eu des maris qui ont souffert cet accident, non seulement sans reproche et offence enuers leurs femmes, mais auec singuliere obligation et recommandation de leur vertu. Telle, qui aymoit mieux son honneur que sa vie, l'a prostitué à l'appetit forcené d'vn mortel ennemy, pour sauuer la vie à son mary: et a faict pour luy ce qu'elle n'eust aucunement faict pour soy. Ce n'est pas icy le lieu d'estendre ces exemples: ils sont trop hauts et trop riches, pour estre representez en ce lustre: gardons-les à vn plus noble siege.

Mais pour des exemples de lustre plus vulgaire: est-il pas tous les iours des femmes entre nous qui pour la seule vtilité de leurs maris se prestent, et par leur expresse ordonnance et entremise? Et anciennement Phaulius l'Argien offrit la sienne au Roy Philippus par ambition: tout ainsi que par ciuilité ce Galba qui auoit donné à souper à Mecenas, voyant que sa femme et luy commançoient à comploter d'œuillades et de signes, se laissa couler sur son coussin, representant vn homme aggraué de sommeil: pour faire espaule à leurs amours.

Ce qu'il aduoua d'assez bonne grace: car sur ce poinct, vn valet ayant pris la hardiesse de porter la main sur les vases, qui estoient sur la table: il luy cria tout franchement: Comment coquin? vois tu pas que ie ne

ENGLISH

There are acts by which they can lose their chastity without unchastity, and what is more, without their knowledge. *A midwife, testing a certain virgin's integrity by hand, whether through malice, clumsiness or accident, destroyed it while examining it.* One woman has lost her virginity by looking for it; another has killed it by toying with it. We could never precisely mark out for them the actions we forbid them.[41]

We have to frame our law in general and vague terms. The very idea we forge of their chastity is ridiculous. For among the most extreme models of it that I know are Fatua, wife of Faunus, who after her marriage never let herself be seen by any male whatever; and the wife of Hiero, who did not notice that her husband's breath stank, thinking it a quality common to all men. They must become insensible and invisible to satisfy us.[42]

Now let us admit that the crux in judging this duty lies chiefly in the will. There have been husbands who suffered this mishap not only without reproaching or resenting their wives, but with singular gratitude and praise for their virtue. Some woman who loved her honor more than her life has prostituted it to the frenzied appetite of a mortal enemy to save her husband's life, and has done for him what she would never have done for herself. This is not the place to expand on these examples: they are too lofty and too rich to be shown in this light. Let us keep them for a nobler setting.

But for examples of a more ordinary light: are there not women among us every day who lend themselves out solely for their husbands' profit, and by their express order and arrangement? And in ancient times Phaulius of Argos offered his wife to King Philip out of ambition; just as, out of courtesy, that Galba who had given a supper for Maecenas, seeing his wife and his guest begin to conspire with glances and signs, let himself slide down onto his cushion, playing a man heavy with sleep, to give their love affair a helping hand.[43]

He owned up to this with rather good grace: for at that point, when a servant made bold to lay hands on the vessels on the table, he cried out to him quite frankly: "What, you rascal? Can't you see I

41 The first two quotations are from Martial; the prose passage is from Saint Augustine, City of God.
42 Fatua was an old Roman goddess, wife of the rustic god Faunus; Hiero was a tyrant of Syracuse in the 5th century BC.
43 Philip II of Macedon, father of Alexander.

FRENCH

dors que pour Mecenas? Telle a les mœurs desbordees, qui a la volonté plus reformee que n'a cet' autre, qui se conduit soubs vne apparence reglee. Comme nous en voyons, qui se plaignent d'auoir esté vouees à chasteté, auant l'aage de cognoissance: i'en ay veu aussi, se plaindre veritablement, d'auoir esté vouees à la desbauche, auant l'aage de cognoissance. Le vice des parens en peut estre cause: ou la force du besoing, qui est vn rude conseiller.

Aux Indes Orientales, la chasteté y estant en singuliere recommandation, l'vsage pourtant souffroit, qu'vne femme mariee se peust abandonner à qui luy presentoit vn elephant: et cela, auec quelque gloire d'auoir esté estimee à si haut prix. Phedon le philosophe, homme de maison, apres la prinse de son païs d'Elide, feit mestier de prostituer, autant qu'elle dura, la beauté de sa ieunesse, à qui en voulut, à prix d'argent, pour en viure. Et Solon fut le premier en la Grece, dit-on, qui par ses loix, donna liberté aux femmes aux despens de leur pudicité de prouuoir au besoing de leur vie: coustume qu'Herodote dit auoir esté receuë auant luy, en plusieurs polices. Et puis, quel fruit de cette penible sollicitude?

Car quelque iustice, qu'il y ayt en cette passion, encore faudroit-il voir si elle nous charie vtilement. Est-il quelqu'vn, qui les pense boucler par son industrie? *Pone seram, cohibe: sed quis custodiet ipsos / Custodes? cauta est, et ab illis incipit vxor.* Quelle commodité ne leur est suffisante, en vn siecle si sçauant?

3.5.31 La curiosité est vicieuse par tout: mais elle est pernicieuse icy. C'est folie de vouloir s'esclaircir d'vn mal, auquel il n'y a point de medecine, qui ne l'empire et le rengrege: duquel la honte s'augmente et se publie principalement par la ialousie: duquel la vengeance blesse plus nos enfans, qu'elle ne nous guerit. Vous assechez et mourez à la queste d'vne si obscure verification. Combien piteusement y sont arriuez ceux de mon temps, qui en sont venus à bout? Si l'aduertisseur n'y presente quand et quand le remede et son secours, c'est vn aduertissement iniurieux, et qui merite mieux vn coup de poignard, que ne faict vn dementir.

ENGLISH

am only sleeping for Maecenas?" One woman whose morals are loose may have a more reformed will than another who conducts herself with an orderly appearance. Just as we see some women complain of having been vowed to chastity before the age of discretion, I have also seen some complain, truthfully, of having been vowed to debauchery before the age of discretion. The vice of the parents may be the cause, or the force of need, which is a harsh counselor.

In the East Indies, though chastity was held in singular esteem, custom nevertheless allowed a married woman to give herself to anyone who presented her with an elephant, and that with some glory at having been valued at so high a price. Phaedo the philosopher, a man of good family, after his homeland, Elis, was captured, made a trade of prostituting the beauty of his youth, as long as it lasted, to anyone who wanted it, for money, in order to live. And Solon was the first in Greece, they say, to give women by his laws the freedom to provide for their livelihood at the expense of their chastity—a custom that Herodotus says had been accepted before him in several states. And then, what comes of all this painful anxiety?[44]

For whatever justice there may be in this passion, we should still see whether it carries us anywhere useful. Is there anyone who thinks he can lock them up by his own ingenuity? *Put on a bolt, keep her confined; but who will guard / the guards themselves? Your wife is crafty and begins with them.* What opportunity is not enough for them, in so knowing an age?[45]

Curiosity is a vice everywhere, but here it is pernicious. It is folly to want to get to the bottom of an ill for which there is no medicine that does not worsen and aggravate it; whose shame is increased and made public chiefly by jealousy; whose revenge wounds our children more than it heals us. You wither and die in pursuit of so obscure a verification. How pitifully those in my time who succeeded in it have fared! If the informer does not offer the remedy and his help at the same time, his warning is an insult, and deserves a dagger thrust more than being called a liar does.

44 Phaedo of Elis was a disciple of Socrates.
45 Juvenal, Satires.

FRENCH

On ne se moque pas moins de celuy qui est en peine d'y pouruoir, que de celuy qui l'ignore. Le charactere de la cornardise est indelebile: à qui il est vne fois attaché, il l'est tousiours. Le chastiement l'exprime plus, que la faute. Il faict beau voir, arracher de l'ombre et du doubte, nos malheurs priuez, pour les trompeter en eschaffaux tragiques: et malheurs, qui ne pinsent, que par le rapport. Car bonne femme et bon mariage, se dit, non de qui l'est, mais duquel on se taist. Il faut estre ingenieux à euiter cette ennuyeuse et inutile cognoissance. Et auoyent les Romains en coustume, reuenans de voyage, d'enuoyer au deuant en la maison, faire sçauoir leur arriuee aux femmes, pour ne les surprendre.

Et pourtant a introduit certaine nation, que le prestre ouure le pas à l'espousee, le iour des nopces: pour oster au marié, le doubte et la curiosité, de cercher en ce premier essay, si elle vient à luy vierge, ou blessee d'vne amour estrangere.

3.5.32 Mais le monde en parle. Ie sçay cent honnestes hommes coquus, honnestement et peu indecemment. Vn galant homme en est pleint, non pas desestimé. Faites que vostre vertu estouffe votre malheur: que les gens de bien en maudissent l'occasion: que celuy qui vous offence, tremble seulement à le penser. Et puis, de qui ne parle on en ce sens, depuis le petit iusques au plus grand? *Tot qui legionibus imperitauit, / Et melior quàm tu multis fuit, improbe, rebus.* Voys tu qu'on engage en ce reproche tant d'honnestes hommes en ta presence, pense qu'on ne t'espargne non plus ailleurs. Mais iusques aux dames elles s'en moqueront. Et dequoy se moquent elles en ce temps plus volontiers, que d'vn mariage paisible et bien composé?

Chacun de vous a fait quelqu'vn coqu: or nature est toute en pareilles, en compensation et vicissitude. La frequence de cet accident, en doibt mes-huy auoir moderé l'aigreur: le voyla tantost passé en coustume.

3.5.33 Miserable passion, qui a cecy encore, d'estre incommunicable. *Fors etiam nostris inuidit questibus aures.* Car à quel amy osez vous fier vos doleances: qui, s'il ne

ENGLISH

People laugh no less at the man who goes to the trouble of remedying it than at the man who knows nothing about it. The mark of cuckoldry is indelible: once it is attached to a man, it stays with him forever. The punishment shows it more than the fault does. It is a fine sight, to drag our private misfortunes out of shadow and doubt and trumpet them on tragic stages—misfortunes that sting only by being reported. For a good wife and a good marriage are so called not when they are so, but when nobody talks about them. We must be clever at avoiding this distressing and useless knowledge. The Romans had the custom, when returning from a journey, of sending someone ahead to the house to let their wives know they were coming, so as not to surprise them.

And that is why a certain nation introduced the practice that the priest opens the way for the bride on the wedding day, to spare the groom the doubt and the curiosity of trying to find out, in this first trial, whether she comes to him a virgin or wounded by another's love.

"But people talk about it." I know a hundred honorable men who are cuckolds, honorably and with little indecency. A gallant man is pitied for it, not thought less of. See to it that your virtue smothers your misfortune; that good men curse the occasion of it; that the man who wrongs you trembles merely to think of it. And then, who is not talked of in this way, from the least to the greatest? *He who commanded so many legions, / and was a better man than you, scoundrel, in many ways.* When you see so many honorable men implicated in this reproach in your presence, consider that you are not spared elsewhere either. "But even the ladies will laugh at it." And what do they laugh at more readily these days than a peaceful and well-ordered marriage?[46]

Each of you has made someone a cuckold; and nature deals entirely in like for like, in compensation and turn about. The frequency of this mishap must by now have tempered its bitterness: it will soon have passed into custom.

A wretched passion, which has this further feature: that it cannot be shared. *Fortune has even begrudged ears to our complaints.* For what friend do

46 Adapted from Lucretius, On the Nature of Things.

FRENCH

s'en rit, ne s'en serue d'acheminement et d'instruction pour prendre luy-mesme sa part à la curee? Les aigreurs comme les douceurs du mariage se tiennent secrettes par les sages. Et parmy les autres importunes conditions, qui se trouuent en iceluy, cette cy à vn homme languager, comme ie suis, est des principales: que la coustume rende indecent et nuisible, qu'on communique à personne tout ce qu'on en sçait, et qu'on en sent.

3.5.34 De leur donner mesme conseil à elles, pour les desgouter de la ialousie, ce seroit temps perdu: leur essence est si confite en soupçon, en vanité et en curiosité, que de les guarir par voye legitime, il ne faut pas l'esperer. Elles s'amendent souuent de cet inconuenient, par vne forme de santé, beaucoup plus à craindre que n'est la maladie mesme. Car comme il y a des enchantemens, qui ne sçauent pas oster le mal, qu'en le rechargeant à vn autre, elles reiettent ainsi volontiers cette fieure à leurs maris, quand elles la perdent. Toutesfois à dire vray, ie ne sçay si on peut souffrir d'elles pis que la ialousie. C'est la plus dangereuse de leurs conditions, comme de leurs membres, la teste.

Pittacus disoit, que chacun auoit son defaut: que le sien estoit la mauuaise teste de sa femme: hors cela, il s'estimeroit de tout point heureux. C'est vn bien poisant inconuenient, duquel vn personnage si iuste, si sage, si vaillant, sentoit tout l'estat de sa vie alteré. Que deuons nous faire nous autres hommenets? Le Senat de Marseille eut raison, d'interiner sa requeste à celuy qui demandoit permission de se tuer, pour s'exempter de la tempeste de sa femme: car c'est vn mal, qui ne s'emporte iamais qu'en emportant la piece: et qui n'a autre composition qui vaille, que la fuitte, ou la souffrance: quoy que toutes les deux, tres-difficiles.

Celuy là s'y entendoit, ce me semble, qui dit qu'vn bon mariage se dressoit d'vne femme aueugle, auec vn mary sourd.

3.5.35 Regardons aussi que cette grande et violente aspreté d'obligation, que nous leur enioignons, ne produise deux effects contraires à nostre fin: à sçauoir, qu'elle aiguise les poursuyuants, et face les femmes plus faciles à se rendre. Car quant au premier point, montant le prix de la place, nous montons le prix et le desir de la conqueste.

ENGLISH

you dare confide your grievances to, who, if he does not laugh at them, will not use them as a lead and a lesson for taking his own share of the spoils? The bitternesses of marriage, like its sweetnesses, are kept secret by the wise. And among the other troublesome conditions found in it, this one, for a talkative man like me, is among the chief: that custom makes it indecent and harmful to tell anyone all that one knows and feels about it.[47]

As for giving advice to the women themselves, to wean them from jealousy, that would be time lost. Their essence is so steeped in suspicion, vanity and curiosity that we must not hope to cure them by legitimate means. They often recover from this affliction through a kind of health much more to be feared than the illness itself. For as there are spells that can remove an ailment only by loading it onto someone else, so they readily throw this fever back onto their husbands when they lose it. Yet, to tell the truth, I do not know whether one can suffer anything worse from them than jealousy. It is the most dangerous of their conditions, as the head is of their members.

Pittacus said that everyone had his defect, and that his was his wife's bad head; apart from that, he would think himself happy in every respect. It is a very heavy affliction, if so just, so wise, so valiant a personage felt the whole state of his life altered by it. What are we little manikins to do? The Senate of Marseille was right to grant the request of the man who asked permission to kill himself to escape his wife's storms. For it is an ill that is never removed except by removing the whole piece, and that admits of no settlement worth anything but flight or endurance—though both are very hard.[48]

He knew what he was talking about, it seems to me, who said that a good marriage was made of a blind wife and a deaf husband.

Let us also take care that this great and violent harshness of obligation that we impose on them does not produce two effects contrary to our purpose: namely, that it whets the pursuers and makes the women readier to surrender. As to the first point, by raising the value of the fortress we

47 Catullus.
48 Pittacus, ruler of Mytilene, was one of the Seven Sages of Greece.

FRENCH

Seroit-ce pas Venus mesme, qui eust ainsi finement haussé le cheuet à sa marchandise, par le maquerelage des loix: cognoissant combien c'est vn sot desduit, qui ne le feroit valoir par fantasie et par cherté? En fin c'est toute chair de porc, que la sauce diuersifie, comme disoit l'hoste de Flaminius. Cupidon est vn Dieu felon. Il fait son ieu, à luitter la deuotion et la iustice.

C'est sa gloire, que sa puissance chocque tout' autre puissance, et que toutes autres regles cedent aux siennes. *Materiam culpæ prosequitúrque suæ.* Et quant au second poinct: serions nous pas moins coqus, si nous craignions moins de l'estre? suyuant la complexion des femmes: car la deffence les incite et conuie. *Vbi velis nolunt, vbi nolis volunt vltrò: / Concessa pudet ire via.* Quelle meilleure interpretation trouuerions nous au faict de Messalina? Elle fit au commencement son mary coqu à cachetes, comme il se faict: mais conduisant ses parties trop aysément, par la stupidité qui estoit en luy, elle desdaigna soudain cet vsage: la voyla à faire l'amour à la descouuerte, aduoüer des seruiteurs, les entretenir et les fauoriser à la veüe d'vn chacun.

Elle vouloit qu'il s'en ressentist. Cet animal ne se pouuant esueiller pour tout cela, et luy rendant ses plaisirs mols et fades, par cette trop lasche facilité, par laquelle il sembloit qu'il les authorisast et legitimast: que fit elle? Femme d'vn Empereur sain et viuant, et à Rome, au theatre du monde, en plein midy, en feste et ceremonie publique, et auec Silius, duquel elle iouyssoit long temps deuant, elle se marie vn iour que son mary estoit hors de la ville. Semble-il pas qu'elle s'acheminast à deuenir chaste, par la nonchallance de son mary? Ou qu'elle cherchast vn autre mary, qui luy aiguisast l'appetit par sa ialousie, et qui en luy insistant, l'incitast? Mais la premiere difficulté qu'elle rencontra, fut aussi la derniere.

Cette beste s'esueilla en sursaut. On a souuent pire marché de ces sourdaux endormis. I'ay veu par experience, que cette extreme souffrance, quand elle vient à se desnoüer, produit des vengeances plus aspres. Car prenant feu tout à coup, la cholere et la fureur s'emmoncelant en vn, esclatte tous ses efforts à la

ENGLISH

raise the value of the conquest and the desire for it. Might it not be Venus herself who so cleverly raised the price of her wares through the pimping of the laws, knowing what a silly pastime it is unless fancy and costliness give it value? In the end it is all pork, varied only by the sauce, as Flamininus's host used to say. Cupid is a treacherous god. His game is to wrestle with devotion and justice.[49]

It is his glory that his power clashes with every other power, and that all other rules give way to his. *And he goes after the occasion of his own offense.* As to the second point: would we not be cuckolded less if we were less afraid of it, given the temperament of women? For prohibition incites and invites them. *Where you will, they won't; where you won't, they want to of their own accord. / They are ashamed to go by the permitted road.* What better interpretation could we find for the case of Messalina? At first she cuckolded her husband on the sly, as is done; but since she managed her affairs too easily, thanks to his stupidity, she suddenly scorned that practice. There she was, making love in the open, acknowledging her lovers, keeping them and favoring them in everyone's sight.[50]

She wanted him to feel it. When the beast could not be roused for all that, and made her pleasures soft and insipid by this too lax indulgence, by which he seemed to authorize and legitimize them, what did she do? Wife of an emperor alive and in good health, in Rome, the theater of the world, at high noon, amid public feast and ceremony, she married Silius, whom she had long been enjoying, one day when her husband was out of the city. Does it not seem that she was on her way to becoming chaste through her husband's indifference? Or that she was looking for another husband who would whet her appetite by his jealousy, and spur her on by resisting her? But the first difficulty she met was also the last.

The beast woke with a start. One often gets the worst of the bargain with these sleepy deaf fellows. I have seen by experience that this extreme forbearance, when it comes to break loose, produces the harshest revenges. For catching fire all at once, with anger and fury heaped into one, it

49 The story is in Plutarch: a host at Chalcis served the Roman general Flamininus a feast of many dishes, all made from pork.
50 The quotations are from Ovid, Terence and Lucan.

FRENCH	ENGLISH
premiere charge. *Irarúmque omnes effundit habenas.* Il la fit mourir, et grand nombre de ceux de son intelligence: iusques à tel qui n'en pouuoit mais, et qu'elle auoit conuié à son lict à coups d'escourgee.	bursts out with all its force at the first charge. *And he lets loose all the reins of his wrath.* He put her to death, along with a great number of those in her confidence—even one who could not help it, and whom she had summoned to her bed with lashes of the whip.[51]

THE LANGUAGE OF THE POETS

Virgil and Lucretius show how vigor of thought makes words full and living.

FRENCH	ENGLISH
3.5.36 Ce que Virgile dit de Venus et de Vulcan, Lucrece l'auoit dict plus sortablement, d'vne iouyssance desrobee, d'elle et de Mars. *Belli fera mœnera Mauors* *Armipotens regit, in gremium qui sæpe tuum se* *Reiicit, æterno deuinctus vulnere amoris* *Pascit amore auidos inhians in te, Dea, visus,* *Eque tuo pendet resupini spiritus ore:* *Hunc tu, Diua, tuo recubantem corpore sancto* *Circumfusa super, suaueis ex ore loquelas* *Funde.* Quand ie rumine ce, *reiicit, pascit, inhians, molli, fouet, medullas, labefacta, pendet, percurrit*, et cette noble, *circumfusa*, mere du gentil *infusus*, i'ay desdain de ces menues pointes et allusions verballes, qui nasquirent depuis. A ces bonnes gens, il ne falloit d'aigue et subtile rencontre.	What Virgil says of Venus and Vulcan, Lucretius had said more fittingly of a stolen enjoyment between her and Mars. *Mars, mighty in arms, governs the fierce works* *of war; often he flings himself back into your lap, bound by the eternal wound of love;* *gazing open-mouthed at you, goddess, he feeds his greedy eyes with love,* *and as he lies back his breath hangs upon your lips. As he reclines upon your holy body, goddess,* *pour yourself around him from above, and pour sweet words* *from your lips.* When I ruminate on that *reiicit, pascit, inhians, molli, fouet, medullas, labefacta, pendet, percurrit*, and that noble *circumfusa*, mother of the fine *infusus*, I disdain those petty conceits and verbal plays that were born since. These good people had no need of sharp and subtle wit.[52]
Leur langage est tout plein, et gros d'vne vigueur naturelle et constante. Ils sont tout epigramme: non la queuë seulement, mais la teste, l'estomach, et les pieds. Il n'y a rien d'efforcé, rien de trainant: tout y marche d'vne pareille teneur. *Contextus totus virilis est, non sunt circa flosculos occupati.* Ce n'est pas vne eloquence molle, et seulement sans offence: elle est nerueuse et solide, qui ne plaist pas tant, comme elle remplit et rauit: et rauit le plus, les plus forts esprits. Quand ie voy ces braues formes de s'expliquer, si vifues, si profondes, ie ne dis pas que c'est bien dire, ie dis que c'est bien penser. C'est la gaillardise de l'imagination, qui esleue et enfle les parolles.	Their language is wholly full and pregnant with a natural and steady vigor. They are all epigram: not the tail only, but the head, the stomach and the feet. There is nothing strained, nothing dragging: everything moves at the same pace. *The whole texture is manly; they are not busy with little flowers.* It is not a soft eloquence, merely inoffensive: it is sinewy and solid, and it does not so much please as fill and ravish; and it ravishes the strongest minds most. When I see these splendid ways of expressing oneself, so lively, so deep, I do not say "this is speaking well," I say "this is thinking well." It is the vigor of the imagination that lifts and swells the words.[53]
Pectus est quod disertum facit. Nos gens appellent iugement, langage, et beaux mots, les pleines	*It is the heart that makes one eloquent.* Our people call judgment "language" and full conceptions

51 Virgil, Aeneid.

52 The words listed come from this passage of Lucretius and from Virgil's scene of Venus and Vulcan in Aeneid VIII, which Montaigne has quoted earlier in this essay.

FRENCH

conceptions. Cette peinture est conduitte, non tant par dexterité de la main, comme pour auoir l'obiect plus vifuement empreint en l'ame. Gallus parle simplement, par ce qu'il conçoit simplement. Horace ne se contente point d'vne superficielle expression, elle le trahiroit: il voit plus clair et plus outre dans les choses: son esprit crochette et furette tout le magasin des mots et des figures, pour se representer: et les luy faut outre l'ordinaire, comme sa conception est outre l'ordinaire. Plutarque dit, qu'il veid le langage Latin par les choses. Icy de mesme: le sens esclaire et produit les parolles: non plus de vent, ains de chair et d'os.

Elles signifient, plus qu'elles ne disent. Les imbecilles sentent encores quelque image de cecy. Car en Italie ie disois ce qu'il me plaisoit en deuis communs: mais aux propos roides, ie n'eusse osé me fier à vn idiome, que ie ne pouuois plier ny contourner, outre son alleure commune. I'y veux pouuoir quelque chose du mien.

3.5.37 Le maniement et employte des beaux esprits, donne prix à la langue: non pas l'innouant, tant, comme la remplissant de plus vigoreux et diuers seruices, l'estirant et ployant. Ils n'y apportent point des mots: mais ils enrichissent les leurs, appesantissent et enfoncent leur signification et leur vsage: luy apprenent des mouuements inaccoustumés: mais prudemment et ingenieusement. Et combien peu cela soit donné à tous, il se voit par tant d'escriuains François de ce siecle. Ils sont assez hardis et dédaigneux, pour ne suyure la route commune: mais faute d'inuention et de discretion les pert. Il ne s'y voit qu'vne miserable affectation d'estrangeté: des desguisements froids et absurdes, qui au lieu d'esleuer, abbattent la matiere.

Pourueu qu'ils se gorgiasent en la nouuelleté, il ne leur chaut de l'efficace. Pour saisir vn nouueau mot, ils quittent l'ordinaire, souuent plus fort et plus nerueux.

3.5.38 En nostre langage ie trouue assez d'estoffe, mais vn peu faute de façon. Car il n'est rien, qu'on ne fist du iargon de nos chasses, et de nostre guerre, qui est vn genereux terrein à emprunter. Et les formes de parler, comme les herbes, s'amendent et fortifient en les transplantant. Ie le

ENGLISH

"fine words." This painting is guided not so much by dexterity of hand as by having the object more vividly imprinted on the mind. Gallus speaks simply because he conceives simply. Horace is not content with a superficial expression; it would betray him. He sees more clearly and further into things; his mind picks the locks of the whole storehouse of words and figures and ferrets through it to express itself; and he needs them beyond the ordinary, as his conception is beyond the ordinary. Plutarch says that he learned the Latin language through things. It is the same here: the sense illuminates and produces the words—words no longer of wind, but of flesh and bone.[54]

They signify more than they say. Even the feeble get some glimpse of this. For in Italy I said what I pleased in ordinary conversation, but in serious discussion I would not have dared trust myself to an idiom that I could not bend or turn beyond its common gait. I want to be able to put something of my own into it.

It is the handling and use by fine minds that give value to a language: not so much by innovating as by filling it out with more vigorous and varied services, stretching and bending it. They do not bring words to it, but they enrich their own words, give weight and depth to their meaning and use, and teach the language unaccustomed movements—but prudently and ingeniously. How little this is granted to everyone can be seen in so many French writers of this century. They are bold and scornful enough not to follow the common road; but lack of invention and discretion ruins them. All one sees is a wretched affectation of strangeness, cold and absurd disguises which, instead of raising the subject matter, bring it down.

So long as they can strut in novelty, they care nothing for effectiveness. To seize on a new word they abandon the ordinary one, which is often stronger and more sinewy.

In our language I find plenty of material, but a slight lack of fashioning. For there is nothing that could not be made out of the jargon of our hunting and our warfare, which is a generous ground to borrow from. And forms of speech, like plants, im-

53 Seneca, Letters.
54 Quintilian. Gallus is Cornelius Gallus, a Roman love poet of the 1st century BC.

FRENCH

trouue suffisamment abondant, mais non pas maniant et vigoureux suffisamment. Il succombe ordinairement à vne puissante conception. Si vous allez tendu, vous sentez souuent qu'il languit soubs vous, et fleschit: et qu'à son deffaut le Latin se presente au secours, et le Grec à d'autres.

D'aucuns de ces mots que ie viens de trier, nous en apperçeuons plus mal-aysement l'energie, d'autant que l'vsage et la frequence, nous en ont aucunement auily et rendu vulgaire la grace. Comme en nostre commun, il s'y rencontre des frases excellentes, et des metaphores, desquelles la beauté flestrit de vieillesse, et la couleur s'est ternie par maniement trop ordinaire. Mais cela n'oste rien du goust, à ceux qui ont bon nez: ny ne desroge à la gloire de ces anciens autheurs, qui, comme il est vraysemblable, mirent premierement ces mots en ce lustre.

3.5.39 Les sciences traictent les choses trop finement, d'vne mode artificielle, et differente à la commune et naturelle. Mon page fait l'amour, et l'entend: lisez luy Leon Hebreu, et Ficin: on parle de luy, de ses pensees, et de ses actions, et si n'y entend rien. Ie ne recognois chez Aristote, la plus part de mes mouuemens ordinaires. On les a couuers et reuestus d'vne autre robbe, pour l'vsage de l'eschole. Dieu leur doint bien faire: si i'estois du mestier, ie naturaliserois l'art, autant comme ils artialisent la nature. Laissons là Bembo et Equicola.

3.5.40 Quand i'escris, ie me passe bien de la compagnie, et souuenance des liures: de peur qu'ils n'interrompent ma forme. Aussi qu'à la verité, les bons autheurs m'abbattent par trop, et rompent le courage. Ie fais volontiers le tour de ce peintre, lequel ayant miserablement representé des coqs, deffendoit à ses garçons, qu'ils ne laissassent venir en sa boutique aucun coq naturel. Et auroy plustost besoing, pour me donner vn peu de lustre, de l'inuention du musicien Antinonydes, qui, quand il auoit à faire la musique, mettoit ordre que deuant ou apres luy, son auditoire fust abbreuué de quelques autres mauuais chantres.

Mais ie me puis plus malaisément deffaire de Plutarque: il est si vniuersel et si plain, qu'à toutes occasions, et quelque suiect extrauagant que vous ayez pris, il s'ingere

ENGLISH

prove and grow stronger by being transplanted. I find our language abundant enough, but not pliable and vigorous enough. It usually gives way under a powerful conception. If you are going at full stretch, you often feel it flag and buckle beneath you, and when it fails you, Latin comes to your aid, and Greek to others.

In some of the words I have just picked out, we perceive their force less easily because use and frequency have somewhat cheapened their grace and made it common. Just so, in our everyday speech there are excellent phrases and metaphors whose beauty has withered with age and whose color has been tarnished by too common handling. But that takes nothing away from their savor for those who have a good nose, nor does it detract from the glory of those ancient authors who, very likely, first brought these words into such luster.

The sciences treat things too subtly, in an artificial way, different from the common and natural one. My page makes love and understands it. Read him Leo Hebraeus and Ficino: they talk about him, his thoughts and his actions, and yet he understands nothing of it. I do not recognize in Aristotle most of my ordinary emotions. They have been covered and dressed in another robe for the use of the schools. God grant them success! If I were in the trade, I would naturalize art as much as they artify nature. Let us leave Bembo and Equicola aside.[55]

When I write, I prefer to do without the company and memory of books, for fear they may interfere with my form. Also because, in truth, good authors humble me too much and dash my courage. I gladly play the trick of that painter who, having painted roosters wretchedly, forbade his apprentices to let any real rooster into his shop. And to give myself a little luster, I would rather need the device of the musician Antinonydes, who, when he had to perform, arranged for his audience to be plied, before or after him, with some other bad singers.[56]

But I can less easily rid myself of Plutarch. He is so universal and so full that on every occasion, however eccentric the subject you have taken up, he

55 Leo Hebraeus (Judah Abravanel), Marsilio Ficino, Pietro Bembo and Mario Equicola were Italian Renaissance writers on the philosophy of love.
56 Antinonydes is Montaigne's form of Antigenidas, a Theban musician mentioned by Plutarch.

FRENCH

à vostre besonge, et vous tend vne main liberale et inespuisable de richesses, et d'embellissemens. Il m'en fait despit, d'estre si fort exposé au pillage de ceux qui le hantent. Ie ne le puis si peu racointer, que ie n'en tire cuisse ou aile.

3.5.41 Pour ce mien dessein, il me vient aussi à propos, d'escrire chez moy, en pays sauuage, où personne ne m'aide, ny me releve: où ie ne hante communément homme, qui entende le Latin de son patenostre; et de François vn peu moins. Ie l'eusse faict meilleur ailleurs, mais l'ouurage eust esté moins mien. Et sa fin principale et perfection, c'est d'estre exactement mien. Ie corrigerois bien vne erreur accidentale, dequoy ie suis plein, ainsi que ie cours inaduertemment: mais les imperfections qui sont en moy ordinaires et constantes, ce seroit trahison de les oster.

Quand on m'a dict ou que moy-mesme me suis dict: Tu es trop espais en figures, voyla vn mot du cru de Gascongne: voyla vne phrase dangereuse: (ie n'en refuis aucune de celles qui s'vsent emmy les rues Françoises: ceux qui veulent combatre l'vsage par la grammaire se moquent) voylà vn discours ignorant: voylà vn discours paradoxe, en voylà vn trop fol: tu te ioues souuent, on estimera que tu dies à droit, ce que tu dis à feinte. Oüy, fais-ie, mais ie corrige les fautes d'inaduertence, non celles de coustume. Est-ce pas ainsi que ie parle par tout? me represente-ie pas viuement? suffit. I'ay faict ce que i'ay voulu: tout le monde me recognoist en mon liure, et mon liure en moy.

3.5.42 Or i'ay vne condition singeresse et imitatrice. Quand ie me meslois de faire des vers, et n'en fis iamais que des Latins, ils accusoient euidemment le poëte que ie venois dernierement de lire. Et de mes premiers Essays, aucuns puent vn peu l'estranger. A Paris ie parle vn langage aucunement autre qu'à Montaigne. Qui que ie regarde auec attention, m'imprime facilement quelque chose du sien. Ce que ie considere, ie l'vsurpe: vne sotte contenance, vne desplaisante grimace, vne forme de parler ridicule. Les vices plus. D'autant qu'ils me poingnent, ils s'acrochent à moy, et ne s'en vont pas sans secouer. On m'a veu plus souuent iurer par similitude, que par complexion.

Imitation meurtriere, comme celle des singes horribles en grandeur et en force, que le Roy Alexandre rencontra en certaine contree des Indes. Desquels il eust esté

ENGLISH

thrusts himself into your work and holds out to you a generous hand, inexhaustible in riches and embellishments. It vexes me that he is so exposed to plunder by those who frequent him. I cannot have the slightest dealings with him without making off with a leg or a wing.

For this design of mine, it also suits me to write at home, in wild country, where no one helps me or sets me right; where I do not usually associate with anyone who understands the Latin of his Paternoster, and French a little less. I would have done it better elsewhere, but the work would have been less mine; and its principal end and perfection is to be exactly mine. I would gladly correct an accidental error, of which I am full, since I run on carelessly; but the imperfections that are ordinary and constant in me—it would be treachery to remove them.

When I have been told, or have told myself, "You are too thick with figures of speech. Here is a word of Gascon growth. Here is a risky phrase" (I reject none of those used in the streets of France; those who would fight usage with grammar are not serious), "Here is an ignorant piece of reasoning. Here is a paradoxical one. Here is one too foolish. You are often joking; people will think you mean in earnest what you say in jest"—"Yes," I say, "but I correct the faults of inadvertence, not those of habit. Isn't this how I speak everywhere? Do I not portray myself to the life? Enough. I have done what I wanted: everyone recognizes me in my book, and my book in me."

Now I have an apish, imitative disposition. When I dabbled in writing verse (and I never wrote any but Latin), it plainly betrayed the poet I had last been reading. And some of my first essays smell a little of other people. In Paris I speak a somewhat different language than at Montaigne. Anyone I look at attentively easily imprints something of his on me. Whatever I observe, I appropriate: a foolish bearing, an unpleasant grimace, a ridiculous way of speaking. Vices even more: because they prick me, they cling to me and will not go away unless shaken off. I have more often been seen to swear by imitation than by temperament.

A murderous imitation, like that of the apes, horrible in size and strength, that King Alexander came upon in a certain region of India. They

FRENCH

autrement difficile de venir à bout. Mais ils en presterent le moyen par cette leur inclination à contrefaire tout ce qu'ils voyent faire. Car par là les chasseurs apprindrent de se chausser des souliers à leur veuë, auec force nœuds de liens: de s'affubler d'accoustremens de teste à tout des lacs courants, et oindre par semblant, leurs yeux de glux. Ainsi mettoyent imprudemment à mal, ces pauures bestes, leur complexion singeresse. Ils s'engluoient, s'encheuestroyent et garrotoyent eux mesmes.

Cette autre faculté, de representer ingenieusement les gestes et parolles d'vn autre, par dessein qui apporte souuent plaisir et admiration, n'est en moy, non plus qu'en vne souche. Quand ie iure selon moy, c'est seulement, par Dieu, qui est le plus droit de touts les serments. Ils disent, que Socrates iuroit le chien: Zenon cette mesme interiection, qui sert à cette heure aux Italiens, Cappari: Pythagoras, l'eau et l'air. Ie suis si aisé à receuoir sans y penser ces impressions superficielles, que si i'ay eu en la bouche, Sire ou Altesse, trois iours de suite, huict iours apres ils m'eschappent, pour excellence, ou pour seigneurie. Et ce que i'auray pris à dire en battelant et en me moquant, ie le diray lendemain serieusement.

Parquoy, à escrire, i'accepte plus enuis les argumens battus, de peur que ie les traicte aux despens d'autruy. Tout argument m'est egallement fertile. Ie les prens sur vne mouche. Et Dieu vueille que celuy que i'ay icy en main, n'ait pas esté pris, par le commandement d'vne volonté autant volage. Que ie commence par celle qu'il me plaira, car les matieres se tiennent toutes enchesnees les vnes aux autres.

3.5.43 Mais mon ame me desplaist, de ce qu'elle produit ordinairement ses plus profondes resueries, plus folles, et qui me plaisent le mieux, à l'improuueu, et lors que ie les cherche moins: lesquelles s'esuanouissent soudain, n'ayant sur le champ où les attacher. A cheual, à la table, au lict. Mais plus à cheual, où sont mes plus larges entretiens. I'ay le parler vn peu delicatement ialoux d'attention et de silence, si ie parle de force. Qui m'interrompt, m'arreste. En voyage, la necessité mesme des chemins couppe les propos. Outre ce, que ie voyage plus souuent sans compagnie, propre à ces entretiens de suite: par où ie prens tout loisir de m'entretenir moy-mesme.

ENGLISH

would otherwise have been hard to overcome. But they supplied the means through their inclination to mimic everything they see done. For by this the hunters learned to put on shoes in their sight, tying them with many knots of laces; to rig themselves out in headgear fitted with running nooses; and to pretend to smear their eyes with birdlime. Thus these poor beasts imprudently turned their apish nature to their own harm: they stuck themselves in lime, tangled themselves in halters and trussed themselves up.

That other faculty, of deliberately and cleverly reproducing another person's gestures and words, which often brings pleasure and admiration, is no more in me than in a tree stump. When I swear in my own way, it is only "by God," which is the most straightforward of all oaths. They say that Socrates swore by the dog; Zeno by the same interjection the Italians use nowadays, "Cappari"; Pythagoras by water and air. I am so apt to take on these superficial impressions without thinking that if I have had "Sire" or "Highness" in my mouth three days running, a week later they slip out of me in place of "Excellency" or "Lordship." And what I have taken to saying in fooling and mockery, I will say the next day in earnest.[57]

That is why, in writing, I am more reluctant to take up well-worn subjects, for fear of treating them at someone else's expense. Any subject is equally fertile for me. I take them up from a fly. And God grant that the one I have in hand here was not taken up at the command of a will just as flighty! Let me begin with whichever I please, for subjects are all linked to one another in a chain.

But my mind displeases me in that it usually produces its deepest musings, its maddest and those I like best, unexpectedly and when I am least looking for them; and they vanish at once, since I have nothing on the spot to fasten them to. On horseback, at table, in bed—but most on horseback, where my thoughts range widest. My speech is somewhat delicately jealous of attention and silence, if I am speaking in earnest: whoever interrupts me stops me. When traveling, the very demands of the road break off conversation. Besides, I more often travel without company suited to

57 "Cappari" means "capers," a mild oath.

FRENCH

Il m'en aduient comme de mes songes: en songeant, ie les recommande à ma memoire, car ie songe volontiers que ie songe, mais le lendemain, ie me represente bien leur couleur, comme elle estoit, ou gaye, ou triste, ou estrange, mais quels ils estoient au reste, plus i'ahane à le trouuer, plus ie l'enfonce en l'oubliance. Aussi des discours fortuites qui me tombent en fantasie, il ne m'en reste en memoire qu'vne vaine image: autant seulement qu'il m'en faut pour me faire ronger, et despiter apres leur queste, inutilement.

ENGLISH

these sustained conversations; so I take all the leisure I want to converse with myself.

It is the same with these as with my dreams. While dreaming, I commend them to my memory (for I often dream that I am dreaming); but the next day I can picture their color well enough, as it was, gay or sad or strange, but as for what they were otherwise, the more I labor to find it, the deeper I plunge it into oblivion. So too with the chance thoughts that drop into my head: all that stays in my memory is a vague image, just enough to make me fret and chafe in fruitless pursuit of them.

THE RIDICULOUS ACT

Love is mere appetite, and its absurd motions show that the gods made man their plaything.

FRENCH

3.5.44 Or donc, laissant les liures à part, et parlant plus materiellement et simplement: ie trouue apres tout, que l'amour n'est autre chose, que la soif de cette iouyssance en vn subiect desiré: ny Venus autre chose, que le plaisir à descharger ses vases: comme le plaisir que nature nous donne à descharger d'autres parties: qui deuient vicieux ou par immoderation, ou par indiscretion. Pour Socrates, l'amour est appetit de generation par l'entremise de la beauté.

Et considerant maintefois la ridicule titillation de ce plaisir, les absurdes mouuemens esceruelez et estourdis, dequoy il agite Zenon et Cratippus: cette rage indiscrete, ce visage enflammé de fureur et de cruauté, au plus doux effect de l'amour: et puis cette morgue graue, seuere, et ecstatique, en vne action si folle, qu'on ayt logé pesle-mesle nos delices et nos ordures ensemble: et que la supreme volupté aye du transy et du plaintif, comme la douleur: ie crois qu'il est vray, ce que dit Platon, que l'homme a esté faict par les Dieux pour leur iouët.

Quænam ista iocandi
Sœuitia? Et que c'est par moquerie, que Nature nous a laissé la plus trouble de nos actions, la plus commune: pour nous esgaller par là, et apparier les fols et les sages, et nous et les bestes. Le plus contemplatif, et prudent homme, quand ie l'imagine en cette assiette, ie le tiens pour affronteur, de faire le prudent et le contemplatif. Ce sont les pieds du paon, qui abbatent son orgueil. *Ridentem dicere verum*

ENGLISH

So then, leaving books aside and speaking more materially and simply: I find, after all, that love is nothing but the thirst for this enjoyment in a desired object, and Venus nothing but the pleasure of discharging one's vessels, like the pleasure nature gives us in discharging other parts; which becomes vicious through either immoderation or indiscretion. For Socrates, love is the appetite for generation through the mediation of beauty.

And considering many times the ridiculous titillation of this pleasure; the absurd, giddy, harebrained motions with which it shakes a Zeno or a Cratippus; that reckless frenzy, that face inflamed with fury and cruelty in the sweetest act of love; and then that grave, severe and ecstatic solemnity in so mad an action; and that our delights and our filth should have been lodged pell-mell together; and that the supreme pleasure should have something of swooning and moaning about it, like pain —I believe it is true, as Plato says, that man was made by the gods as their plaything.[58]

What cruelty
in jest is this? And that it is in mockery that Nature has left us the most disorderly of our actions as the most common, to make us equal by it and pair off fools and wise men, and us and the beasts. The most contemplative and prudent man, when I imagine him in that position, I consider an impostor for playing the prudent and contemplative

58 Cratippus was a Peripatetic philosopher; with Zeno he stands here for the gravest of sages.

FRENCH

Quid vetat? Ceux qui parmi les ieux, refusent les opinions serieuses, font, dit quelqu'vn, comme celuy qui craint d'adorer la statuë d'vn sainct, si elle est sans deuantiere.

Nous mangeons bien et beuuons comme les bestes: mais ce ne sont pas actions qui empeschent les offices de nostre ame. En celles-là, nous gardons nostre auantage sur elles: cette-cy met toute autre pensee soubs le ioug: abrutit et abestit par son imperieuse authorité, toute la theologie et philosophie qui est en Platon: et si ne s'en plaint pas. Par tout ailleurs vous pouuez garder quelque decence: toutes autres operations souffrent des regles d'honnesteté: cette-cy ne se peut pas seulement imaginer, que vicieuse ou ridicule. Trouuez y pour voir vn proceder sage et discret.

Alexandre disoit qu'il se connoissoit principallement mortel, par cette action, et par le dormir: le sommeil suffoque et supprime les facultez de nostre ame, la besongne les absorbe et dissipe de mesme. Certes c'est vne marque non seulement de nostre corruption originele: mais aussi de nostre vanité et deformité.

3.5.45 D'vn costé Nature nous y pousse, ayant attaché à ce desir, la plus noble, vtile, et plaisante de toutes ses functions: et la nous laisse d'autre part accuser et fuyr, comme insolente et deshonneste, en rougir et recommander l'abstinence. Sommes nous pas bien bruttes, de nommer brutale l'operation qui nous faict? Les peuples, és religions, se sont rencontrez en plusieurs conuenances: comme sacrifices, luminaires, encensements, ieusnes, offrandes: et entre autres, en la condemnation de cette action. Toutes les opinions y viennent, outre l'vsage si estendu des circoncisions. Nous auons à l'auanture raison, de nous blasmer, de faire vne si sotte production que l'homme: d'appeller l'action honteuse, et honteuses les parties qui y seruent (à cette heure sont les miennes proprement honteuses).

Les Esseniens, dequoy parle Pline, se maintenoient sans nourrice, sans maillot, plusieurs siecles: de l'abbord des estrangers, qui, suiuants cette belle humeur, se rengeoient continuellement à eux: ayant toute vne nation, hazardé de s'exterminer plustost, que s'engager à vn embrassement feminin, et de perdre la suitte des hommes plustost, que d'en forger vn. Ils disent que

ENGLISH

man. It is the peacock's feet that bring down its pride. *To tell the truth while laughing—what forbids it?* Those who refuse serious opinions in the midst of play are like, as someone says, the man who is afraid to worship the statue of a saint if it has no loincloth.[59]

We eat and drink just as the beasts do, but these are not actions that hinder the functions of our soul. In them we keep our advantage over the beasts. This one brings every other thought under the yoke, and by its imperious authority stupefies and brutalizes all the theology and philosophy there is in Plato; and yet he does not complain of it. Everywhere else you can keep some decency; all other operations allow rules of propriety. This one cannot even be imagined except as vicious or ridiculous. Just try to find a wise and discreet way of going about it.

Alexander said that he knew himself to be mortal chiefly by this act and by sleep. Sleep stifles and suppresses the faculties of our soul; this business likewise absorbs and dissipates them. Certainly it is a mark not only of our original corruption but also of our vanity and deformity.

On the one hand Nature drives us to it, having attached to this desire the noblest, most useful and most pleasant of all her functions; and on the other she leaves us to condemn it and shun it as insolent and indecent, to blush at it and recommend abstinence. Are we not real brutes to call brutish the act that makes us? Peoples in their religions have agreed on many points—sacrifices, lamps, incense, fasts, offerings—and, among others, on condemning this act. All opinions come round to it, not to mention the widespread practice of circumcision. We are perhaps right to blame ourselves for making so foolish a product as man; to call the act shameful, and shameful the parts that serve it (at present mine are truly shameful).

The Essenes, of whom Pliny speaks, kept themselves going for several centuries without wet nurses or swaddling clothes, through the arrival of strangers who, following this fine humor, kept joining them; a whole nation preferred to risk extinction rather than engage in a woman's embrace, and to lose the succession of men rather than

59 The quotations are from Claudian and Horace, Satires.

FRENCH

Zenon n'eut affaire à femme, qu'vne fois en sa vie: et que ce fut par ciuilité, pour ne sembler dedaigner trop obstinement le sexe. Chacun fuit à le voir naistre, chacun court à le voir mourir. Pour le destruire, on cerche vn champ spacieux en pleine lumiere: pour le construire, on se musse dans vn creux tenebreux, et le plus contraint qu'il se peut.

C'est le deuoir, de se cacher pour le faire, et c'est gloire, et naissent plusieurs vertus, de le sçauoir deffaire. L'vn est iniure, l'autre est faueur: car Aristote dit, que bonifier quelqu'vn, c'est le tuer, en certaine phrase de son païs. Les Atheniens, pour apparier la deffaueur de ces deux actions, ayants à mundifier l'isle de Delos, et se iustifier enuers Apollo, defendirent au pourpris d'icelle, tout enterrement, et tout enfantement ensemble. *Nostri nosmet pœnitet.*

3.5.46 Il y a des nations qui se couurent en mangeant. Ie sçay vne dame, et des plus grandes, qui a cette mesme opinion, que c'est vne contenance desagreable, de mascher: qui rabat beaucoup de leur grace, et de leur beauté: et ne se presente pas volontiers en public auec appetit. Et sçay vn homme, qui ne peut souffrir de voir manger, ny qu'on le voye: et fuyt toute assistance, plus quand il s'emplit, que s'il se vuide. En l'empire du Turc, il se void grand nombre d'hommes, qui, pour exceller les autres, ne se laissent iamais veoir, quand ils font leur repas; qui n'en font qu'vn la sepmaine: qui se deschiquettent et decoupent la face et les membres: qui ne parlent iamais à personne.

Gens fanatiques, qui pensent honnorer leur nature en se desnaturant: qui se prisent de leur mespris, et s'amendent de leur empirement. Quel monstrueux animal, qui se fait horreur à soy-même, à qui ses plaisirs poisent: qui se tient à mal-heur? Il y en a qui cachent leur vie, *Exilióque domos et dulcia limina mutant,* Et la desrobent de la veuë des autres hommes: qui euitent la santé et l'allegresse, comme qualitez ennemies et dommageables. Non seulement plusieurs sectes, mais plusieurs peuples maudissent leur naissance, et benissent leur mort. Il en est où le soleil est abominé, les tenebres adorees. Nous ne sommes ingenieux qu'à nous mal mener: c'est le vray

ENGLISH

forge one. They say that Zeno had to do with a woman only once in his life, and that it was out of politeness, so as not to seem to disdain the sex too obstinately. Everyone shuns seeing a man born; everyone runs to see him die. To destroy him we seek a spacious field in broad daylight; to construct him we hide in a dark hole, as cramped as can be.[60]

It is our duty to hide in order to make him, and it is glory, and the birth of many virtues, to know how to unmake him. The one is an offense, the other a favor: for Aristotle says that "to do someone good," in a certain expression of his country, means to kill him. The Athenians, to put the disfavor of these two actions on an equal footing, when they had to purify the island of Delos and justify themselves to Apollo, forbade within its precincts all burials and all childbirths alike. *We are ashamed of ourselves.*[61]

There are nations that cover themselves while eating. I know a lady, one of the greatest, who holds this same opinion, that chewing is an unpleasant sight which greatly detracts from women's grace and beauty; and she does not willingly appear in public with an appetite. And I know a man who cannot bear to see people eat, or to be seen eating, and who shuns all onlookers more when he is filling himself than when he is emptying himself. In the Turkish empire one sees a great number of men who, to outdo the others, never let themselves be seen when they take their meals; who take only one a week; who slash and cut their faces and limbs; who never speak to anyone.

Fanatical people, who think they honor their nature by denaturing themselves; who prize themselves for their self-contempt, and improve themselves by making themselves worse. What a monstrous animal, that horrifies itself, whose pleasures weigh on it, that regards itself as a misfortune! There are some who hide their life, *And exchange their homes and sweet thresholds for exile,* and steal it from the sight of other men; who avoid health and cheerfulness as hostile and harmful qualities. Not only many sects but many peoples curse their birth and bless their death. There are some where the sun is abhorred and darkness

60 The Essenes were a celibate Jewish sect of antiquity.
61 Terence, Phormio.

FRENCH	ENGLISH
gibbier de la force de nostre esprit: dangereux vtil en desreglement.	worshiped. We are ingenious only at mistreating ourselves; that is the true quarry of our mind's power—a dangerous tool when it runs out of control.[62]
O miseri quorum gaudia crimen habent! Hé pauure homme, tu as assez d'incommoditez necessaires, sans les augmenter par ton inuention: et és assez miserable de condition, sans l'estre par art: tu as des laideurs reelles et essentielles à suffisance, sans en forger d'imaginaires. Trouues tu que tu sois trop à l'aise si la moitié de ton aise ne te fasche? Trouues tu que tu ayes remply tous les offices necessaires, à quoy Nature t'engage, et qu'elle soit oysiue chez toy, si tu ne t'obliges à nouueaux offices? Tu ne crains point d'offencer ses lois vniuerselles et indubitables, et te piques aux tiennes partisanes et fantastiques. Et d'autant plus qu'elles sont particulieres, incertaines, et plus contredictes, d'autant plus tu fais là ton effort.	*O wretches, whose joys are counted a crime!* Ah, poor man, you have enough unavoidable ills without adding to them by your own invention; you are wretched enough by condition without being so by art. You have real and essential ugliness enough without forging imaginary ones. Do you find yourself too comfortable unless half your comfort vexes you? Do you find you have fulfilled all the necessary duties to which Nature binds you, and that she is idle in you, unless you bind yourself to new duties? You are not afraid to offend her universal and indubitable laws, and you pride yourself on your own partisan and fanciful ones; and the more particular, uncertain and disputed they are, the more effort you put into them.[63]
Les ordonnances positiues de ta paroisse t'attachent: celles du monde ne te touchent point. Cours vn peu par les exemples de cette consideration: ta vie en est toute.	The man-made ordinances of your parish bind you; those of the world do not touch you. Run through a few examples of this reflection: your whole life is made of them.

CONCEALMENT AND DESIRE

Veiled poetry and slow, measured favors make desire keener than frankness.

FRENCH	ENGLISH
3.5.47 Les vers de ces deux poëtes, traictans ainsi reseruément et discrettement de la lasciueté, comme ils font, me semblent la descouurir et esclairer de plus pres. Les dames couurent leur sein d'vn reseul, les prestres plusieurs choses sacrees, les peintres ombragent leur ouurage, pour luy donner plus de lustre. Et dict-on que le coup du soleil et du vent, est plus poisant par reflexion qu'à droit fil. L'Ægyptien respondit sagement à celuy qui luy demandoit, Que portes-tu là, caché soubs ton manteau? Il est caché soubs mon manteau, affin que tu ne sçaches pas que c'est. Mais il y a certaines autres choses qu'on cache pour les montrer. Oyez cetuy-là plus ouuert, *Et nudam pressi corpus adusque meum.* Il me semble qu'il me chapone.	The verses of these two poets, treating lasciviousness with as much reserve and discretion as they do, seem to me to reveal it and light it up more closely. Ladies cover their bosoms with a net, priests cover many sacred things, painters shade their work to give it more luster. And they say that the force of the sun and wind strikes harder by reflection than directly. The Egyptian gave a wise answer to the man who asked him, "What are you carrying hidden under your cloak?" "It is hidden under my cloak so that you will not know what it is." But there are certain other things that are hidden in order to show them. Listen to this one, who is more open: *And I pressed her naked body to my own.* I feel as if he were gelding me.[64]
Que Martial retrousse Venus à sa poste, il n'arriue pas à la faire paroistre si entiere. Celuy qui dit tout, il nous saoule	Let Martial hitch up Venus's skirts as he pleases, he does not succeed in showing her so completely.

62 Virgil, Georgics.
63 From an elegy then attributed to Cornelius Gallus.
64 Ovid, Amores. "These two poets" are Virgil and Lucretius.

FRENCH

et nous desgouste. Celuy qui craint à s'exprimer, nous achemine à en penser plus qu'il n'en y a. Il y a de la trahison en cette sorte de modestie: et notamment nous entr'ouurant comme font ceux cy, vne si belle route à l'imagination. Et l'action et la peinture doiuent sentir leur larrecin.

3.5.48 L'amour des Espagnols, et des Italiens, plus respectueuse et craintifue, plus mineuse et couuerte, me plaist. Ie ne sçay qui, anciennement, desiroit le gosier allongé comme le col d'vne gruë, pour sauourer plus long temps ce qu'il aualloit. Ce souhait est mieux à propos en cette volupté, viste et precipiteuse. Mesmes à telles natures comme est la mienne, qui suis vicieux en soudaineté. Pour arrester sa fuitte, et l'estendre en preambules; entre-eux, tout sert de faueur et de recompense: vne œillade, vne inclination, vne parolle, vn signe. Qui se pourroit disner de la fumee du rost, feroit-il pas vne belle espargne?

C'est vne passion qui mesle à bien peu d'essence solide, beaucoup plus de vanité et resuerie fieureuse: il la faut payer et seruir de mesme. Apprenons aux dames à se faire valoir, à s'estimer, à nous amuser, et à nous piper. Nous faisons nostre charge extreme la premiere: il y a tousiours de l'impetuosité Françoise. Faisant filer leurs faueurs, et les estallant en detail: chacun, iusques à la vieillesse miserable, y trouue quelque bout de lisiere, selon son vaillant et son merite. Qui n'a iouyssance, qu'en la iouyssance: qui ne gaigne que du haut poinct: qui n'ayme la chasse qu'en la prise: il ne luy appartient pas de se mesler à nostre escole.

Plus il y a de marches et degrez, plus il y a de hauteur et d'honneur au dernier siege. Nous nous deurions plaire d'y estre conduicts, comme il se faict aux palais magnifiques, par diuers portiques, et passages, longues et plaisantes galleries, et plusieurs destours. Cette dispensation reuiendroit à nostre commodité: nous y arresterions, et nous y aymerions plus long temps. Sans esperance, et sans desir, nous n'allons plus rien qui vaille. Nostre maistrise et entiere possession, leur est infiniement à craindre. Depuis qu'elles sont du tout rendues à la mercy de nostre foy, et constance, elles sont vn peu bien hasardees. Ce sont vertus rares et difficiles: soudain qu'elles sont à nous, nous ne sommes plus à elles.

ENGLISH

He who says everything gluts us and puts us off. He who is afraid to express himself leads us to imagine more than there is. There is treachery in this sort of modesty, especially when, like these two, it half opens so fine a road for the imagination. Both the act and its depiction should have a whiff of theft about them.

The love of the Spaniards and the Italians, more respectful and timid, more coy and covert, pleases me. Someone in ancient times, I forget who, wished for a throat as long as a crane's neck, to savor longer what he swallowed. That wish is more apt for this quick and hasty pleasure, especially for natures like mine, which have the fault of suddenness. To check its flight and spin it out in preambles, everything among them serves as favor and reward: a glance, a bow, a word, a sign. If someone could dine on the smoke of the roast, would he not make a fine saving?

It is a passion that mixes with very little solid substance a great deal more vanity and feverish dreaming; it must be paid and served in the same coin. Let us teach ladies to make themselves valued, to esteem themselves, to keep us dangling and to lure us on. We make our final charge first: there is always some French impetuosity in it. If they spin out their favors and display them piece by piece, everyone, even into wretched old age, will find some scrap of the hem, according to his means and merit. He who finds enjoyment only in the enjoyment, who wins only with the highest throw, who likes the hunt only in the kill, has no business joining our school.

The more steps and stairs there are, the more height and honor in the topmost seat. We should be glad to be led there, as one is in magnificent palaces, through various porticoes and passages, long and pleasant galleries, and many windings. This arrangement would work to our advantage: we would linger there and love longer. Without hope and without desire, we are no longer good for much. Our mastery and full possession is something they have infinite reason to fear. Once they have surrendered entirely to the mercy of our faith and constancy, they are running quite a risk. Those are rare and difficult virtues: as soon as they are ours, we are no longer theirs.

FRENCH

ENGLISH

Postquam cupidæ mentis satiata libido est, / Verba nihil metuere, nihil periuria curant. Et Thrasonidez ieune homme Grec, fut si amoureux de son amour, qu'il refusa, ayant gaigné le cœur d'vne maistresse, d'en iouyr: pour n'amortir, rassasier et allanguir par la iouyssance cette ardeur inquiete, de laquelle il se glorifioit et se paissoit.

Once the lust of the eager mind is sated, / they fear nothing of their words, care nothing for their perjuries. And Thrasonides, a young Greek, was so in love with his love that, having won a mistress's heart, he refused to enjoy her, so as not to deaden, sate and enfeeble through enjoyment that restless ardor in which he gloried and on which he fed.[65]

3.5.49 La cherté donne goust à la viande. Voyez combien la forme des salutations, qui est particuliere à nostre nation, abastardit par sa facilité, la grace des baisers, lesquels Socrates dit estre si puissans et dangereux à voler nos cœurs. C'est vne desplaisante coustume, et iniurieuse aux dames, d'auoir à prester leurs leures, à quiconque a trois valets à sa suitte, pour mal plaisant qu'il soit, *Cuius liuida naribus caninis,*
Dependet glacies, rigétque barba:
Centum occurrere malo culilingis. Et nous mesme n'y gaignons guere: car comme le monde se voit party, pour trois belles, il nous en faut baiser cinquante laides. Et à vn estomach tendre, comme sont ceux de mon aage, vn mauuais baiser en surpaie vn bon.

Costliness gives food its relish. See how the form of greeting peculiar to our nation, by its very easiness, debases the grace of kisses, which Socrates says are so powerful and dangerous for stealing our hearts. It is an unpleasant custom, and insulting to the ladies, to have to lend their lips to any man with three footmen in his train, however disagreeable he may be: *From whose dog-like nostrils hangs a livid icicle, and whose beard is stiff with frost: I would rather meet a hundred lickers of backsides.* And we ourselves gain little by it: for as the world is divided, for three pretty women we have to kiss fifty ugly ones. And to a delicate stomach, such as men of my age have, one bad kiss is too high a price for a good one.[66]

3.5.50 Ils font les poursuyuans en Italie, et les transis, de celles mesmes qui sont à vendre: et se defendent ainsi: Qu'il y a des degrez en la iouyssance: et que par seruices ils veulent obtenir pour eux, celle qui est la plus entiere. Elles ne vendent que le corps. La volonté ne peut estre mise en vente, elle est trop libre et trop sienne. Ainsi ceux cy disent, que c'est la volonté qu'ils entreprennent, et ont raison. C'est la volonté qu'il faut seruir et practiquer. I'ay horreur d'imaginer mien, vn corps priué d'affection. Et me semble, que cette forcenerie est voisine à celle de ce garçon, qui alla saillir par amour, la belle image de Venus que Praxiteles auoit faicte.

In Italy they play the suitor and the lovesick swain even with women who are for sale. They defend themselves this way: there are degrees of enjoyment, and by their attentions they want to obtain for themselves the most complete kind. Those women sell only the body. The will cannot be put up for sale; it is too free and too much its own. So these men say it is the will they are setting out to win, and they are right. It is the will that must be served and courted. I am horrified to imagine as mine a body without affection. And it seems to me that this frenzy is close to that of the boy who, out of love, went and mounted the beautiful statue of Venus that Praxiteles had made.[67]

Ou de ce furieux Ægyptien, eschauffé apres la charongne d'vne morte qu'il embaumoit et ensueroit. Lequel donna occasion à la loy, qui fut faicte depuis en Ægypte, que les corps des belles et ieunes femmes, et de celles de bonne maison, seroient gardez trois iours, auant qu'on les mist entre les mains de ceux qui auoient charge de prouuoir à leur enterrement. Periander fit plus merueilleusement: qui estendit l'affection coniugale, plus reglee et legitime, à la iouyssance de Melissa sa femme trespassee. Ne

Or that of the frenzied Egyptian who was inflamed with lust for the corpse of a dead woman he was embalming and shrouding. He gave occasion for the law later made in Egypt that the bodies of beautiful young women, and of women of good family, should be kept for three days before being handed over to those whose task was to prepare their burial. Periander did something more aston-

65 Catullus.
66 Martial.
67 Praxiteles, the Athenian sculptor of the 4th century BC, made the famous Aphrodite of Cnidus.

FRENCH

semble ce pas estre vne humeur lunatique de la Lune, ne pouuant autrement iouyr d'Endymion son mignon, l'aller endormir pour plusieurs mois: et se paistre de la iouyssance d'vn garçon, qui ne se remuoit qu'en songe?

Ie dis pareillement, qu'on ayme vn corps sans ame, quand on ayme vn corps sans son consentement, et sans son desir. Toutes iouyssances ne sont pas vnes. Il y a des iouyssances ethiques et languissantes. Mille autres causes que la bien-vueillance, nous peuuent acquerir cet octroy des dames. Ce n'est suffisant tesmoignage d'affection. Il y peut eschoir de la trahison, comme ailleurs: elles n'y vont par fois que d'vne fesse; *Tanquam thura merûmque parent: / Absentem marmoreàmue putes.* I'en sçay, qui ayment mieux prester cela, que leur coche: et qui ne se communiquent, que par là.

Il faut regarder si vostre compagnie leur plaist pour quelque autre fin encores, ou pour celle là seulement, comme d'vn gros garson d'estable: en quel rang et à quel prix vous y estes logé, *Tibi si datur vni / Quo lapide illa diem candidiore notet.* Quoy, si elle mange vostre pain, à la sauce d'vne plus agreable imagination? *Te tenet, absentes alios suspirat amores.* Comment? auons nous pas veu quelqu'vn en nos iours, s'estre seruy de cette action, à l'vsage d'vne horrible vengeance: pour tuer par là, et empoisonner, comme il fit, vne honneste femme?

3.5.51 Ceux qui cognoissent l'Italie, ne trouueront iamais estrange, si pour ce subiect, ie ne cherche ailleurs des exemples. Car cette nation se peut dire regente du reste du monde en cela. Ils ont plus communément des belles femmes, et moins de laydes que nous: mais des rares et excellentes beautez, i'estime que nous allons à pair. Et en iuge autant des esprits: de ceux de la commune façon, ils en ont beaucoup plus, et euidemment. La brutalité y est sans comparaison plus rare: d'ames singulieres et du plus haut estage, nous ne leur en deuons rien.

Si i'auois à estendre cette similitude, il me sembleroit pouuoir dire de la vaillance, qu'au rebours, elle est au prix d'eux, populaire chez nous, et naturelle: mais on la

ENGLISH

ishing: he extended his conjugal affection, which is more regulated and lawful, to the enjoyment of his dead wife Melissa. Does it not seem a lunatic whim of the Moon that, unable to enjoy Endymion, her darling, in any other way, she went and put him to sleep for several months, and feasted on the enjoyment of a boy who moved only in his dreams?[68]

I say likewise that one loves a body without a soul when one loves a body without its consent and without its desire. Not all enjoyments are alike. There are consumptive and languid enjoyments. A thousand causes other than goodwill can win us this grant from the ladies. It is not sufficient evidence of affection. There may be treachery in it, as anywhere else: sometimes they go at it with only one buttock; *As if they were preparing incense and wine: / you would think her absent, or made of marble.* I know some who would rather lend that than their coach, and who give themselves only that way.

You must look to see whether your company pleases them for some other purpose too, or only for that one, as with a strapping stable-boy; at what rank and at what value you are lodged there, *whether to you alone / she grants the days she marks with a whiter stone.* What if she is eating your bread with the sauce of a more pleasing fancy? *She holds you, but sighs for other, absent loves.* What? Have we not seen someone in our own day use this act for a horrible revenge, to kill and poison by this means, as he did, an honorable woman?

Those who know Italy will never find it strange if, on this subject, I look nowhere else for examples. For that nation can be called the teacher of the rest of the world in this matter. They commonly have more beautiful women and fewer ugly ones than we do; but in rare and excellent beauties I reckon we are even. And I judge the same of minds: of the ordinary sort they have far more, and obviously so. Brutishness is incomparably rarer there; but in singular souls of the highest rank, we owe them nothing.

If I had to extend this comparison, it seems to me I could say of valor that, on the contrary, compared

68 Periander was tyrant of Corinth (7th–6th century BC); Endymion was the shepherd whom the Moon loved and cast into endless sleep.

FRENCH

voit par fois, en leurs mains, si pleine et si vigoreuse, qu'elle surpasse tous les plus roides exemples que nous en ayons.

3.5.52 Les mariages de ce pays là, clochent en cecy. Leur coustume donne communement la loy si rude aux femmes, et si serue, que la plus esloignee accointance auec l'estranger, leur est autant capitalle que la plus voisine. Cette loy fait, que toutes les approches se rendent necessairement substantieles. Et puis que tout leur reuient à mesme compte, elles ont le choix bien aysé. Et ont elles brisé ces cloisons? Croyez qu'elles font feu: *Luxuria ipsis vinculis, sicut fera bestia, irritata, deinde emissa.* Il leur faut vn peu lascher les resnes. *Vidi ego nuper equum, contra sua frena tenacem, / Ore reluctanti fulminis ire modo.* On alanguit le desir de la compagnie, en luy donnant quelque liberté.

C'est vn bel vsage de nostre nation, qu'aux bonnes maisons, nos enfans soyent receuz, pour y estre nourris et esleuez pages comme en vne escole de noblesse. Et est discourtoisie, dit-on, et iniure, d'en refuser vn Gentilhomme. I'ay apperçeu, car autant de maisons autant de diuers stiles et formes, que les dames qui ont voulu donner aux filles de leur suite, les regles plus austeres, n'y ont pas eu meilleure aduanture. Il y faut de la moderation. Il faut laisser bonne partie de leur conduitte, à leur propre discretion: car ainsi comme ainsi n'y a il discipline qui les sçeut brider de toutes parts.

Mais il est bien vray, que celle qui est eschappee bagues sauues, d'vn escolage libre, apporte bien plus de fiance de soy, que celle qui sort saine, d'vne escole seuere et prisonniere.

3.5.53 Nos peres dressoient la contenance de leurs filles à la honte et à la crainte (les courages et les desirs tousiours pareils), nous à l'asseurance: nous n'y entendons rien. C'est à faire aux Sarmates, qui n'ont loy de coucher auec homme, que de leurs mains elles n'en ayent tué vn autre en guerre. A moy qui n'y ay droit que par les oreilles, suffit, si elles me retiennent pour le conseil, suyuant le priuilege de mon aage. Ie leur conseille donc, et à nous aussi, l'abstinence: mais si ce siecle en est trop ennemy, aumoins la discretion et la modestie.

ENGLISH

with them it is common among us, and natural; but one sometimes sees it in their hands so full and so vigorous that it surpasses all the sternest examples we have.

Marriages in that country limp in this respect. Their custom commonly lays down so harsh and servile a law for women that the most distant acquaintance with a stranger is as much a capital offense for them as the closest. This law makes every approach necessarily substantial. And since it all comes to the same reckoning for them, they have an easy choice. And once they have broken through those partitions? Believe me, they catch fire: *Lust, like a wild beast, first provoked by its very chains, then let loose.* You must slacken the reins on them a little. *I saw lately a horse fighting stubbornly against its bit / rush off like a thunderbolt, its mouth resisting.* The desire for company is dulled by allowing it some freedom.

It is a fine custom of our nation that our children are received into good houses to be brought up and trained there as pages, as in a school of nobility. And it is a discourtesy and an insult, they say, to refuse a gentleman this. I have noticed (for there are as many different styles and ways as there are houses) that the ladies who have tried to give the girls in their train the most austere rules have had no better luck for it. Moderation is needed here. A good part of their conduct must be left to their own discretion; for, one way or another, there is no discipline that could curb them on every side.

But it is quite true that the girl who has come out of a free schooling unscathed inspires much more confidence in herself than the one who comes out sound from a strict, prison-like school.

FRENCH

ENGLISH

Our fathers trained their daughters' bearing to shame and fear (hearts and desires being always the same); we train it to self-assurance. We understand nothing about it. That is a matter for the Sarmatian women, who are not allowed to sleep with a man until they have killed another with their own hands in war. For me, who have no rights there except through my ears, it is enough if they keep me on as counsel, according to the privilege of my age. So I counsel them, and us too, abstinence; but if this age is too hostile to it, at least discretion and modesty.[69]

Car, comme dit le compte d'Aristippus, parlant à des ieunes hommes, qui rougissoient de le veoir entrer chez vne courtisane: Le vice est, de n'en pas sortir, non pas d'y entrer. Qui ne veut exempter sa conscience, qu'elle exempte son nom: si le fons n'en vaut guere, que l'apparence tienne bon.

For, as the story goes of Aristippus, speaking to some young men who blushed to see him go into a courtesan's house: "The vice is in not coming out, not in going in." Let her who will not keep her conscience clear keep her name clear; if the substance is not worth much, let the appearance hold firm.

3.5.54 Ie loüe la gradation et la longueur, en la dispensation de leurs faueurs. Platon montre, qu'en toute espece d'amour, la facilité et promptitude est interdicte aux tenants. C'est vn traict de gourmandise, laquelle il faut qu'elles couurent de tout leur art, de se rendre ainsi temerairement en gros, et tumultuairement. Se conduisant en leur dispensation, ordonnement et mesurement, elles pipent bien mieux nostre desir, et cachent le leur. Qu'elles fuyent tousiours deuant nous: ie dis celles mesmes qui ont à se laisser attraper. Elles nous battent mieux en fuyant, comme les Scythes. De vray, selon la loy que Nature leur donne, ce n'est pas proprement à elles de vouloir et desirer: leur rolle est souffrir, obeyr, consentir.

I commend gradualness and slowness in the dispensing of their favors. Plato shows that in every kind of love, easiness and promptness are forbidden to the defenders. To surrender like that, rashly, wholesale and in a rush, is a mark of greed, which they must hide with all their art. By conducting themselves in an orderly and measured way in dispensing their favors, they lure our desire far better and conceal their own. Let them always flee before us—I mean even those who intend to let themselves be caught. They beat us better by fleeing, like the Scythians. In truth, by the law Nature gives them, it is not properly their part to will and desire; their role is to submit, obey, consent.

C'est pourquoy Nature leur a donné vne perpetuelle capacité; à nous, rare et incertaine. Elles ont tousiours leur heure, afin qu'elles soyent tousiours prestes à la nostre *Pati natæ*. Et où elle a voulu que nos appetis eussent montre et declaration prominante, ell' a faict que les leurs fussent occultes et intestins. Et les a fournies de pieces impropres à l'ostentation: et simplement pour la defensiue. Il faut laisser à la licence Amazonienne pareils traits à cettuy cy. Alexandre passant par l'Hyrcanie, Thalestris Royne des Amazones le vint trouuer auec trois cents gens-darmes de son sexe: bien montez et bien armez: ayant laissé le demeurant d'vne grosse armee, qui la suyuoit, au delà des voisines montaignes.

That is why Nature has given them a perpetual capacity, and us a rare and uncertain one. They always have their hour, so that they may always be ready for ours: *born to be passive*. And whereas she wanted our appetites to have a prominent display and declaration, she made theirs hidden and internal; and she furnished them with parts unsuited for display, made simply for defense. We must leave to Amazonian license strokes like this one. When Alexander was passing through Hyrcania, Thalestris, queen of the Amazons, came to find him with three hundred warriors of her sex, well mounted and well armed, having left the

69 Herodotus tells this of the Sauromatian women, neighbors of the Scythians.

FRENCH

Et luy dit tout haut, et en publiq, que le bruit de ses victoires et de sa valeur, l'auoit menee là, pour le veoir, luy offrir ses moyens et sa puissance au secours de ses entreprinses. Et que le trouuant si beau, ieune, et vigoureux, elle, qui estoit parfaitte en toutes ses qualitez, luy conseilloit qu'ils couchassent ensemble: afin qu'il nasquist de la plus vaillante femme du monde, et du plus vaillant homme, qui fust lors viuant, quelque chose de grand et de rare, pour l'aduenir. Alexandre la remercia du reste: mais pour donner temps à l'accomplissement de sa derniere demande, il arresta treize iours en ce lieu, lesquels il festoya le plus alaigrement qu'il peut, en faueur d'vne si courageuse Princesse.

3.5.55 Nous sommes quasi par tout iniques iuges de leurs actions, comme elles sont des nostres. I'aduoüe la verité lors qu'elle me nuit, de mesme que si elle me sert. C'est vn vilain desreglement, qui les pousse si souuent au change, et les empesche de fermir leur affection en quelque subiect que ce soit: comme on voit de cette Deesse, à qui lon donne tant de changemens et d'amis. Mais si est-il vray, que c'est contre la nature de l'amour, s'il n'est violant, et contre la nature de la violance, s'il est constant.

Et ceux qui s'en estonnent, s'en escrient, et cherchent les causes de cette maladie en elles, comme desnaturee et incroyable: que ne voyent ils, combien souuent ils la reçoyuent en eux, sans espouuantement et sans miracle? Il seroit à l'aduenture plus estrange d'y voir de l'arrest. Ce n'est pas vne passion simplement corporelle. Si on ne trouue point de bout en l'auarice, et en l'ambition, il n'y en a non plus en paillardise. Elle vit encore apres la satieté: et ne luy peut on prescrire ny satisfaction constante, ny fin: elle va tousiours outre sa possession. Et si l'inconstance leur est à l'aduenture aucunement plus pardonnable qu'à nous.

Elles peuuent alleguer comme nous, l'inclination qui nous est commune à la varieté et à la nouuelleté: et alleguer secondement sans nous, qu'elles achetent chat en sac. Ieanne Royne de Naples, feit estrangler Andreosse son premier mary, aux grilles de sa fenestre, auec un laz d'or et de soye, tissu de sa main propre: sur ce qu'aux couruees matrimoniales, elle ne luy trouuoit ny les

ENGLISH

rest of a large army that followed her beyond the neighboring mountains.[70]

And she told him aloud, in public, that the fame of his victories and his valor had brought her there to see him and to offer him her means and her power in support of his enterprises; and that, finding him so handsome, young and vigorous, she, who was perfect in all her qualities, advised that they sleep together, so that from the most valiant woman in the world and the most valiant man then living there might be born something great and rare for the future. Alexander thanked her for the rest; but to give time for the fulfillment of her last request he stayed thirteen days in that place, which he celebrated as merrily as he could in honor of so courageous a princess.

We are almost everywhere unfair judges of their actions, as they are of ours. I admit the truth when it hurts me just as when it serves me. It is an ugly disorder that drives them so often to change and prevents them from fixing their affection firmly on any object whatever, as we see with that goddess to whom so many changes and lovers are attributed. But it is true, all the same, that it is against the nature of love not to be violent, and against the nature of violence to be constant.

And those who are amazed at this, who cry out against it and seek the causes of this malady in women as something unnatural and incredible—why do they not see how often they harbor it in themselves without alarm and without marvel? It would perhaps be stranger to find any stability in it. It is not simply a bodily passion. If there is no limit to be found in avarice and ambition, there is none in lechery either. It lives on even after satiety; no constant satisfaction and no end can be prescribed for it; it always goes beyond what it possesses. And yet inconstancy is perhaps somewhat more pardonable in them than in us.

They can plead, as we can, the inclination we share for variety and novelty; and they can plead secondly, as we cannot, that they buy a cat in a sack. Joanna, queen of Naples, had Andrew, her first husband, strangled at the bars of her window with a cord of gold and silk woven by her own hand, because in the labors of marriage she found

70 Hyrcania was a region on the southern shore of the Caspian Sea; the story of Thalestris is told by Quintus Curtius and others.

FRENCH

parties, ny les efforts, assez respondants à l'esperance qu'elle en auoit couçeuë, à veoir sa taille, sa beauté, sa ieunesse et disposition: par où elle auoit esté prinse et abusee. Que l'action a plus d'effort que n'a la souffrance: ainsi que de leur part tousiours aumoins il est pourueu à la necessité: de nostre part il peut auenir autrement.

Platon à cette cause establit sagement par ses loix, auant tout mariage, pour decider de son opportunité, que les iuges voient les garçons, qui y pretendent, touts fins nuds: et les filles nuës iusqu'à la ceinture seulement. En nous essayant, elles ne nous trouuent à l'aduenture pas digne de leur choix: *Experta latus, madidoque simillima loro*
Inguina, nec lassa stare coacta manu,
Deserit imbelles thalamos. Ce n'est pas tout, que la volonté charrie droict. La foiblesse et l'incapacité, rompent legitimement vn mariage: *Et quærendum aliunde foret neruosius illud,*
Quod posset zonam soluere virgineam. Pourquoy non, et selon sa mesure, vne intelligence amoureuse, plus licentieuse et plus actiue? *Si blando nequeat superesse labori.*

3.5.56 Mais n'est-ce pas grande impudence, d'apporter nos imperfections et foiblesses, en lieu où nous desirons plaire, et y laisser bonne estime de nous et recommandation? Pour ce peu qu'il m'en faut à cette heure, *Ad vnum*
Mollis opus, ie ne voudrois importuner vne personne, que i'ay a reuerer et craindre. *Fuge suspicari,*
Cuius vndenum trepidauit ætas
Claudere lustrum. Nature se deuoit contenter d'auoir rendu cet aage miserable, sans le rendre encore ridicule. Ie hay de le voir, pour vn pouce de chetiue vigueur, qui l'eschaufe trois fois la semaine, s'empresser et se gendarmer, de pareille aspreté, comme s'il auoit quelque grande et legitime iournee dans le ventre: vn vray feu d'estoupe.

Et admire sa cuisson, si viue et fretillante, en vn moment si lourdement congelee et esteinte. Cet appetit ne deuroit appartenir qu'à la fleur d'vne belle ieunesse. Fiez vous y, pour voir, à seconder cett' ardeur indefatigable, pleine, constante, et magnanime, qui est en vous: il vous la lairra vrayment en beau chemin.

ENGLISH

neither his parts nor his efforts answering to the hope she had conceived of them on seeing his stature, his beauty, his youth and his vigor, by which she had been taken in and deceived. They can plead too that the active part takes more effort than the passive: so that on their side, at least, the need is always provided for, whereas on ours it may turn out otherwise.[71]

For this reason Plato wisely provides in his Laws that before any marriage, to decide whether it is suitable, the judges should see the young men who seek it stark naked, and the girls naked only to the waist. When they try us out, they may find us unworthy of their choice: *Having tried his loins, and found his groin just like a sodden strap,*
unable to stand even when urged by her tired hand,
she deserts the unwarlike marriage bed. It is not enough for the will to go straight. Weakness and incapacity lawfully break a marriage: *And she would have to look elsewhere for something more sinewy,*
able to untie a virgin's girdle. Why not, then, and in her own measure, a love affair more licentious and more active? *if he cannot last out the sweet labor.*

But is it not great impudence to bring our imperfections and weaknesses to a place where we wish to please, and to leave a good opinion and recommendation of ourselves behind? For the little I need nowadays, *limp*
after a single bout, I would not want to trouble a person whom I must revere and fear. *Have no suspicion of a man*
whose age has hurried on
to close its eleventh lustrum. Nature should have been content to make this age miserable without making it ridiculous as well. I hate to see it, for an inch of puny vigor that heats it three times a week, bustle and swagger with as much eagerness as if it had some great and lawful battle in its belly: a real fire of straw.[72]

And I marvel at its heat, so lively and frisky, being in a moment so heavily frozen and snuffed out. This appetite ought to belong only to the flower of a fine youth. Just trust it, and see, to second that tireless, full, constant and magnanimous ardor

71 Joanna I of Naples; her husband Andrew of Hungary was murdered at Aversa in AD 1345.
72 Horace, Odes II.4; a lustrum is five years, so the speaker is fifty-five, about Montaigne's age at the time.

FRENCH

ENGLISH

that is in you: it will leave you stranded halfway, I promise you.

Renuoyez le hardiment plustost vers quelque enfance molle, estonnee, et ignorante, qui tremble encore soubs la verge, et en rougisse, *Indum sanguineo veluti violauerit ostro*
Si quis ebur, vel mista rubent vbi lilia multa
Alba rosa. Qui peut attendre le lendemain, sans mourir de honte, le desdain de ces beaux yeux, consens de sa lascheté et impertinence: *Et taciti fecere tamen conuitia vultus,* il n'a iamais senty le contentement et la fierté, de les leur auoir battus et ternis, par le vigoureux exercice d'vne nuict officieuse et actiue. Quand i'en ay veu quelqu'vne s'ennuyer de moy, ie n'en ay point incontinent accusé sa legereté: i'ay mis en doubte, si ie n'auois pas raison de m'en prendre à Nature plustost.

Rather send it off boldly to some soft, bewildered and ignorant girlhood that still trembles under the rod and blushes at it, *As when someone stains Indian ivory*
with blood-red purple, or when white lilies blush, mixed
with many roses. The man who can wait for the next day without dying of shame, for the disdain of those lovely eyes that witnessed his slackness and ineptitude, *And yet her silent face reproached me,* has never felt the satisfaction and pride of having left them heavy and dim from the vigorous exercise of an obliging and active night. When I have seen a woman grow tired of me, I have not straightaway blamed her fickleness; I have wondered whether I had not better reason to blame Nature instead.

Certes elle m'a traitté illegitimement et inciuilement, *Si non longa satis, si non benè mentula crassa:*
Nimirum sapiunt vidéntque paruam
Matronæ quoque mentulam illibenter: et d'vne lesion enormissime. Chacune de mes pieces est esgalement mienne, que toute autre. Et nulle autre ne me fait plus proprement homme que cette cy.

Certainly she has treated me unfairly and unkindly, *If the penis is not long enough, not thick enough:*
no doubt matrons too know what's what, and look on a small penis with displeasure: and with the grossest of losses. Each of my parts is as much mine as any other. And no other makes me more properly a man than this one.[73]

MY PORTRAIT, ALL OF IT

Montaigne defends his frankness and owns his conduct as a lover.

FRENCH

ENGLISH

3.5.57 Ie doy au publiq vniuersellement mon pourtrait. La sagesse de ma leçon est en verité, en liberté, en essence, toute. Dedeignant au rolle de ses vrays deuoirs, ces petites regles, feintes, vsuelles, prouinciales. Naturelle toute, constante, generale. De laquelle sont filles, mais bastardes, la ciuilité, la ceremonie. Nous aurons bien les vices de l'apparence, quand nous aurons eu ceux de l'essence. Quand nous aurons faict à ceux icy, nous courrons sus aux autres, si nous trouuons qu'il y faille courir. Car il y a danger, que nous fantasions des offices nouueaux, pour excuser nostre negligence enuers les naturels offices, et pour les confondre. Qu'il soit ainsin, il se void, qu'és lieux, où les fautes sont malefices, les malefices ne sont que fautes.

I owe the public my portrait, complete. The wisdom of my teaching lies wholly in truth, in freedom, in essence. It disdains to put on the list of its true duties these petty rules, feigned, customary, provincial. It is wholly natural, constant, universal. Civility and ceremony are its daughters, but spurious ones. We shall get the better of the vices of appearance once we have got the better of those of essence. When we have done with these, we will fall upon the others, if we find that we must. For there is a danger that we invent new duties to excuse our neglect of the natural ones, and to confuse them. That this is so can be seen from the fact

73 The Latin is from the Priapea, ancient poems about the god Priapus. "Lésion énorme" was a legal term for grossly unfair loss in a bargain, grounds for annulling it.

FRENCH

Qu'és nations, où les loix de la bienseance sont plus rares et lasches, les loix primitiues de la raison commune sont mieux obseruees: l'innumerable multitude de tant de deuoirs, suffoquant nostre soing, l'allanguissant et dissipant. L'application aux legeres choses nous retire des iustes. O que ces hommes superficiels, prennent vne routte facile et plausible, au prix de la nostre! Ce sont ombrages, dequoy nous nous plastrons et entrepayons. Mais nous n'en payons pas, ainçois en rechargeons nostre debte, enuers ce grand iuge, qui trousse nos panneaus et haillons, d'autour noz parties honteuses: et ne se feint point à nous veoir par tout, iusques à noz intimes et plus secrettes ordures: vtile decence de nostre virginale pudeur, si elle luy pouuoit interdire cette descouuerte.

En fin, qui desniaiseroit l'homme, d'vne si scrupuleuse superstition verbale, n'apporteroit pas grande perte au monde. Nostre vie est partie en folie, partie en prudence. Qui n'en escrit que reuerемment et regulierement, il en laisse en arriere plus de la moitié. Ie ne m'excuse pas enuers moy: et si ie le faisoy, ce seroit plustost de mes excuses, que ie m'excuseroy, que d'autre mienne faute. Ie m'excuse à certaines humeurs, que i'estime plus fortes en nombre que celles, qui sont de mon costé.

En leur consideration, ie diray encore cecy (car ie desire de contenter chacun; chose pourtant difficile, *esse vnum hominem accommodatum ad tantam morum ac sermonum et voluntatum varietatem*) qu'ils n'ont à se prendre à moy, de ce que ie fay dire aux auctoritez receuës et approuuees de plusieurs siecles: et que ce n'est pas raison, qu'à faute de rythme ils me refusent la dispense, que mesme des hommes ecclesiastiques, des nostres, iouyssent en ce siecle. En voicy deux, et des plus crestez: *Rimula, dispeream, ni monogramma tua est. / Vn vit d'amy la contente et bien traitte.* Quoy tant d'autres? I'ayme la modestie: et n'est par iugement, que i'ay choisi cette sorte de parler scandaleux: c'est Nature, qui l'a choisi pour moy.

Ie ne le louë, non plus que toutes formes contraires à l'vsage receu: mais ie l'excuse: par circonstances tant

ENGLISH

that in places where faults are crimes, crimes are only faults.

And that in nations where the laws of propriety are fewer and looser, the primary laws of common reason are better observed, since the countless multitude of so many duties smothers our care, making it languid and scattering it. Attention to trivial things draws us away from the proper ones. Oh, what an easy and plausible road these superficial men take, compared with ours! These are shadows with which we plaster ourselves over and pay one another. But we do not pay with them; rather, we add to our debt toward that great Judge who lifts our flaps and rags from around our shameful parts, and does not hesitate to see us all over, down to our most intimate and secret filth. A useful decency, that maidenly modesty of ours, if it could forbid him this discovery.

In short, whoever cured man of so scrupulous a verbal superstition would do the world no great harm. Our life is partly folly, partly prudence. Whoever writes of it only reverently and by the rules leaves more than half of it out. I do not make excuses to myself; and if I did, it would be for my excuses that I would excuse myself, rather than for any other fault of mine. I make my excuses to certain temperaments, which I reckon to be more numerous than those on my side.

For their sake I will say this too (for I wish to satisfy everyone, a hard thing nonetheless, *for one man to adapt himself to so great a variety of manners, speech and inclinations*): that they have no cause to blame me for what I make authorities say that have been accepted and approved for many centuries; and that it is not reasonable, just because I do not write in rhyme, to refuse me the license that even churchmen, some of our own, enjoy in this age. Here are two, and from some of the proudest crests: *May I perish if your little slit is more than a single line. / A friend's member pleases her and treats her well.* And what of so many others? I love modesty; and it is not by judgment that I have chosen this scandalous way of speaking: it is Nature that chose it for me.[74]

I do not praise it, any more than any other ways contrary to accepted usage; but I excuse it, and by

74 The first Latin is from the Handbook on Electioneering ascribed to Quintus Cicero; the two lines are by the Calvinist theologian Théodore de Bèze and the court poet and royal almoner Mellin de Saint-Gelais.

FRENCH

generales que particulieres, en allege l'accusation. Suiuons.

3.5.58 Pareillement d'où peut venir cette vsurpation d'authorité souueraine, que vous prenez sur celles, qui vous fauorisent à leurs despens, *Si furtiua dedit nigra munuscula nocte,* que vous en inuestissez incontinent l'interest, la froideur, et vne auctorité maritale? C'est vne conuention libre, que ne vous y prenez vous, comme vous les y voulez tenir? Il n'y a point de prescription sur les choses volontaires.

C'est contre la forme, mais il est vray pourtant, que i'ay en mon temps conduict ce marché, selon que sa nature peut souffrir, aussi conscientieusement qu'autre marché, et auec quelque air de iustice: et que ie ne leur ay tesmoigné de mon affection, que ce que i'en sentois; et leur en ay representé naifuement, la decadence, la vigueur, et la naissance: les accez et les remises. On n'y va pas tousiours vn train. I'ay esté si espargnant à promettre, que ie pense auoir plus tenu que promis, ny deu. Elles y ont trouué de la fidelité, iusques au seruice de leur inconstance. Ie dis inconstance aduouee, et par fois multipliee.

Ie n'ay iamais rompu auec elles, tant que i'y tenois, ne fust que par le bout d'vn filet. Et quelques occasions qu'elles m'en ayent donné, n'ay iamais rompu, iusques au mespris et à la hayne. Car telles priuautez, lors mesme qu'on les acquiert par les plus honteuses conuentions, encores m'obligent elles à quelque bien-vueillance. De cholere et d'impatience vn peu indiscrette, sur le poinct de leurs ruses et desfuites, et de nos contestations, ie leur en ay faict voir par fois. Car ie suis de ma complexion, subiect à des emotions brusques, qui nuisent souuent à mes marchez, quoy qu'elles soyent legeres et courtes.

Si elles ont voulu essayer la liberté de mon iugement, ie ne me suis pas feint, à leur donner des aduis paternels et mordans, et à les pinser où il leur cuysoit. Si ie leur ay laissé à se plaindre de moy, c'est plustost d'y auoir trouué vn amour, au prix de l'vsage moderne, sottement consciencieux. I'ay obserué ma parolle, és choses dequoy on m'eust aysement dispensé. Elles se rendoient lors par fois auec reputation, et soubs des capitulations, qu'elles souffroient aysement estre faussees par le vaincueur. I'ay faict caler soubs l'interest de leur honneur, le plaisir, en son plus grand effort, plus d'vne fois.

ENGLISH

circumstances both general and particular I lighten the charge. Let us go on.

Likewise, where can it come from, this usurpation of sovereign authority that you assume over the women who favor you at their own expense, *If she has given stolen little gifts in the dark of night,* so that you at once take on the rights, the coolness and the authority of a husband? It is a free agreement: why do you not hold yourselves to it as you want to hold them? No rights can be acquired by prescription in things done voluntarily.

It is against the fashion, but it is true nonetheless, that in my time I conducted this bargain, as far as its nature allows, as conscientiously as any other bargain, and with some semblance of justice; that I showed them no more affection than I felt, and represented to them plainly its decline, its vigor and its birth, its fits and its lulls. One does not always go at the same pace. I was so sparing in my promises that I think I have kept more than I promised or owed. They found me faithful, even to the point of serving their inconstancy. I mean an inconstancy openly admitted, and sometimes multiplied.

I never broke with them as long as I was still attached, even if only by the end of a thread. And whatever cause they gave me, I never broke off to the point of contempt and hatred. For such intimacies, even when obtained by the most shameful agreements, still bind me to some goodwill. I have sometimes shown them anger and somewhat indiscreet impatience over their tricks and evasions, and over our quarrels. For by my constitution I am subject to sudden emotions that often harm my dealings, though they are light and brief.

If they wanted to test the freedom of my judgment, I did not hesitate to give them fatherly and biting advice, and to pinch them where it smarted. If I have left them any cause to complain of me, it is rather that they found in me a love that was, by modern standards, foolishly conscientious. I kept my word in matters where I would easily have been released from it. They sometimes surrendered then with their reputation intact, and on terms of capitulation that they readily allowed the victor to break. More than once I have made pleasure, at its very height, strike sail before the interest of their honor.

FRENCH

Et où la raison me pressoit, les ay armees contre moy: si qu'elles se conduisoient plus seurement et seuerement, par mes regles, quand elles s'y estoient franchement remises, qu'elles n'eussent faict par les leurs propres. I'ay autant que i'ay peu chargé sur moy seul, le hazard de nos assignations, pour les en descharger: et ay dressé nos parties tousiours par le plus aspre, et inopiné, pour estre moins en souspçon, et en outre par mon aduis, plus accessible. Ils sont ouuerts, principalement par les endroits qu'ils tiennent de soy couuerts. Les choses moins craintes sont moins defendues et obseruees. On peut oser plus aysement, ce que personne ne pense que vous oserez, qui deuient facile par sa difficulté.

Iamais homme n'eut ses approches plus impertinemment genitales. Cette voye d'aymer, est plus selon la discipline. Mais combien elle est ridicule à nos gens, et peu effectuelle, qui le sçait mieux que moy? Si ne m'en viendra point le repentir. Ie n'y ay plus que perdre, *Me tabula sacer*
Votiua paries indicat vuida,
Suspendisse potenti
Vestimenta maris Deo. Il est à cette heure temps d'en parler ouuertement.

Mais tout ainsi comme à vn autre, ie dirois à l'auanture, Mon amy tu resues, l'amour de ton temps a peu de commerce auec la foy et la preud'hommie; *Hæc si tu postules*
Ratione certa facere, nihilo plus agas,
Quàm si des operam, vt cum ratione insanias. Aussi au rebours, si c'estoit à moy de recommencer, ce seroit certes le mesme train et par mesme progrez, pour infructueux qu'il me peust estre. L'insuffisance et la sottise est loüable en vne action meslouable. Autant que ie m'eslongne de leur humeur en cela, ie m'approche de la mienne.

ENGLISH

And where reason pressed me, I armed them against me, so that they conducted themselves more safely and strictly by my rules, once they had freely put themselves in my hands, than they would have by their own. As far as I could, I took on myself alone the risk of our assignations, to relieve them of it; and I always arranged our meetings by the hardest and least expected way, to be less suspected and also, in my opinion, more accessible. People are open chiefly at the points they consider covered by themselves. Things less feared are less defended and watched. You can more easily dare what no one thinks you will dare, which becomes easy by its very difficulty.

Never did a man make his approaches more ineptly genital. This way of loving is more in keeping with the rules. But how ridiculous it is to our people, and how ineffective, who knows better than I? Yet I shall not come to repent of it. I have nothing more to lose there: *The sacred wall, by its votive tablet,*
shows that I have hung up my dripping garments to the mighty god
who rules the sea. Now is the time to speak of it openly.

But just as I might perhaps say to another: "My friend, you are dreaming; love in your day has little to do with good faith and integrity; *If you expect to make these things*
certain by reason, you will achieve no more than if you tried to go mad by reason"—so, on the other hand, if it were up to me to begin again, it would certainly be the same way and by the same steps, however fruitless it might prove for me. Incompetence and foolishness are praiseworthy in a blameworthy action. The further I move from their temperament in this, the closer I come to my own.

LOVE IN OLD AGE

Moderate love would revive an aging man, but he has little left to offer in return.

FRENCH

3.5.59 Au demeurant, en ce marché, ie ne me laissois pas tout aller: ie m'y plaisois, mais ie ne m'y oubliois pas: ie reseruois en son entier, ce peu de sens et de discretion, que Nature m'a donné, pour leur seruice, et pour le mien: vn peu d'esmotion, mais point de resuerie. Ma conscience s'y engageoit aussi, iusques à la desbauche et dissolution,

ENGLISH

Besides, in this business I did not let myself go entirely. I enjoyed it, but I did not forget myself; I kept intact the little sense and discretion that Nature has given me, for their service and for mine: a little excitement, but no delirium. My con-

FRENCH

mais iusques à l'ingratitude, trahison, malignité, et cruauté, non. Ie n'achetois pas le plaisir de ce vice à tout prix: et me contentois de son propre et simple coust. *Nullum intra se vitium est.* Ie hay quasi à pareille mesure vne oysiueté croupie et endormie, comme vn embesongnement espineux et penible. L'vn me pince, l'autre m'assoupit.

I'ayme autant les blesseures, comme les meurtrisseures, et les coups trenchans, comme les coups orbes. I'ay trouué en ce marché, quand i'y estois plus propre, vne iuste moderation entre ces deux extremitez. L'amour est vne agitation esueillee, viue, et gaye. Ie n'en estois ny troublé, ny affligé, mais i'en estois eschauffé, et encores alteré: il s'en faut arrester là. Elle n'est nuisible qu'aux fols. Vn ieune homme demandoit au philosophe Panetius, s'il sieroit bien au sage d'estre amoureux: Laissons là le sage, respondit-il, mais toy et moy, qui ne le sommes pas, ne nous engageons en chose si esmeuë et violente, qui nous esclaue à autruy, et nous rende contemptibles à nous.

Il disoit vray: qu'il ne faut pas fier chose de soy si precipiteuse, à vne ame qui n'aye dequoy en soustenir les venues, et dequoy rabatre par effect la parole d'Agesilaus, que la prudence et l'amour ne peuuent ensemble. C'est vne vaine occupation, il est vray, messeante, honteuse, et illegitime. Mais à la conduire en cette façon, ie l'estime salubre, propre à desgourdir vn esprit, et vn corps poisant. Et comme medecin, l'ordonnerois à vn homme de ma forme et condition, autant volontiers qu'aucune autre recepte: pour l'esueiller et tenir en force bien auant dans les ans, et le dilaier des prises de la vieillesse.

Pendant que nous n'en sommes qu'aux fauxbourgs, que le pouls bat encores, *Dum noua canities, dum prima et recta senectus,*
Dum superest Lachesi quod torqueat, et pedibus me
Porto meis, nullo dextram subeunte bacillo, nous auons besoing d'estre sollicitez et chatouillez, par quelque agitation mordicante, comme est cette-cy. Voyez combien elle a rendu de ieunesse, vigueur et de gayeté, au sage Anacreon.

Et Socrates, plus vieil que ie ne suis, parlant d'vn obiect amoureux: M'estant, dit-il, appuyé contre son espaule, de la mienne, et approché ma teste à la sienne, ainsi que nous regardions ensemble dans vn liure, ie senty sans

ENGLISH

science was engaged in it too, as far as debauchery and dissoluteness, but as far as ingratitude, treachery, malice and cruelty, no. I did not buy the pleasure of this vice at any price, and was content with its own simple cost. *No vice is confined to itself.* I hate almost equally a stagnant, sleepy idleness and a thorny, painful busyness. The one pricks me, the other puts me to sleep.

I like wounds as much as bruises, and cutting blows as much as blunt ones. In this business, when I was more fit for it, I found a just moderation between these two extremes. Love is a wakeful, lively and cheerful agitation. I was neither troubled nor afflicted by it, but I was warmed by it, and stirred as well: that is where one must stop. It is harmful only to fools. A young man asked the philosopher Panaetius whether it would become a wise man to be in love. "Let us leave the wise man aside," he answered, "but you and I, who are not wise, let us not get involved in something so agitated and violent, which enslaves us to another and makes us contemptible to ourselves."

He spoke truly: one should not entrust so headlong a thing to a soul that has not the means to withstand its assaults, and to refute in practice the saying of Agesilaus, that prudence and love cannot go together. It is a vain occupation, it is true: unseemly, shameful and illegitimate. But conducted in this way, I consider it healthy, fit to rouse a sluggish mind and body. And as a doctor I would prescribe it to a man of my build and condition as willingly as any other prescription, to wake him up and keep him vigorous well on into his years, and to put off the grip of old age.

While we are only in its outskirts, while the pulse still beats, *While my white hair is new, while old age is fresh and upright,*
while Lachesis still has thread to spin, and I carry myself
on my own feet, with no staff to prop my right hand, we need to be roused and tickled by some biting agitation like this one. See how much youth, vigor and gaiety it gave back to the wise Anacreon.[75]

And Socrates, who was older than I am, said of an object of his love: "As I leaned my shoulder against his, and brought my head close to his while we were looking at a book together, I felt, truly, a sud-

75 Anacreon wrote of love and wine into old age.

FRENCH

mentir, soudain vne piqueure dans l'espaule, comme de quelque morsure de beste; et fus plus de cinq iours depuis, qu'elle me fourmilloit: et m'escoula dans le cœur vne demangeaison continuelle. Vn attouchement, et fortuite, et par vne espaule, aller eschauffer, et alterer vne ame refroidie, et esneruee par l'aage, et la premiere de toutes les humaines, en reformation. Pourquoy non dea? Socrates estoit homme, et ne vouloit ny estre ny sembler autre chose.

La philosophie n'estriue point contre les voluptez naturelles, pourueu que la mesure y soit ioincte: et en presche la moderation, non la fuitte. L'effort de sa resistance s'emploie contre les estrangeres et bastardes. Elle dit que les appetits du corps ne doiuent pas estre augmentez par l'esprit. Et nous aduertit ingenieusement, de ne vouloir point esueiller nostre faim par la saturité: de ne vouloir farcir, au lieu de remplir le ventre: d'euiter toute iouyssance, qui nous met en disette: et toute viande et breuuage, qui nous altere, et affame.

Comme au seruice de l'amour elle nous ordonne, de prendre vn obiect qui satisface simplement au besoing du corps, qui n'esmeuue point l'ame: laquelle n'en doit pas faire son faict, ains suyure nüement et assister le corps. Mais ay-ie pas raison d'estimer, que ces preceptes, qui ont pourtant d'ailleurs, selon moy, vn peu de rigueur, regardent vn corps qui face son office: et qu'à vn corps abbattu, comme vn estomach prosterné, il est excusable de le rechauffer et soustenir par art: et par l'entremise de la fantasie, luy faire reuenir l'appetit et l'allegresse, puis que de soy il l'a perdue?

3.5.60 Pouuons nous pas dire, qu'il n'y a rien en nous, pendant cette prison terrestre, purement, ny corporel, ny spirituel: et qu'iniurieusement nous desmembrons vn homme tout vif: et qu'il semble y auoir raison, que nous nous portions enuers l'vsage du plaisir, aussi fauorablement aumoins, que nous faisons enuers la douleur? Elle estoit, pour exemple, vehemente, iusques à la perfection, en l'ame des saincts par la pœnitence. Le corps y auoit naturellement part, par le droict de leur colligance, et si pouuoit auoir peu de part à la cause: si ne se sont ils pas contentez qu'il suyuist nuement, et assistast l'ame affligee.

Ils l'ont affligé luymesme, de peines atroces et propres: affin qu'à l'enuy l'vn de l'autre, l'ame et le corps plongeassent l'homme dans la douleur, d'autant plus

ENGLISH

den sting in my shoulder, like the bite of some animal; and for more than five days afterward it tingled, and a continual itch flowed into my heart." A touch, and an accidental one, and by a shoulder, to heat and stir a soul cooled and enfeebled by age, and the foremost of all human souls in reforming itself! And why not, indeed? Socrates was a man, and wanted neither to be nor to seem anything else.[76]

Philosophy does not struggle against natural pleasures, provided measure goes with them; it preaches moderation in them, not flight. The force of its resistance is used against foreign and spurious ones. It says that the appetites of the body must not be increased by the mind. And it warns us ingeniously not to try to wake our hunger by surfeit; not to stuff the belly instead of filling it; to avoid every enjoyment that leaves us in want, and every food and drink that makes us thirsty and hungry.

So in the service of love it bids us take an object that simply satisfies the body's need and does not stir the soul, which must not make this its business, but merely follow and assist the body. But am I not right to think that these precepts, which in my view are rather rigorous anyway, concern a body that does its job; and that for a body that is run down, like a prostrate stomach, it is excusable to warm it and prop it up by art, and by means of the imagination to bring back its appetite and liveliness, since of itself it has lost them?

May we not say that there is nothing in us, during this earthly prison, that is purely either bodily or spiritual, and that it is wrong to dismember a living man; and that it seems reasonable for us to treat the enjoyment of pleasure at least as favorably as we treat pain? Pain, for example, was vehement to the point of perfection in the souls of the saints through penitence. The body naturally had a share in it by right of their union, and yet could have had little share in the cause; still, they were not content that it should merely follow and assist the afflicted soul.

They afflicted the body itself with atrocious pains of its own, so that, vying with each other, soul and body might plunge the man into pain, all the more

76 The story comes from Xenophon's Symposium.

FRENCH

salutaire, que plus aspre. En pareil cas, aux plaisirs corporels, est-ce pas iniustice d'en refroidir l'ame, et dire, qu'il l'y faille entrainer, comme à quelque obligation et necessité contreinte et seruile? C'est à elle plustost de les couuer et fomenter: de s'y presenter et conuier: la charge de regir luy appartenant. Comme c'est aussi à mon aduis à elle, aux plaisirs, qui luy sont propres, d'en inspirer et infondre au corps tout le ressentiment que porte sa condition, et de s'estudier qu'ils luy soient doux et salutaires.

Car c'est bien raison, comme ils disent, que le corps ne suyue point ses appetits au dommage de l'esprit. Mais pourquoy n'est-ce pas aussi raison, que l'esprit ne suiue pas les siens, au dommage du corps?

3.5.61 Ie n'ay point autre passion qui me tienne en haleine. Ce que l'auarice, l'ambition, les querelles, les procés, font à l'endroit des autres, qui comme moy, n'ont point de vacation assignee, l'amour le feroit plus commodément.

Il me rendroit, la vigilance, la sobrieté, la grace, le soing de ma personne: r'asseureroit ma contenance, à ce que les grimaces de la vieillesse, ces grimaces difformes et pitoyables, ne vinssent à la corrompre: me remettroit aux estudes sains et sages, par où ie me peusse rendre plus estimé et plus aymé: ostant à mon esprit le desespoir de soy, et de son vsage, et le raccointant à soy: me diuertiroit de mille pensees ennuyeuses, de mille chagrins melancholiques que l'oysiueté nous charge en tel aage, et le mauuais estat de nostre santé: reschaufferoit aumoins en songe, ce sang que nature abandonne: soustiendroit le menton, et allongeroit vn peu les nerfs, et la vigueur et allegresse de la vie, à ce pauure homme, qui s'en va le grand train vers sa ruine.

Mais i'entens bien que c'est vne commodité fort malaisée à recouurer. Par foiblesse, et longue experience, nostre goust est deuenu plus tendre et plus exquis. Nous demandons plus, lors que nous apportons moins. Nous voulons le plus choisir, lors que nous meritons le moins d'estre acceptez. Nous cognoissans tels, nous sommes moins hardis, et plus defians: rien ne nous peut asseurer d'estre aymez, veu nostre condition, et la leur. I'ay honte de me trouuer parmy cette verte et bouillante ieunesse, *Cuius in indomito constantior inguine neruus, / Quàm noua collibus arbor inhæret.* Qu'irions nous presenter nostre misere parmy cette allégresse?

ENGLISH

salutary for being harsher. In the same case, with bodily pleasures, is it not unjust to chill the soul toward them and to say that it must be dragged to them as to some constrained and servile obligation and necessity? It is rather for the soul to brood over and foster them, to present itself and invite itself to them, since the charge of ruling belongs to it. Just as it is also, in my opinion, for the soul, in the pleasures proper to it, to inspire and infuse into the body all the feeling its nature can bear, and to strive to make them sweet and wholesome for it.

For it is quite right, as they say, that the body should not follow its appetites to the harm of the mind. But why is it not also right that the mind should not follow its own to the harm of the body?

I have no other passion to keep me on my toes. What avarice, ambition, quarrels and lawsuits do for others who, like me, have no assigned occupation, love would do more agreeably.

It would give me back watchfulness, sobriety, grace, care of my person. It would steady my bearing, so that the grimaces of old age, those deformed and pitiable grimaces, might not come to spoil it. It would bring me back to sound and wise studies, by which I might make myself more esteemed and more loved, freeing my mind from despair of itself and of its use, and reconciling it with itself. It would divert me from a thousand distressing thoughts, a thousand melancholy cares with which idleness and the poor state of our health burden us at such an age. It would warm again, at least in dreams, this blood that nature is abandoning. It would hold up the chin, and stretch a little the sinews, and the vigor and gaiety of life, for this poor man who is heading full tilt toward his ruin.

But I fully understand that it is a convenience very hard to come by. Through weakness and long experience, our taste has become more delicate and more refined. We ask more when we bring less. We want to choose most when we least deserve to be accepted. Knowing ourselves to be such, we are less bold and more distrustful: nothing can assure us that we are loved, given our condition and theirs. I am ashamed to find myself among this green and ebullient youth, *whose sinew, in his untamed groin, stands firmer / than a young tree rooted*

FRENCH

Possint vt iuuenes visere feruidi
Multo non sine risu,
Dilapsam in cineres facem. Ils ont la force et la raison pour eux: faisons leur place: nous n'auons plus que tenir. Et ce germe de beauté naissante, ne se laisse manier à mains si gourdes, et prattiquer à moyens purs materiels. Car, comme respondit ce philosophe ancien, à celuy qui se moquoit, dequoy il n'auoit sçeu gaigner la bonne grace d'vn tendron qu'il pourchassoit: Mon amy, le hameçon ne mord pas à du fromage si frais. Or c'est vn commerce qui a besoin de relation et de correspondance. Les autres plaisirs que nous receuons, se peuuent recognoistre par recompenses de nature diuerse: mais cettuy-cy ne se paye que de mesme espece de monnoye.

En verité en ce desduit, le plaisir que ie fay, chatouille plus doucement mon imagination, que celuy qu'on me fait. Or cil n'a rien de genereux, qui peut receuoir plaisir où il n'en donne point; c'est vne vile ame, qui veut tout deuoir, et qui se plaist de nourrir de la conference, auec les personnes ausquels il est en charge. Il n'y a beauté, ny grace, ny priuauté si exquise, qu'vn galant homme deust desirer à ce prix. Si elles ne nous peuuent faire du bien que par pitié: i'ayme bien plus cher ne viure point, que de viure d'aumosne.

Ie voudrois auoir droit de leur demander, au stile auquel i'ay veu quester en Italie: *Fate bene per voi*: ou à la guise que Cyrus exhortoit ses soldats, Qui m'aymera, si me suiue. R'alliez vous, me dira lon, à celles de vostre condition, que la compagnie de mesme fortune vous rendra plus aysees. O la sotte composition et insipide! *Nolo / Barbam vellere mortuo leoni.* Xenophon employe pour obiection et accusation, contre Menon, qu'en son amour il embesongna des obiects passants fleur. Ie trouue plus de volupté à seulement veoir le juste et doux meslange de deux ieunes beautés: ou à le seulement considerer par fantasie, qu'à faire moy mesme le second, d'vn meslange triste et informe.

Ie resigne cet appetit fantastique, à l'Empereur Galba, qui ne s'addonnoit qu'aux chairs dures et vieilles: et à ce

ENGLISH

on the hills. Why should we go and display our misery amid all this gaiety?

So that the hot-blooded young men may see,
not without much laughter,
the torch crumbled into ashes. They have strength and reason on their side; let us make way for them; we have nothing left to hold on to. And this bud of nascent beauty does not let itself be handled by such numb hands, or won by purely material means. For, as that ancient philosopher answered the man who mocked him for failing to win the favor of a young thing he was pursuing: "My friend, the hook won't bite into such fresh cheese." Now this is a commerce that requires relationship and reciprocity. The other pleasures we receive can be repaid with rewards of a different kind; but this one is paid only in coin of the same kind.[77]

Truly, in this sport, the pleasure I give tickles my imagination more sweetly than the pleasure I am given. Now there is nothing generous in a man who can receive pleasure where he gives none; it is a mean soul that wants to owe everything, and likes to keep up dealings with people to whom it is a burden. There is no beauty, no grace, no intimacy so exquisite that a gentleman should desire it at that price. If they can do us good only out of pity, I would much rather not live at all than live on alms.

I would like to have the right to ask it of them in the style I have seen beggars use in Italy: *Do good for your own sake*; or in the way Cyrus exhorted his soldiers: "Whoever loves me, follow me." "Take up with women of your own condition," someone will tell me, "whom the company of a common lot will make easier for you." Oh, what a stupid and insipid compromise! *I do not want / to pluck the beard of a dead lion.* Xenophon brings it as an objection and charge against Meno that in his love he took up with objects past their bloom. I find more pleasure in merely seeing the right and sweet blending of two young beauties, or merely contemplating it in imagination, than in making the second party myself in a sad and shapeless blending.[78]

I leave this fanciful appetite to the Emperor Galba, who went only for tough old flesh, and to this poor

77 Diogenes Laertius attributes this reply to the philosopher Bion of Borysthenes.
78 Meno of Thessaly was one of the Greek generals in Xenophon's Anabasis.

FRENCH

pauure miserable, *O ego di faciant talem te cernere possim,*
Charáque mutatis oscula ferre comis,
Amplectique meis corpus non pingue lacertis! Et entre les premieres laideurs, ie compte les beautez artificielles et forcees. Emonez ieune gars de Chio, pensant par des beaux attours, acquerir la beauté que nature luy ostoit, se presenta au philosophe Arcesilaus: et luy demanda si vn sage se pourroit veoir amoureux: Ouy dea, respondit l'autre, pourueu que ce ne fust pas d'vne beauté paree et sophistiquee comme la tienne. La laideur d'vne vieillesse aduouee, est moins vieille, et moins laide à mon gré, qu'vne autre peinte et lissee.

Le diray-ie, pourueu qu'on ne m'en prenne à la gorge? L'amour ne me semble proprement et naturellement en sa saison, qu'en l'aage voisin de l'enfance: *Quem si puellarum insereres choro,*
Mille sagaces falleret hospites
Discrimen obscurum, solutis
Crinibus, ambiguóque vultu. Et la beauté non plus. Car ce qu'Homere l'estend iusqu'à ce que le menton commence à s'ombrager, Platon mesme l'a remarqué pour rare. Et est notoire la cause pour laquelle le sophiste Dion appelloit les poils folets de l'adolescence, Aristogitons et Harmodiens. En la virilité, ie le trouue desia aucunement hors de son siege, non qu'en la vieillesse.

Importunus enim transuolat aridas / Quercus. Et Marguerite Royne de Nauarre, alonge en femme, bien loing, l'auantage des femmes: ordonnant qu'il est saison à trente ans, qu'elles changent le titre de belles en bonnes. Plus courte possession nous luy donnons sur nostre vie, mieux nous en valons. Voyez son port. C'est vn menton puerile, qui ne sçait en son eschole, combien on procede au rebours de tout ordre. L'estude, l'exercitation, l'vsage, sont voyes à l'insuffisance: les nouices y regentent. *Amor ordinem nescit.* Certes sa conduicte a plus de galbe, quand elle est meslee d'inaduertance, et de trouble: les fautes, les succez contraires y donnent poincte et grace. Pourueu qu'elle soit aspre et affamee, il chaut peu, qu'elle soit prudente.

Voyez comme il va chancelant, chopant, et folastrant. On le met aux ceps, quand on le guide par art, et sagesse. Et

ENGLISH

wretch: *O, may the gods grant that I might see you thus,*
and kiss your dear lips beneath your changed hair,
and hold in my arms your body, no longer plump! And among the chief uglinesses I count artificial and forced beauties. Hemon, a young lad from Chios, thinking to acquire by fine adornments the beauty that nature denied him, came before the philosopher Arcesilaus and asked him whether a wise man could fall in love. "Yes indeed," the other replied, "provided it is not with a decked-out and adulterated beauty like yours." The ugliness of an avowed old age is less old and less ugly, to my taste, than another that is painted and smoothed over.[79]

Shall I say it, provided no one grabs me by the throat for it? Love seems to me properly and naturally in season only in the age close to childhood:
If you set him in a chorus of girls,
the subtle difference would deceive a thousand
shrewd strangers, with his flowing
hair and ambiguous face. And beauty likewise. For as to Homer extending it until the chin begins to be shadowed, Plato himself remarked on this as rare. And the reason is well known why the sophist Dion called the downy hairs of adolescence Aristogeitons and Harmodiuses. In manhood I find it already somewhat out of its proper place, let alone in old age.[80]

For he flies rudely past the withered / oaks. And Marguerite, queen of Navarre, like a woman, stretches the advantage of women a long way, decreeing that at thirty it is time for them to exchange the title of "beautiful" for "good." The shorter the hold we give love over our lives, the better off we are. Look at its bearing. It has a boy's chin. Who does not know how, in its school, everything proceeds against all order? Study, exercise and practice are roads to incompetence; novices are the masters there. *Love knows no order.* Certainly its conduct has more grace when mixed with heedlessness and confusion; mistakes and setbacks give it spice and charm. Provided it is keen and hungry, it matters little whether it is prudent.[81]

See how it goes staggering, stumbling and frolicking. You put it in the stocks when you guide it by

79 Galba was Roman emperor in AD 68–69.
80 The joke is that the first beard frees a youth from the tyranny of his lovers, as Harmodius and Aristogeiton freed Athens.

FRENCH

contraint on sa diuine liberté, quand on le submet à ces mains barbues et calleuses.

ENGLISH

skill and wisdom. And you constrain its divine freedom when you subject it to those bearded and calloused hands.

3.5.62 Au demeurant, ie leur oy souuent peindre cette intelligence toute spirituelle, et desdaigner de mettre en consideration l'interest que les sens y ont. Tout y sert. Mais ie puis dire auoir veu souuent, que nous auons excusé la foiblesse de leurs esprits, en faueur de leurs beautez corporelles, mais que ie n'ay point encore veu, qu'en faueur de l'esprit, tant rassis, et meur soit-il, elles vueillent prester la main à vn corps, qui tombe tant soit peu en decadence.

Que ne prend il enuie à quelqu'vne, de faire cette noble harde Socratique, du corps à l'esprit, achetant au prix de ses cuisses, vne intelligence et generation philosophique et spirituelle: le plus haut prix où elle les puisse monter: Platon ordonne en ses loix, que celuy qui aura faict quelque signalé et vtile exploit en la guerre, ne puisse estre refusé durant l'expedition d'icelle, sans respect de sa laideur ou de son aage, du baiser, ou autre faueur amoureuse, de qui il la vueille. Ce qu'il trouue si iuste en recommandation de la valeur militaire, ne le peut il pas estre aussi, en recommandation de quelque autre valeur?

Et que ne prend il enuie à vne de preoccuper sur ses compagnes la gloire de cet amour chaste? chaste dis-ie bien, *Nam si quando ad prælia ventum est,*
Vt quondam in stipulis magnus sine viribus ignis
Incassum furit. Les vices qui s'estouffent en la pensee, ne sont pas des pires.

Moreover, I often hear them describe this relationship as wholly spiritual, and disdain to take into account the part the senses play in it. Everything plays its part there. But I can say that I have often seen us excuse the weakness of their minds for the sake of their bodily beauty; whereas I have not yet seen them willing, for the sake of the mind, however settled and mature it may be, to lend a hand to a body that is falling even slightly into decline.

Why does it not occur to some woman to make that noble Socratic exchange of body for mind, buying at the price of her thighs a philosophical and spiritual understanding and offspring—the highest price she could get for them? Plato ordains in his Laws that whoever has performed some signal and useful exploit in war may not be refused, for the duration of that campaign, regardless of his ugliness or his age, a kiss or other amorous favor from whomever he wants it. What he finds so just as a reward for military valor, can it not be just also as a reward for some other kind of valor?

And why does it not occur to some woman to win, ahead of her companions, the glory of this chaste love? Chaste, I say advisedly: *For if ever it comes to battle,*
his ardor rages in vain, like a great fire in stubble,
without strength. The vices that are stifled in thought are not the worst.

THE SAME MOLD

Men and women are cast in the same mold; custom and education make the difference.

FRENCH

3.5.63 Pour finir ce notable commentaire, qui m'est eschappé d'vn flux de caquet: flux impetueux par fois et nuisible,
Vt missum sponsi furtiuo munere malum
Procurrit casto virginis è gremio:
Quod miseræ oblitæ molli sub veste locatum,
Dum aduentu matris prosilit, excutitur,
Atque illud prono præceps agitur decursu:
Huic manat tristi conscius ore rubor. Ie dis, que les masles et femelles, sont iettez en mesme moule, sauf l'institution et l'vsage, la difference n'y est pas grande. Platon appelle

ENGLISH

To finish this notable commentary, which has escaped me in a flood of chatter—a flood sometimes violent and harmful: *As an apple, sent as a secret gift by her betrothed,*
rolls out of a maiden's chaste lap:
the poor girl had forgotten it, tucked under her soft gown,
and when she jumps up at her mother's arrival it is shaken out,
and goes rolling headlong down;

81 "Love knows no order" comes from a letter of Saint Jerome.

FRENCH	ENGLISH
indifferemment les vns et les autres, à la societé de tous estudes, exercices, charges et vacations guerrieres et paisibles, en sa republique. Et le philosophe Antisthenes, ostoit toute distinction entre leur vertu et la nostre.	*a guilty blush spreads over her sad face.* I say that males and females are cast in the same mold; except for education and custom, the difference is not great. Plato invites both alike to share in all studies, exercises, offices and occupations, in war and in peace, in his Republic. And the philosopher Antisthenes removed all distinction between their virtue and ours.
Il est bien plus aisé d'accuser l'vn sexe, que d'excuser l'autre. C'est ce qu'on dit, Le fourgon se moque de la paele.	It is much easier to accuse one sex than to excuse the other. It is as the saying goes: the poker mocks the shovel.

III.6 Of Coaches

Des Coches

From the pomp of royal coaches and spectacles, Montaigne turns to the Spanish conquest of the New World and condemns its cruelty.

FRENCH

3.6.1 IL est bien aisé à verifier, que les grands autheurs, escriuans des causes, ne se seruent pas seulement de celles qu'ils estiment estre vrayes, mais de celles encores qu'ils ne croient pas, pourueu qu'elles ayent quelque inuention et beauté. Ils disent assez veritablement et vtilement, s'ils disent ingenieusement. Nous ne pouuons nous asseurer de la maistresse cause, nous en entassons plusieurs, pour voir si par rencontre elle se trouuera en ce nombre, *Namque vnam dicere causam / Non satis est, verum plures, vnde vna tamen sit.*

3.6.2 Me demandez vous d'où vient cette coustume, de benir ceux qui esternuent? Nous produisons trois sortes de vent; celuy qui sort par embas est trop sale: celuy qui sort par la bouche, porte quelque reproche de gourmandise: le troisiesme est l'esternuement: et parce qu'il vient de la teste, et est sans blasme, nous luy faisons cet honneste recueil. Ne vous moquez pas de cette subtilité, elle est, dit-on, d'Aristote.

3.6.3 Il me semble auoir veu en Plutarque (qui est de tous les autheurs que ie cognoisse, celuy qui a mieux meslé l'art à la nature, et le iugement à la science) rendant la cause du sousleuement d'estomach, qui aduient à ceux qui voyagent en mer, que cela leur arriue de crainte, ayant trouué quelque raison, par laquelle il prouue, que la crainte peut produire vn tel effect. Moy qui y suis fort subiect, sçay bien, que cette cause ne me touche pas. Et le sçay, non par argument, mais par necessaire experience.

Sans alleguer ce qu'on m'a dict, qu'il en arriue de mesme souuent aux bestes, specialement aux pourceaux, hors de toute apprehension de danger: et ce qu'vn mien cognoissant, m'a tesmoigné de soy, qu'y estant fort subiect, l'enuie de vomir luy estoit passee, deux ou trois fois, se trouuant pressé de frayeur, en grande tourmente. Comme à cet ancien: *Peius vexabar quàm vt periculum mihi succurreret.* Ie n'euz iamais peur sur l'eau: comme ie n'ay

ENGLISH

It is very easy to verify that great authors, when writing about causes, use not only those they consider true but also those they do not believe, provided they have some inventiveness and beauty. They speak truly and usefully enough if they speak ingeniously. We cannot be sure of the master cause, so we pile up several, to see whether by chance it will be found among them: *For it is not enough to state one cause, / but several, of which one, however, is the true one.*[1]

Do you ask me where this custom comes from of blessing those who sneeze? We produce three kinds of wind. The one that goes out below is too dirty; the one that goes out through the mouth carries some reproach of gluttony; the third is the sneeze, and because it comes from the head and is blameless, we give it this courteous welcome. Do not laugh at this subtlety; it is, they say, Aristotle's.

I seem to remember seeing in Plutarch an explanation of the queasiness that comes over people traveling by sea. (Of all the authors I know, he is the one who has best blended art with nature, and judgment with learning.) He says it happens to them out of fear, having found some reason by which he proves that fear can produce such an effect. I am very prone to it, and I know well that this cause does not apply to me. And I know it not by argument but by unavoidable experience.

I will not cite what I have been told, that the same thing often happens to animals, especially pigs, without any apprehension of danger. Nor will I cite what an acquaintance of mine told me of himself: he was very prone to it, yet two or three times the urge to vomit left him when he found himself gripped by terror in a great storm. It was the same

1 Lucretius, On the Nature of Things.

FRENCH

aussi ailleurs (et s'en est assez souuent offert de iustes, si la mort l'est) qui m'ait troublé ou esblouy. Elle naist par fois de faute de iugement, comme de faute de cœur. Tous les dangers que i'ay veu, ç'a esté les yeux ouuerts, la veuë libre, saine, et entiere.

Encore faut-il du courage à craindre. Il me seruit autrefois au prix d'autres, pour conduire et tenir en ordre ma fuite, qu'elle fust sinon sans crainte, toutesfois sans effroy, et sans estonnement. Elle estoit esmeue, mais non pas estourdie ny esperdue. Les grandes ames vont bien plus outre, et representent des fuites, non rassises seulement, et saines, mais fieres. Disons celle qu'Alcibiades recite de Socrates, son compagnon d'armes: Ie le trouuay, dit-il, apres la route de nostre armee, luy et Lachez, des derniers entre les fuyans: et le consideray tout à mon aise, et en seureté, car i'estois sur vn bon cheual, et luy à pied, et auions ainsi combatu.

Ie remarquay premierement, combien il montroit d'auisement et de resolution, au prix de Lachez: et puis la brauerie de son marcher, nullement different du sien ordinaire: sa veue ferme et reglee, considerant et iugeant ce qui se passoit autour de luy: regardant tantost les vns, tantost les autres, amis et ennemis, d'vne façon, qui encourageoit les vns, et signifioit aux autres, qu'il estoit pour vendre bien cher son sang et sa vie, à qui essayeroit de la luy oster, et se sauuerent ainsi: car volontiers on n'attaque pas ceux-cy, on court apres les effraiez.

Voylà le tesmoignage de ce grand capitaine: qui nous apprend ce que nous essaions tous les iours, qu'il n'est rien qui nous iette tant aux dangers, qu'vne faim inconsideree de nous en mettre hors. *Quo timoris minus est, eo minus fermè periculi est.* Nostre peuple a tort, de dire, celuy-là craint la mort, quand il veut exprimer, qu'il y songe, et qu'il la preuoit. La preuoyance conuient egallement à ce qui nous touche en bien, et en mal. Considerer et iuger le danger, est aucunement le rebours de s'en estonner. Ie ne me sens pas assez fort pour

ENGLISH

with that ancient: *I was too badly shaken for the danger to cross my mind.* I have never been afraid on the water. Nor have I had a fear elsewhere that troubled or dazzled me, though just causes for one have offered themselves often enough, if death is one. Fear sometimes springs from a lack of judgment, as well as from a lack of heart. All the dangers I have seen, I have seen with my eyes open and my sight free, sound and whole.[2]

Even fearing takes courage. It once served me well, compared with others, in conducting my flight and keeping it in order, so that it was, if not without fear, at least without terror and without being stunned. It was stirred, but not dazed or distraught. Great souls go much further and display flights that are not only composed and sound, but proud. Let us cite the one Alcibiades tells of Socrates, his comrade in arms: "I found him," he says, "after our army was routed, him and Laches, among the last of the fugitives. I watched him at my ease and in safety, for I was on a good horse and he was on foot, and that is how we had fought.[3]

I noticed first how much more presence of mind and resolution he showed than Laches. Then I noticed the boldness of his gait, not at all different from his ordinary walk, and his gaze, steady and measured, considering and judging what was going on around him. He looked now at some, now at others, friends and enemies, in a way that encouraged the one side and signified to the other that he was ready to sell his blood and his life very dear to anyone who tried to take it from him. And so they got away; for people do not readily attack men like these; they run after the frightened."

That is the testimony of this great captain. It teaches us what we experience every day: that nothing throws us into danger so much as a thoughtless hunger to get ourselves out of it. *The less fear there is, the less danger, as a rule.* Our common people are wrong to say "that man fears death" when they mean that he thinks about it and foresees it. Foresight applies equally to what concerns us for good and for ill. To consider and judge danger is, in a way, the opposite of being stunned

2 Seneca, Letters to Lucilius 53.
3 Alcibiades' account of the retreat after the Athenian defeat at Delium (424 BC) is in Plato's Symposium; Laches was an Athenian general.

FRENCH	ENGLISH
soustenir le coup, et l'impetuosité, de cette passion de la peur, ny d'autre vehemente.	by it. I do not feel strong enough to withstand the blow and the violence of this passion of fear, or of any other vehement one.[4]
Si i'en estois vn coup vaincu, et atterré, ie ne m'en releuerois iamais bien entier. Qui auroit faict perdre pied à mon ame, ne la remettroit iamais droicte en sa place. Elle se retaste et recherche trop vifuement et profondement. Et pourtant, ne lairroit iamais ressoudre et consolider la playe qui l'auroit percee. Il m'a bien pris qu'aucune maladie ne me l'ayt encore desmise. A chasque charge qui me vient, ie me presente et oppose, en mon haut appareil. Ainsi la premiere qui m'emporteroit, me mettroit sans ressource. Ie n'en fais point à deux. Par quelque endroict que le rauage fauçast ma leuee, me voyla ouuert, et noyé sans remede. Epicurus dit, que le sage ne peut iamais passer à vn estat contraire.	If I were once overcome and floored by it, I would never get up again quite whole. Whatever had made my soul lose its footing would never set it back upright in its place. My soul probes and searches itself too keenly and too deeply, and so it would never let the wound that had pierced it close and heal. It has been lucky for me that no illness has yet put it out of joint. At every attack that comes at me, I stand up and oppose it in full array. So the first one that carried me away would leave me without recourse. I have no second line. Wherever the flood broke through my dike, there I would be, laid open and drowned beyond remedy. Epicurus says that the wise man can never pass into a contrary state.
I'ay quelque opinion de l'enuers de cette sentence; que qui aura esté vne fois bien fol, ne sera nulle autre fois bien sage. Dieu me donne le froid selon la robe, et me donne les passions selon le moyen que i'ay de les soustenir. Nature m'ayant descouuert d'vn costé, m'a couuert de l'autre: m'ayant desarmé de force, m'a armé d'insensibilité, et d'vne apprehension reglee, ou mousse.	I hold something like the reverse of this maxim: that whoever has once been thoroughly a fool will never at any other time be thoroughly wise. God sends me the cold according to my coat, and sends me passions according to the means I have to bear them. Nature, having left me uncovered on one side, has covered me on the other; having disarmed me of strength, she has armed me with insensibility and with a measured, or dull, apprehension.

COACHES AND SEASICKNESS

Montaigne cannot bear coaches or boats, and recalls coaches used in war and pageantry.

FRENCH	ENGLISH
3.6.4 Or ie ne puis souffrir long temps, et les souffrois plus difficilement en ieunesse, ny coche, ny littiere, ny bateau, et hay toute autre voiture que de cheual, en la ville, et aux champs. Mais ie puis souffrir la lictiere, moins qu'vn coche: et par mesme raison, plus aisement vne agitation rude sur l'eau, d'où se produict la peur, que le mouuement qui se sent en temps calme. Par cette legere secousse, que les auirons donnent, desrobant le vaisseau soubs nous, ie me sens brouiller, ie ne sçay comment, la teste et l'estomach: comme ie ne puis souffrir sous moy vn siege tremblant. Quand la voile, ou le cours de l'eau, nous emporte esgallement, ou qu'on nous touë, cette agitation vnie, ne me blesse aucunement.	Now, I cannot endure coach, litter or boat for long, and I endured them with more difficulty in my youth; I hate any conveyance but a horse, in town and in the country. But I can stand a litter less than a coach; and for the same reason I can stand a rough tossing on the water, which produces fear, more easily than the motion felt in calm weather. With that light jerk the oars give, stealing the vessel out from under us, I feel my head and stomach scrambled, I do not know how, just as I cannot bear a shaky seat under me. When the sail or the current carries us along evenly, or when we are towed, that smooth motion does not bother me at all.

4 Livy, History of Rome XXII.

FRENCH

C’est vn remuement interrompu, qui m’offence: et plus, quand il est languissant. Ie ne sçaurois autrement peindre sa forme. Les medecins m’ont ordonné de me presser et sangler d’vne seruiette le bas du ventre, pour remedier à cet accident: ce que ie n’ay point essayé, ayant accoustumé de lucter les deffauts qui sont en moy, et les dompter par moy-mesme.

3.6.5 Si i’en auoy la memoire suffisamment informee, ie ne pleindroy mon temps à dire icy l’infinie varieté, que les histoires nous presentent de l’vsage des coches, au seruice de la guerre: diuers selon les nations, selon les siecles: de grand effect, ce me semble, et necessité. Si que c’est merueille, que nous en ayons perdu toute cognoissance. I’en diray seulement cecy, que tout freschement, du temps de nos peres, les Hongres les mirent tres-vtilement en besongne contre les Turcs: en chacun y ayant vn rondelier et vn mousquetaire, et nombre de harquebuzes rengees, prestes et chargees: le tout couuert d’vne pauesade, à la mode d’vne galliotte.

Ils faisoient front à leur bataille de trois mille tels coches et apres que le canon auoit ioué, les faisoient tirer, et aualler aux ennemys cette salue, auant que de taster le reste: qui n’estoit pas vn leger auancement: ou descochoient lesdits coches dans leurs escadrons, pour les rompre et y faire iour: outre le secours qu’ils en pouuoient prendre, pour flanquer en lieu chatouilleux, les trouppes marchants en la campagne: ou à couurir vn logis à la haste, et le fortifier. De mon temps, vn Gentilhomme, en l’vne de nos frontieres, impost de sa personne, et ne trouuant cheual capable de son poids, ayant vne querelle, marchoit par païs en coche, de mesme cette peinture, et s’en trouuoit tres-bien. Mais laissons ces coches guerriers.

Comme si leur neantise n’estoit assez cognue à meilleures enseignes, les derniers Roys de nostre premiere race marchoient par païs en vn chariot mené de quatre bœufs. Marc Antoine fut le premier, qui se fit trainer à Rome, et vne garse menestriere quand et luy, par des lyons attelez à vn coche. Heliogabalus en fit depuis autant, se disant Cibelé la mere des Dieux: et aussi par des tigres, contrefaisant le Dieu Bacchus: il attela aussi par fois deux cerfs à son coche: et vne autre fois quatre chiens: et encore quatre garses nues, se faisant trainer par elles, en pompe, tout nud. L’empereur Firmus fit mener son coche,

ENGLISH

It is an interrupted movement that upsets me, and all the more when it is sluggish. I cannot describe its form any other way. The doctors have prescribed that I bind my lower belly and strap it tight with a cloth to remedy this trouble. I have not tried it, being accustomed to wrestle with the defects I have and to tame them by myself.

If my memory were sufficiently stocked on the subject, I would not begrudge the time to recount here the infinite variety the histories show us in the use of coaches in the service of war. It differed according to nations and to ages, and was of great effect, it seems to me, and of great necessity—so much so that it is a wonder we have lost all knowledge of it. I will say only this. Quite recently, in our fathers’ time, the Hungarians put them to very good use against the Turks. In each one there was a shield-bearer and a musketeer, and a number of harquebuses lined up, ready and loaded, the whole thing covered with a pavisade, in the manner of a galliot.[5]

They placed three thousand such coaches at the front of their battle line. After the cannon had played, they had the coaches fire and made the enemy swallow that volley before tasting the rest, which was no slight advantage. Or else they let fly these coaches into the enemy squadrons to break them and open a gap. They could also use them to flank troops marching across open country at a ticklish spot, or to cover a camp in haste and fortify it. In my time a gentleman on one of our frontiers, who was unwieldy in his person and could find no horse able to bear his weight, had a feud and used to travel about the country in a coach of this same design, and did very well with it. But let us leave these war coaches.

As if their sloth were not well enough known by better tokens, the last kings of our first dynasty traveled about the country in a cart drawn by four oxen. Mark Antony was the first who had himself drawn through Rome by lions harnessed to a coach, with a minstrel girl beside him. Heliogabalus later did the same, calling himself Cybele, mother of the gods; he also had himself drawn by tigers, impersonating the god Bacchus. Sometimes he harnessed two stags to his coach, another time

5 A pavisade was a screen of large shields; a galliot was a small galley.

FRENCH	ENGLISH
à des autruches de merueilleuse grandeur, de maniere qu'il sembloit plus voler que rouler.	four dogs, and again four naked girls, having himself drawn by them in pomp, stark naked himself. The emperor Firmus had his coach drawn by ostriches of marvelous size, so that he seemed to be flying rather than rolling.[6]

THE SPENDING OF PRprinces

Lavish display and liberality are weak virtues in a king, who gives what is not his own.

FRENCH	ENGLISH
3.6.6 L'estrangeté de ces inuentions, me met en teste cett' autre fantasie: Que c'est vne espece de pusillanimité, aux monarques, et vn tesmoignage de ne sentir point assez, ce qu'ils sont, de trauailler à se faire valloir et paroistre, par despenses excessiues. Ce seroit chose excusable en pays estranger: mais parmy ses subiects, où il peut tout, il tire de sa dignité, le plus extreme degré d'honneur, où il puisse arriuer. Comme à vn Gentil-homme, il me semble, qu'il est superflu de se vestir curieusement en son priué: sa maison, son train, sa cuysine respondent assez de luy.	The strangeness of these inventions puts another notion into my head: that it is a kind of faintheartedness in monarchs, and a sign that they do not sufficiently feel what they are, to labor to make themselves valued and conspicuous by excessive expenditure. It would be excusable in a foreign country; but among his own subjects, where he can do anything, a king draws from his dignity the very highest degree of honor he can attain. In the same way, for a gentleman, it seems to me superfluous to dress elaborately at home: his house, his household and his kitchen answer well enough for him.
Le conseil qu'Isocrates donne à son Roy, ne me semble sans raison: Qu'il soit splendide en meubles et vtensiles: d'autant que c'est vne despense de duree, qui passe iusques à ses successeurs: et qu'il fuye toutes magnificences, qui s'escoulent incontinent et de l'vsage et de la memoire. I'aymois à me parer quand i'estoy cadet, à faute d'autre parure: et me seoit bien. Il en est sur qui les belles robes pleurent. Nous auons des comtes merueilleux de la frugalité de nos Roys au tour de leurs personnes, et en leurs dons: grands Roys en credit, en valeur, et en fortune. Demosthenes combat à outrance, la loy de sa ville, qui assignoit les deniers publics aux pompes des ieux, et de leurs festes.	The advice Isocrates gives his king does not seem to me unreasonable: that he be splendid in furniture and utensils, since that is a lasting expense that passes on to his successors, and that he avoid all magnificence that slips away at once from both use and memory. I liked to dress up when I was a young man, for lack of other adornment, and it suited me. There are some on whom fine clothes weep. We have marvelous accounts of the frugality of our kings in their persons and in their gifts—kings great in reputation, in valor and in fortune. Demosthenes fights tooth and nail against the law of his city that assigned public funds to the pomp of the games and of their festivals.[7]
Il veut que leur grandeur se montre, en quantité de vaisseaux bien equippez, et bonnes armees bien fournies. Et a lon raison d'accuser Theophrastus, qui establit en son liure des richesses, vn aduis contraire: et maintient telle nature de despense, estre le vray fruit de l'opulence. Ce sont plaisirs, dit Aristote, qui ne touchent que la plus basse commune: qui s'euanouissent de la souuenance	He wants their greatness to show itself in a quantity of well-equipped ships and good, well-supplied armies. And people are right to blame Theophrastus, who in his book on wealth set forth a contrary opinion and maintained that this kind of expenditure is the true fruit of opulence. These are pleasures, says Aristotle, that touch only the lowest common sort, that vanish from memory as

6 The last Merovingian kings, the so-called "do-nothing kings," traveled in ox carts. Firmus was a third-century AD usurper in Egypt.

7 Isocrates' advice is in To Nicocles; Demosthenes attacked the Athenian festival fund in his Olynthiacs.

FRENCH

aussi tost qu'on en est rassasié: et desquels nul homme iudicieux et graue ne peut faire estime.

L'emploitte me sembleroit bien plus royale, comme plus vtile, iuste et durable, en ports, en haures, fortifications et murs: en bastiments somptueux, en eglises, hospitaux, colleges, reformation de ruës et chemins: en quoy le Pape Gregoire treziesme lairra sa memoire recommandable à long temps: et en quoy nostre Royne Catherine tesmoigneroit à longues annees sa liberalité naturelle et munificence, si ses moyens suffisoient à son affection. La Fortune m'a faict grand desplaisir d'interrompre la belle structure du Pont neuf, de nostre grand' ville, et m'oster l'espoir auant mourir d'en veoir en train le seruice.

3.6.7 Outre ce, il semble aux subiects spectateurs de ces triomphes, qu'on leur fait montre de leurs propres richesses, et qu'on les festoye à leurs despens. Car les peuples presument volontiers des Roys, comme nous faisons de nos valets: qu'ils doiuent prendre soing de nous apprester en abondance tout ce qu'il nous faut, mais qu'ils n'y doiuent aucunement toucher de leur part. Et pourtant l'Empereur Galba, ayant pris plaisir à vn musicien pendant son souper, se fit porter sa boëte, et luy donna en sa main vne poignee d'escus, qu'il y pescha, auec ces paroles: Ce n'est pas du public, c'est du mien.

Tant y a, qu'il aduient le plus souuent, que le peuple a raison: et qu'on repaist ses yeux, de ce dequoy il auoit à paistre son ventre.

3.6.8 La liberalité mesme n'est pas bien en son lustre en main souueraine: les priuez y ont plus de droict. Car à le prendre exactement, vn Roy n'a rien proprement sien; il se doibt soy-mesmes à autruy. La iurisdiction ne se donne point en faueur du iuridiciant: c'est en faueur du iuridicié. On fait vn superieur, non iamais pour son profit, ains pour le profit de l'inferieur: et vn medecin pour le malade, non pour soy. Toute magistrature, comme tout art, iette sa fin hors d'elle.

Nulla ars in se versatur. Parquoy les gouuerneurs de l'enfance des Princes, qui se piquent à leur imprimer

ENGLISH

soon as one has had one's fill of them, and that no judicious and serious man can hold in esteem.[8]

Spending would seem to me much more royal, as being more useful, just and lasting, if it went to ports, harbors, fortifications and walls; to sumptuous buildings, churches, hospitals, colleges, and the improvement of streets and roads. In this Pope Gregory XIII will leave a memory to be commended for a long time; and in this our Queen Catherine would bear witness for many years to her natural liberality and munificence, if her means were equal to her desire. Fortune has done me a great disservice in interrupting the fine structure of the Pont Neuf in our great city and taking from me the hope of seeing it in use before I die.[9]

Besides, the subjects who watch these triumphs feel that they are being shown their own riches and feasted at their own expense. For peoples readily presume of kings what we presume of our servants: that they should take care to lay on for us in abundance everything we need, but should not touch any of it themselves. And so the Emperor Galba, having enjoyed a musician during his supper, had his money box brought to him and with his own hand gave the man a fistful of crowns that he fished out of it, with these words: "This is not from the public purse; it is from my own."[10]

Be that as it may, it most often happens that the people are right, and that their eyes are fed with what should have fed their bellies.

Liberality itself does not show to best advantage in a sovereign hand; private persons have more right to it. For, strictly speaking, a king has nothing that is properly his own; he owes his very self to others. Jurisdiction is not granted for the benefit of the judge but for the benefit of the judged. A superior is never made for his own profit, but for the profit of the inferior; and a doctor for the patient, not for himself. Every magistracy, like every art, has its end outside itself.

No art is concerned with itself. Therefore the tutors of princes in childhood who make it a point to im-

8 Montaigne follows Cicero, On Duties II, which reports Aristotle's criticism of Theophrastus.
9 Gregory XIII was pope 1572–1585; Catherine de' Medici was the queen mother. Work on the Pont Neuf in Paris, begun in 1578, was halted by the civil wars in 1588.
10 Galba was notorious for his stinginess (Suetonius).

FRENCH

cette vertu de largesse: et les preschent de ne sçauoir rien refuser, et n'estimer rien si bien employé, que ce qu'ils donront (instruction que i'ay veu en mon temps fort en credit) ou ils regardent plus à leur proufit, qu'à celuy de leur maistre: ou ils entendent mal à qui ils parlent. Il est trop aysé d'imprimer la liberalité, en celuy, qui a dequoy y fournir autant qu'il veut, aux despens d'autruy. Et son estimation se reglant, non à la mesure du present, mais à la mesure des moyens de celuy qui l'exerce, elle vient à estre vaine en mains si puissantes.

Ils se trouuent prodigues, auant qu'ils soient liberaux. Pourtant est elle de peu de recommandation, au prix d'autres vertus royalles. Et la seule, comme disoit le tyran Dionysius, qui se comporte bien auec la tyrannie mesme. Ie luy apprendroy plustost ce verset du laboureur ancien, Τη χειρι δει σπειρειν, αλλαμη όλω τω θυλακω Qu'il faut à qui en veut retirer fruict, semer de la main, non pas verser du sac: il faut espandre le grain, non pas le respandre: et qu'ayant à donner, ou pour mieux dire, à payer, et rendre à tant de gens, selon qu'ils ont deseruy, il en doibt estre loyal et auisé dispensateur. Si la liberalité d'vn Prince est sans discretion et sans mesure, ie l'ayme mieux auare.

3.6.9 La vertu Royalle semble consister le plus en la iustice. Et de toutes les parties de la iustice, celle là remerque mieux les Roys, qui accompagne la liberalité. Car ils l'ont particulierement reseruee à leur charge: là où toute autre iustice, ils l'exercent volontiers par l'entremise d'autruy. L'immoderee largesse, est vn moyen foible à leur acquerir bien-vueillance: car elle rebute plus de gens, qu'elle n'en practique: *Quo in plures vsus sis, minus in multos vti possis. Quid autem est stultius, quàm, quod libenter facias, curare vt id diutius facere non possis?* Et si elle est employee sans respect du merite, fait vergongne à qui la reçoit: et se reçoit sans grace.

Des tyrans ont esté sacrifiez à la hayne du peuple, par les mains de ceux mesme, qu'ils auoyent iniquement auancez: telle maniere d'hommes, estimants asseurer la possession des biens indeuement receuz, s'ils montrent

ENGLISH

print on them this virtue of largesse—who preach to them never to know how to refuse anything and to think nothing so well spent as what they give away (a teaching I have seen much in favor in my time)—either have their own profit more in view than their master's, or misunderstand whom they are talking to. It is too easy to imprint liberality on someone who has the means to supply it as freely as he likes at others' expense. And since its worth is reckoned not by the size of the gift but by the size of the means of the one who practices it, it comes to nothing in such powerful hands.[11]

Princes turn out prodigal before they are liberal. So it earns little praise compared with the other royal virtues—and it is the only one, as the tyrant Dionysius used to say, that gets along well with tyranny itself. I would rather teach a prince this line of the ancient farmer, *One must sow with the hand, not with the whole sack*: that whoever wants to reap a harvest must sow by hand, not pour from the sack; the grain must be scattered, not spilled. And having to give, or rather, to pay and repay so many people according to what they have deserved, he must be a loyal and prudent dispenser. If a prince's liberality is without discretion and without measure, I would rather he were miserly.[12]

Royal virtue seems to consist most of all in justice. And of all the parts of justice, the one that best marks out kings is the one that goes with liberality; for they have reserved it especially to their own office, whereas all other justice they readily exercise through others. Immoderate largesse is a weak means of winning them goodwill, for it repels more people than it wins over: *The more people you have used it on, the fewer you will be able to use it on. And what is more foolish than to see to it that what you like doing you can no longer do for long?* And if it is bestowed without regard to merit, it shames the one who receives it, and is received without gratitude.[13]

Tyrants have been sacrificed to the people's hatred by the hands of the very men they had unjustly advanced. Men of that kind think they can secure possession of goods unduly received by showing

11 Cicero, On Ends V.
12 The Greek proverb is quoted by Plutarch, who attributes it to the poet Corinna.
13 Cicero, On Duties II.

FRENCH

auoir à mespris et hayne, celuy duquel ils les tenoyent, et se r'allient au iugement et opinion commune en cela.

3.6.10 Les subiects d'vn Prince excessif en dons, se rendent excessifs en demandes: ils se taillent, non à la raison, mais à l'exemple. Il y a certes souuent, dequoy rougir, de nostre impudence. Nous sommes surpayez selon iustice, quand la recompence esgalle nostre seruice: car n'en deuons nous rien à nos Princes d'obligation naturelle? S'il porte nostre despence, il fait trop: c'est assez qu'il l'ayde: le surplus s'appelle bien-faict, lequel ne se peut exiger: car le nom mesme de la liberalité sonne liberté. A nostre mode, ce n'est iamais faict: le reçeu ne se met plus en compte: on n'ayme la liberalité que future. Par quoy plus vn Prince s'espuise en donnant, plus il s'appaourit d'amys.

Comment assouuiroit il les enuies, qui croissent, à mesure qu'elles se remplissent? Qui a sa pensee à prendre, ne l'a plus à ce qu'il a prins. La conuoitise n'a rien si propre que d'estre ingrate.

3.6.11 L'exemple de Cyrus ne duira pas mal en ce lieu, pour seruir aux Roys de ce temps, de touche, à recognoistre leurs dons, bien ou mal employez: et leur faire veoir, combien cet Empereur les assenoit plus heureusement, qu'ils ne font. Par où ils sont reduits à faire leurs emprunts, apres sur les subiects incognus, et plustost sur ceux, à qui ils ont faict du mal, que sur ceux, à qui ils ont faict du bien: et n'en reçoiuent aydes, où il y aye rien de gratuit, que le nom. Crœsus luy reprochoit sa largesse: et calculoit à combien se monteroit son thresor, s'il eust eu les mains plus restreintes.

Il eut enuie de iustifier sa liberalité: et despeschant de toutes parts, vers les grands de son estat, qu'il auoit particulierement auancez: pria chacun de le secourir, d'autant d'argent qu'il pourroit, à vne sienne necessité: et le luy enuoyer par declaration. Quand touts ces bordereaux luy furent apportez, chacun de ses amys, n'estimant pas que ce fust assez faire, de luy en offrir seulement autant qu'il en auoit reçeu de sa munificence, y en meslant du sien propre beaucoup, il se trouua, que cette somme se montoit bien plus que ne disoit l'espargne de Crœsus. Sur quoy Cyrus: Ie ne suis pas

ENGLISH

contempt and hatred for the man they had them from, and by siding with common judgment and opinion in this.

The subjects of a prince who is excessive in gifts become excessive in demands; they cut their cloth not by reason but by example. There is certainly often cause to blush at our impudence. In justice we are overpaid when the reward equals our service; for do we owe our princes nothing by natural obligation? If he bears our expenses, he does too much; it is enough that he helps with them. The surplus is called a benefaction, which cannot be demanded; for the very name of liberality sounds of liberty. In our fashion, it is never done; what has been received no longer counts; we love only liberality to come. So the more a prince exhausts himself in giving, the poorer he grows in friends.

How could he sate desires that grow as fast as they are filled? A man whose thoughts are on taking no longer thinks of what he has taken. Nothing is so characteristic of covetousness as ingratitude.

The example of Cyrus will not be out of place here. It can serve the kings of our time as a touchstone for telling whether their gifts are well or ill bestowed, and show them how much more happily that emperor placed his than they do. Because of their poor giving, they are reduced afterward to borrowing from subjects they do not know, and rather from those they have harmed than from those they have benefited; and they receive no aid from them in which there is anything free but the name. Croesus reproached Cyrus for his largesse, and calculated what his treasure would amount to if he had been more tight-fisted.[14]

Cyrus wanted to justify his liberality. He sent messengers in every direction to the great men of his realm whom he had particularly advanced, and asked each of them to help him with as much money as he could for a need of his, and to send him a written statement of it. When all these accounts were brought to him, each of his friends, thinking it not enough to offer him only as much as he had received from his munificence, had added a great deal of his own; and it turned out that the sum came to much more than Croesus's reckoning of his savings. Whereupon Cyrus said: "I am

14 The story is from Xenophon, The Education of Cyrus VIII.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
	moins amoureux des richesses, que les autres Princes, et en suis plustost plus mesnager.	no less in love with riches than other princes, and am, if anything, a better manager of them.
	Vous voyez à combien peu de mise i'ay acquis le thresor inestimable de tant d'amis: et combien ils me sont plus fideles thresoriers, que ne seroient des hommes mercenaires, sans obligation, sans affection: et ma cheuance mieux logee qu'en des coffres, appellant sur moy la haine, l'enuie, et le mespris des autres Princes.	You see at how little outlay I have acquired the inestimable treasure of so many friends, and how much more faithful treasurers they are to me than hired men would be, without obligation and without affection. And my wealth is better lodged with them than in coffers, which would call down on me the hatred, envy and contempt of other princes."[15]
3.6.12	Les Empereurs tiroient excuse à la superfluité de leurs ieux et montres publiques, de ce que leur authorité dependoit aucunement, aumoins par apparence, de la volonté du peuple Romain: lequel auoit de tout temps accoustumé d'estre flaté par telle sorte de spectacles et d'excez. Mais c'estoyent particuliers qui auoyent nourry cette coustume, de gratifier leurs concitoyens et compagnons: principalement sur leur bourse, par telle profusion et magnificence. Elle eut tout autre goust, quand ce furent les maistres qui vindrent à l'imiter. *Pecuniarum translatio à iustis dominis ad alienos non debet liberalis videri.* Philippus de ce que son fils essayoit par presents, de gaigner la volonté des Macedoniens, l'en tança par vne lettre, en cette maniere. Quoy?	The emperors excused the superfluity of their games and public shows on the grounds that their authority depended to some extent, at least in appearance, on the will of the Roman people, who had always been accustomed to being flattered by that kind of spectacle and excess. But it was private individuals who had fostered this custom of gratifying their fellow citizens and companions, chiefly out of their own purse, with such profusion and magnificence. It had quite another taste when it was the masters who came to imitate it. *The transfer of money from its rightful owners to strangers should not be regarded as liberality.* Because his son was trying to win the goodwill of the Macedonians with presents, Philip rebuked him in a letter, in this manner: "What?[15]
	as tu enuie, que tes subiects te tiennent pour leur boursier, non pour leur Roy? Veux tu les prattiquer? Prattique les, des bien-faicts de ta vertu, non des bien-faicts de ton coffre.	do you want your subjects to take you for their purse-bearer, not their king? Do you want to win them over? Win them with the benefits of your virtue, not the benefits of your coffer."

ROMAN SPECTACLES

The marvels of the Roman arena show how inventive those ages were.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
3.6.13	C'etoit pourtant vne belle chose, d'aller faire apporter et planter en la place aux arenes, vne grande quantité de gros arbres, tous branchus et tous verts, representans vne grande forest ombrageuse, despartie en belle symmetrie: et le premier iour, ietter là dedans mille austruches, mille cerfs, mille sangliers, et mille dains, les abandonnant à piller au peuple: le lendemain faire assommer en sa presence, cent gros lyons, cent leopards, et trois cens ours: et pour le troisiesme iour, faire combatre à outrance, trois cens paires de gladiateurs, comme fit l'Empereur Probus.	It was a fine thing, though, to have a great number of big trees brought and planted in the arena, all branching and all green, representing a great shady forest laid out in fine symmetry; and on the first day to throw into it a thousand ostriches, a thousand stags, a thousand wild boars and a thousand fallow deer, abandoning them to the people to plunder; the next day to have a hundred big lions, a hundred leopards and three hundred bears slaughtered in his presence; and for the

15 Cicero, On Duties I. Philip II of Macedon's letter to his son Alexander is quoted by Cicero, On Duties II.

FRENCH

ENGLISH

third day to have three hundred pairs of gladiators fight to the death—as the Emperor Probus did.[16]

C'estoit aussi belle chose à voir, ces grands amphitheatres encroustez de marbre au dehors, labouré d'ouurages et statues, le dedans reluisant de rares enrichissemens, *Baltheus en gemmis, en illita porticus auro.* Tous les costez de ce grand vuide, remplis et enuironnez depuis le fons iusques au comble, de soixante ou quatre vingts rangs d'eschelons, aussi de marbre, couuers de carreaux, *Exeat, inquit,*
Si pudor est, et puluino surgat equestri,
Cuius res legi non sufficit, où se peussent renger cent mille hommes, assis à leur aise.

It was also a fine thing to see those great amphitheaters encrusted with marble on the outside, worked with carvings and statues, the inside gleaming with rare embellishments: *Look, the belt studded with gems; look, the colonnade coated with gold.* All the sides of that great hollow were filled and surrounded, from the bottom to the top, with sixty or eighty rows of steps, also of marble, covered with cushions—*"Let him leave," he says, "if he has any shame, and get up from the knights' cushion,*
whose property falls short of what the law requires"—where a hundred thousand men could sit at their ease.[17]

Et la place du fons, où les ieux se iouoyent, la faire premierement par art, entr'ouurir et fendre en creuasses, representant des antres qui vomissoient les bestes destinees au spectacle: et puis secondement l'inonder d'vne mer profonde, qui charioit force monstres marins, chargee de vaisseaux armez à representer vne bataille naualle: et tiercement, l'applanir et assecher de nouueau, pour le combat des gladiateurs: et pour la quatriesme façon, la sabler de vermillon et de storax, au lieu d'arene, pour y dresser vn festin solemne, à tout ce nombre infiny de peuple: le dernier acte d'vn seul iour. Quoties nos descendentis arenæ
Vidimus in partes, ruptáque voragine terræ
Emersisse feras, et ijsdem sæpe latebris
Aurea cum croceo creuerunt arbuta libro!

And the floor at the bottom, where the games were played: first to have it artfully opened and split into crevasses representing caves that spewed out the beasts destined for the show; then, second, to flood it with a deep sea carrying many sea monsters and laden with armed ships to represent a naval battle; third, to level it and dry it again for the gladiators' combat; and for the fourth arrangement, to strew it with vermilion and storax instead of sand, to set up a solemn banquet for that whole countless multitude of people—the last act of a single day. How often have we seen part of the arena sink
down, and from a chasm torn open in the earth wild beasts emerge, and often from those same lairs
golden trees spring up with saffron bark!

/ Nec solùm nobis siluestria cernere monstra
Contigit, æquoreos ego cum certantibus vrsis
Spectaui vitulos, et equorum nomine dignum,
Sed deforme pecus. Quelquefois on y a faict naistre, vne haute montaigne pleine de fruitiers et arbres verdoyans, rendant par son feste, vn ruisseau d'eau, comme de la bouche d'vne viue fontaine. Quelquefois on y promena vn grand nauire, qui s'ouuroit et desprenoit de soy-mesmes, et apres auoir vomy de son ventre, quatre ou cinq cens bestes à combat, se resserroit et s'esuanouissoit, sans ayde. Autresfois, du bas de cette place, ils faisoient eslancer des surgeons et filets d'eau, qui reiallissoient

/ Nor was it only woodland monsters that we were given
to see: I have watched sea calves with bears fighting them,
and a beast that deserves the name of horse, but a misshapen one. Sometimes they made a high mountain rise up there, full of fruit trees and green trees, sending a stream of water from its summit as from the mouth of a living spring. Sometimes they paraded a great ship through it, which opened and came apart by itself, and after spewing four or five hundred fighting beasts from its belly, closed up again and vanished without

16 Probus, emperor AD 276–282; Montaigne follows the Historia Augusta.
17 Calpurnius Siculus, Eclogues VII; then Juvenal, Satires III, on the law reserving the front seats for knights of sufficient wealth.

FRENCH	ENGLISH
contremont, et à cette hauteur infinie, alloient arrousant et embaumant cette infinie multitude.	any help. At other times, from the floor of that place, they made jets and threads of water shoot up, which spurted upward and, at that infinite height, went sprinkling and perfuming that infinite multitude.[18]
Pour se couurir de l'iniure du temps, ils faisoient tendre cette immense capacité, tantost de voyles de pourpre labourez à l'éguille, tantost de soye, d'vne ou autre couleur, et les auançoyent et retiroyent en vn moment, comme il leur venoit en fantasie, *Quamuis non modico caleant spectacula sole,* *Vela reducuntur, cùm venit Hermogenes.* Les rets aussi qu'on mettoit au deuant du peuple, pour le defendre de la violence de ces bestes eslancees, estoient tyssus d'or, *Auro quoque torta refulgent* *Retia.*	To shelter themselves from the weather, they had that immense space covered, sometimes with purple awnings worked with the needle, sometimes with silk of one color or another, and they drew them forward and back in a moment, as the fancy took them: *Though the spectators swelter in no small sun,* *the awnings are drawn back when Hermogenes comes.* The nets, too, that were set in front of the people to protect them from the violence of the beasts let loose, were woven of gold: *The nets too gleam,* *twisted with gold.*[19]

OUR NARROW KNOWLEDGE

We see only a sliver of the world's past and present, and judge everything by it.

FRENCH	ENGLISH
3.6.14 S'il y a quelque chose qui soit excusable en tels excez, c'est, où l'inuention et la nouueauté, fournit d'admiration, non pas la despence. En ces vanitez mesme, nous descouurons combien ces siecles estoyent fertiles d'autres esprits que ne sont les nostres. Il va de cette sorte de fertilité, comme il fait de toutes autres productions de la Nature. Ce n'est pas à dire qu'elle y ayt lors employé son dernier effort. Nous n'allons point, nous rodons plustost, et tourneuirons çà et là: nous nous promenons sur nos pas. Ie crains que nostre cognoissance soit foible en tous sens. Nous ne voyons ny gueres loing, ny guere arriere. Elle embrasse peu, et vit peu: courte et en estendue de temps, et en estendue de matiere.	If there is anything excusable in such excesses, it is where invention and novelty, not expense, supply the wonder. Even in these vanities we discover how fertile those ages were in minds of another kind than ours. It is with this sort of fertility as with all the other productions of Nature. That is not to say that she then made her utmost effort. We do not go forward; rather, we wander about and turn this way and that; we walk back over our own steps. I fear that our knowledge is weak in every direction. We see neither very far ahead nor very far behind. It embraces little and lives little: it is short both in extent of time and in extent of matter.
Vixere fortes ante Agamemnona *Multi, sed omnes illacrymabiles* *Vrgentur, ignotique longa* *Nocte.* *Et supera bellum Troianum et funera Troiæ,* *Multi alias alij quoque res cecinere poetæ.* Et la narration de Solon, sur ce qu'il auoit apprins des prestres d'Ægypte de la longue vie de leur estat, et maniere d'apprendre et conseruer les histoires estrangeres, ne me semble tesmoignage de refus en cette consideration.	*Many brave men lived before Agamemnon,* *but all of them, unwept,* *unknown, are crushed by the long* *night.* *And beyond the Trojan War and the fall of Troy,* *many other poets have sung of other things.* And Solon's account of what he had learned from the priests of Egypt about the long life of their state, and about their way of learning and preserving

18 Calpurnius Siculus again; the misshapen "horse" is the hippopotamus, the river horse.
19 Martial, Epigrams XII, where Hermogenes is a thief who makes off with any cloth in sight; then Calpurnius Siculus.

FRENCH

Si interminatam in omnes partes magnitudinem regionum videremus et temporum, in quam se iniiciens animus et intendens, ita latè longeque peregrinatur, vt nullam oram vltimi videat, in qua possit insistere: in hac immensitate infinita, vis innumerabilium appareret formarum. Quand tout ce qui est venu par rapport du passé, iusques à nous, seroit vray, et seroit sçeu par quelqu'vn, ce seroit moins que rien, au prix de ce qui est ignoré. Et de cette mesme image du monde, qui coule pendant que nous y sommes, combien chetiue et racourcie est la cognoissance des plus curieux?

Non seulement des euenemens particuliers, que Fortune rend souuent exemplaires et poisans: mais de l'estat des grandes polices et nations, il nous en eschappe cent fois plus, qu'il n'en vient a nostre science. Nous escrions, du miracle de l'inuention de nostre artillerie, de nostre impression: d'autres hommes, vn autre bout du monde à la Chine, en iouyssoit mille ans auparauant. Si nous voyions autant du monde, comme nous n'en voyons pas, nous apperceurions, comme il est à croire, vne perpetuelle multiplication et vicissitude de formes. Il n'y a rien de seul et de rare, eu esgard à Nature, ouy bien eu esgard à nostre cognoissance: qui est vn miserable fondement de nos regles, et qui nous represente volontiers vne tres-fauce image des choses.

Comme vainement nous concluons auiourd'huy, l'inclination et la decrepitude du monde, par les arguments que nous tirons de nostre propre foiblesse et decadence: *Iámque adeo affecta est ætas, affectáque tellus.* Ainsi vainement concluoit cettuy-la, sa naissance et ieunesse, par la vigueur qu'il voyoit aux esprits de son temps, abondans en nouuelletez et inuentions de diuers arts: *Verum, vt opinor, habet nouitatem summa, recénsque*
Natura est mundi, neque pridem exordia cœpit:
Quare etiam quædam nunc artes expoliuntur,
Nunc etiam augescunt, nunc addita nauigiis sunt
Multa.

ENGLISH

the histories of other countries, does not seem to me testimony to be rejected on this point.[20]

If we could see the boundless extent of regions and of ages in every direction, into which the mind, plunging and straining, travels so far and wide that it sees no farthest shore on which it can stop, then in that infinite immensity there would appear a multitude of countless forms. Even if everything that has come down to us by report of the past were true and known by someone, it would be less than nothing compared with what is unknown. And of this very image of the world, which flows by while we are in it, how wretched and cramped is the knowledge of even the most curious![21]

Not only of particular events, which Fortune often makes exemplary and weighty, but of the state of great governments and nations, a hundred times more escapes us than comes to our knowledge. We cry out at the miracle of our invention of artillery and of printing; other men, at another end of the world, in China, enjoyed them a thousand years earlier. If we saw as much of the world as we do not see, we would perceive, it is likely, a perpetual multiplication and alternation of forms. There is nothing unique and rare with regard to Nature, only with regard to our knowledge—which is a wretched foundation for our rules, and readily presents us with a very false image of things.

Just as we vainly conclude today that the world is declining and decrepit, from arguments we draw from our own weakness and decay—*So worn out already is our age, and so worn out the earth*—so that other man vainly concluded that it was newborn and young, from the vigor he saw in the minds of his time, abounding in novelties and inventions in various arts: *But, as I think, the whole is new, and fresh*
is the nature of the world, nor did it begin long ago:
that is why some arts are even now being refined,
even now are growing; now there have been added to ships
many things.[22]

20 Horace, Odes IV.9; then Lucretius, On the Nature of Things V. Solon's conversation with the Egyptian priests is told in Plato's Timaeus.
21 Cicero, On the Nature of the Gods I.
22 Both quotations are from Lucretius, On the Nature of Things (II and V).

THE NEW WORLD

A child world, as able as ours, was conquered by trickery and ruined for pearls and pepper.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
3.6.15	Nostre monde vient d'en trouuer vn autre (et qui nous respond si c'est le dernier de ses freres, puis que les Dæmons, les Sybilles, et nous, auons ignoré cettuy-cy iusqu'à cette heure?) non moins grand, plain, et membru, que luy: toutesfois si nouueau et si enfant, qu'on luy apprend encore son a, b, c. Il n'y a pas cinquante ans, qu'il ne sçauoit, ny lettres, ny poix, ny mesure, ny vestements, ny bleds, ny vignes. Il estoit encore tout nud, au giron, et ne viuoit que des moyens de sa mere nourrice. Si nous concluons bien, de nostre fin, et ce poëte de la ieunesse de son siecle, cet autre monde ne fera qu'entrer en lumiere, quand le nostre en sortira.	Our world has just discovered another—and who can guarantee that it is the last of its brothers, since the Daemons, the Sibyls and we ourselves knew nothing of this one until now?—no less big, full and well-limbed than itself, yet so new and so childlike that it is still being taught its ABCs. Not fifty years ago it knew neither letters, nor weights, nor measures, nor clothes, nor wheat, nor vines. It was still quite naked, in its mother's lap, and lived only on what its nursing mother provided. If we are right to conclude that our end is near, and that poet right about the youth of his age, this other world will only be coming into the light when ours is leaving it.
	L'vniuers tombera en paralysie: l'vn membre sera perclus, l'autre en vigueur. Bien crains-ie, que nous aurons tres-fort hasté sa declinaison et sa ruyne, par nostre contagion: et que nous luy aurons bien cher vendu nos opinions et nos arts. C'estoit vn monde enfant: si ne l'auons nous pas fouëté et soubsmis à nostre discipline, par l'auantage de nostre valeur, et forces naturelles: ny ne l'auons practiqué par nostre iustice et bonté: ny subiugué par nostre magnanimité. La plus part de leurs responces, et des negotiations faictes auec eux, tesmoignent qu'ils ne nous deuoient rien en clarté d'esprit naturelle, et en pertinence.	The universe will fall into paralysis: one limb will be withered, the other in full vigor. I greatly fear that we will have greatly hastened its decline and ruin by our contagion, and that we will have sold it our opinions and our arts very dear. It was a child world; yet we have not whipped it and subjected it to our discipline by the advantage of our valor and natural strength, nor won it over by our justice and goodness, nor subjugated it by our magnanimity. Most of their replies, and of the negotiations conducted with them, show that they owed us nothing in natural clarity of mind and pertinence.
	L'espouuentable magnificence des villes de Cusco et de Mexico, et entre plusieurs choses pareilles, le iardin de ce Roy, où tous les arbres, les fruicts, et toutes les herbes, selon l'ordre et grandeur qu'ils ont en vn iardin, estoient excellemment formees en or: comme en son cabinet, tous les animaux, qui naissoient en son estat et en ses mers: et la beauté de leurs ouurages, en pierrerie, en plume, en cotton, en la peinture, montrent qu'ils ne nous cedoient non plus en l'industrie. Mais quant à la deuotion, obseruance des loix, bonté, liberalité, loyauté, franchise, il nous a bien seruy, de n'en auoir pas tant qu'eux. Ils se sont perdus par cet aduantage, et vendus, et trahis eux mesmes.	Consider the stupendous magnificence of the cities of Cusco and Mexico, and, among many such things, the garden of that king in which all the trees, the fruits and all the plants were excellently fashioned in gold, in the order and size they have in a garden; and likewise in his cabinet all the animals born in his state and in his seas; and the beauty of their works in jewelry, in featherwork, in cotton and in painting. All this shows that they did not yield to us in skill either. But as for devotion, observance of the laws, goodness, liberality, loyalty and frankness, it served us well to have less of them than they did. They were lost by that advantage; they sold and betrayed themselves.[23]
3.6.16	Quant à la hardiesse et courage, quant à la fermeté, constance, resolution contre les douleurs et la faim, et la	As for boldness and courage, as for firmness, constancy and resolution against pain, hunger and

FRENCH

mort, ie ne craindrois pas d'opposer les exemples, que ie trouuerois parmy eux, aux plus fameux exemples anciens, que nous ayons aux memoires de nostre monde pardeçà.

Car pour ceux qui les ont subiuguez, qu'ils ostent les ruses et batelages, dequoy ils se sont seruis à les piper: et le iuste estonnement, qu'apportoit à ces nations là, de voir arriuer si inopinement des gens barbus, diuers en langage, religion, en forme, et en contenance: d'vn endroit du monde si esloigné, et où ils n'auoient iamais sçeu qu'il y eust habitation quelconque: montez sur des grands monstres incongneuz: contre ceux, qui n'auoient non seulement iamais veu de cheual, mais beste quelconque, duicte à porter et soustenir homme ny autre charge: garnis d'vne peau luysante et dure, et d'vne arme trenchante et resplendissante:

contre ceux, qui pour le miracle de la lueur d'vn miroir ou d'vn cousteau, alloyent eschangeant vne grande richesse en or et en perles, et qui n'auoient ny science ny matiere, par où tout à loysir, ils sçeussent percer nostre acier: adioustez y les foudres et tonnerres de nos pieces et harquebuses, capables de troubler Cæsar mesme, qui l'en eust surpris autant inexperimenté: et à cett'heure, contre des peuples nuds, si ce n'est où l'inuention estoit arriuee de quelque tyssu de cotton: sans autres armes pour le plus, que d'arcs, pierres, bastons et boucliers de bois: des peuples surpris soubs couleur d'amitié et de bonne foy, par la curiosité de veoir des choses estrangeres et incognues: ostez, dis-ie, aux conquerans cette disparité, vous leur ostez toute l'occasion de tant de victoires.

Quand ie regarde à cette ardeur indomtable, dequoy tant de milliers d'hommes, femmes, et enfans, se presentent et reiettent à tant de fois, aux dangers ineuitables, pour la deffence de leurs dieux, et de leur liberté: cette genereuse obstination de souffrir toutes extremitez et difficultez, et la mort, plus volontiers, que de se soubsmettre à la domination de ceux, de qui ils ont esté si honteusement abusez: et aucuns, choisissans plutost de se laisser defaillir par faim et par ieusne, estans pris, que d'accepter le viure des mains de leurs ennemis, si vilement victorieuses: ie preuois que à qui les eust attaquez pair à pair, et d'armes, et d'experience, et de nombre, il y eust faict aussi dangereux, et plus, qu'en autre guerre que nous voyons.

ENGLISH

death, I would not be afraid to set the examples I could find among them against the most famous examples of antiquity in the records of our world over here.

For as for those who subjugated them, take away the ruses and tricks they used to deceive them, and the justified astonishment those nations felt at seeing the unexpected arrival of bearded men, different in language, religion, shape and bearing, from a part of the world so remote that they had never known there was any habitation there at all; men mounted on great unknown monsters, against people who had never seen a horse, nor indeed any animal at all trained to carry a man or any other load; men equipped with a shiny, hard skin and a sharp, gleaming weapon;

against people who, for the marvel of the gleam of a mirror or a knife, would trade great riches in gold and pearls, and who had neither the knowledge nor the material by which, even at leisure, they could pierce our steel. Add to this the lightning and thunder of our cannon and harquebuses, enough to disturb Caesar himself had he been surprised by them with as little experience; and then, against peoples who were naked, except where the invention of some cotton fabric had reached them, with no other weapons at most than bows, stones, sticks and wooden shields; peoples taken by surprise under color of friendship and good faith, through curiosity to see strange and unknown things—take away from the conquerors, I say, this disparity, and you take away from them the whole occasion of so many victories.

When I look at the indomitable ardor with which so many thousands of men, women and children came forward and threw themselves again and again into inevitable dangers in defense of their gods and their liberty; at that noble obstinacy in suffering all extremities and hardships, and death, more willingly than submit to the domination of those who had so shamefully deceived them; and at some who, when captured, chose rather to let themselves waste away from hunger and fasting than accept food from the hands of their enemies, so basely victorious—I foresee that anyone who had attacked them on equal terms of weapons, ex-

23 Cusco was the capital of the Inca empire.

FRENCH

ENGLISH

perience and numbers would have found it as dangerous as any other war we see, and more so.

3.6.17 Que n'est tombee soubs Alexandre, ou soubs ces anciens Grecs et Romains, vne si noble conqueste: et vne si grande mutation et alteration de tant d'empires et de peuples, soubs des mains, qui eussent doucement poly et defriché ce qu'il y auoit de sauuage: et eussent conforté et promeu les bonnes semences, que Nature y auoit produit: meslant non seulement à la culture des terres, et ornement des villes, les arts de deça, en tant qu'elles y eussent esté necessaires, mais aussi, meslant les vertus Grecques et Romaines, aux origineles du pays?

Why did not so noble a conquest fall to Alexander, or to those ancient Greeks and Romans? Why did not so great a transformation and alteration of so many empires and peoples fall into hands that would gently have polished and cleared whatever was wild there, and would have strengthened and promoted the good seeds that Nature had produced there, mixing not only the arts of our side of the world with the cultivation of the land and the adornment of cities, insofar as they were needed there, but also mixing the Greek and Roman virtues with those native to the country?

Quelle reparation eust-ce esté, et quel amendement à toute cette machine, que les premiers exemples et deportemens nostres, qui se sont presentez par delà, eussent appellé ces peuples, à l'admiration, et imitation de la vertu, et eussent dressé entre-eux et nous, vne fraternelle societé et intelligence? Combien il eust esté aisé, de faire son profit, d'ames si neuues, si affamees d'apprentissage, ayants pour la plus part, de si beaux commencemens naturels? Au rebours, nous nous sommes seruis de leur ignorance, et inexperience, à les plier plus facilement vers la trahison, luxure, auarice, et vers toute sorte d'inhumanité et de cruauté, à l'exemple et patron de nos mœurs. Qui mit iamais à tel prix, le seruice de la mercadence et de la trafique?

What a reparation it would have been, and what an improvement to that whole fabric, if the first examples and conduct of ours that appeared over there had called those peoples to the admiration and imitation of virtue, and had established between them and us a brotherly fellowship and understanding? How easy it would have been to make good use of souls so fresh, so hungry to learn, and having for the most part such fine natural beginnings? On the contrary, we took advantage of their ignorance and inexperience to bend them more easily toward treachery, lust, avarice and every kind of inhumanity and cruelty, after the example and pattern of our own ways. Who ever set such a price on the service of commerce and trade?

Tant de villes rasees, tant de nations exterminees, tant de millions de peuples, passez au fil de l'espee, et la plus riche et belle partie du monde bouleuersee, pour la negotiation des perles et du poiure. Mechaniques victoires. Iamais l'ambition, iamais les inimitiez publiques, ne pousserent les hommes, les vns contre les autres, à si horribles hostilitez, et calamitez si miserables.

So many cities razed, so many nations exterminated, so many millions of people put to the sword, and the richest and most beautiful part of the world turned upside down for the traffic in pearls and pepper. Base, tradesmen's victories. Never did ambition, never did public enmities drive men against one another into such horrible hostilities and such miserable calamities.

3.6.18 En costoyant la mer à la queste de leurs mines, aucuns Espagnols prindrent terre en vne contree fertile et plaisante, fort habitee: et firent à ce peuple leurs remonstrances accoustumees: Qu'ils estoient gens paisibles, venans de loingtains voyages, enuoyez de la part du Roy de Castille, le plus grand Prince de la terre habitable, auquel le Pape, representant Dieu en terre, auoit donné la principauté de toutes les Indes. Que s'ils vouloient luy estre tributaires, ils seroient tres-benignement traictez: leur demandoient des viures, pour

Some Spaniards, sailing along the coast in search of their mines, landed in a fertile, pleasant and well-populated region, and made their customary declarations to its people. They said that they were peaceful men, come from distant voyages, sent on behalf of the King of Castile, the greatest prince of the habitable earth, to whom the Pope, representing God on earth, had given sovereignty over all the Indies; and that if the people were willing to be his tributaries, they would be very kindly

FRENCH

leur nourriture, et de l'or pour le besoing de quelque medecine. Leur remontroient au demeurant, la creance d'vn seul Dieu, et la verité de nostre religion, laquelle ils leur conseilloient d'accepter, y adioustans quelques menasses.

La responce fut telle: Que quand à estre paisibles, ils n'en portoient pas la mine, s'ils l'estoient. Quant à leur Roy, puis qu'il demandoit, il deuoit estre indigent, et necessiteux: et celuy qui luy auoit faict cette distribution, homme aymant dissension, d'aller donner à vn tiers, chose qui n'estoit pas sienne, pour le mettre en debat contre les anciens possesseurs. Quant aux viures, qu'ils leur en fourniroient: d'or, ils en auoient peu: et que c'estoit chose qu'ils mettoient en nulle estime, d'autant qu'elle estoit inutile au seruice de leur vie, là où tout leur soin regardoit seulement à la passer heureusement et plaisamment: pourtant ce qu'ils en pourroient trouuer, sauf ce qui estoit employé au seruice de leurs dieux, qu'ils le prinssent hardiment.

Quant à vn seul Dieu, le discours leur en auoit pleu: mais qu'ils ne vouloient changer leur religion, s'en estans si vtilement seruis si long temps: et qu'ils n'auoient accoustumé prendre conseil, que de leurs amis et cognoissans. Quant aux menasses, c'estoit signe de faute de iugement, d'aller menassant ceux, desquels la nature, et les moyens estoient incongnuz. Ainsi qu'ils se despeschassent promptement de vuyder leur terre, car ils n'estoient pas accoustumez de prendre en bonne part, les honnestetez et remonstrances de gens armez, et estrangers: autrement qu'on feroit d'eux, comme de ces autres, leur montrant les testes d'aucuns hommes iusticiez autour de leur ville. Voylà vn exemple de la balbucie de cette enfance.

Mais tant y a, que ny en ce lieu-là, ny en plusieurs autres, où les Espagnols ne trouuerent les marchandises qu'ils cherchoient, ils ne feirent arrest ny entreprinse: quelque autre commodité qu'il y eust: tesmoing mes Cannibales.

ENGLISH

treated. They asked them for provisions to feed themselves, and for gold for the needs of a certain medicine. They also expounded to them belief in one God and the truth of our religion, which they advised them to accept, adding some threats.[24]

The reply was this. As for being peaceful, they did not look it, if they were. As for their king, since he was asking, he must be poor and needy; and the man who had made him that allotment must be fond of strife, to go giving a third party something that was not his own, so as to set him at odds with its ancient possessors. As for provisions, they would supply them. Of gold they had little, and it was a thing they held in no esteem, since it was useless for the service of their life, whereas all their care was only to pass their life happily and pleasantly; however, whatever of it they could find, except what was used in the service of their gods, the Spaniards were welcome to take.

As for one God, the account of him had pleased them; but they did not want to change their religion, having made such good use of it for so long; and they were not accustomed to take advice from anyone but their friends and acquaintances. As for the threats, it was a sign of poor judgment to go threatening people whose nature and means were unknown. So the Spaniards should make haste to leave their land, for they were not accustomed to take in good part the civilities and admonitions of armed men and strangers; otherwise they would be dealt with like those others—and they showed them the heads of some executed men around their town. There is an example of the babbling of this infancy.

But the fact remains that neither in that place nor in several others where the Spaniards did not find the goods they were looking for did they stop or undertake anything, whatever other advantages there might be: witness my Cannibals.[25]

TWO KINGS

The Spaniards' treachery toward the kings of Peru and Mexico, who meet it with royal constancy.

FRENCH

3.6.19 Des deux les plus puissans Monarques de ce monde là, et à l'auanture de cettuy-cy, Roys de tant de Roys: les

ENGLISH

As for the two most powerful monarchs of that world, and perhaps of this one, kings over so

24 The formal summons the Spaniards read to native peoples rested on Pope Alexander VI's grants of 1493. Montaigne's source is López de Gómara's General History of the Indies.

FRENCH

derniers qu'ils en chasserent: celuy du Peru, ayant esté pris en vne bataille, et mis à vne rançon si excessiue, qu'elle surpasse toute creance, et celle là fidellement payee: et auoir donné par sa conuersation signe d'vn courage franc, liberal, et constant, et d'vn entendement net, et bien composé: il print enuie aux vainqueurs, apres en auoir tiré vn million trois cens vingt cinq mille cinq cens poisant d'or: outre l'argent, et autres choses, qui ne monterent pas moins (si que leurs cheuaux n'alloient plus ferrez, que d'or massif) de voir encores, au prix de quelque desloyauté que ce fust, quel pouuoit estre le reste des thresors de ce Roy, et iouyr librement de ce qu'il auoit reserré.

On luy apposta vne fauce accusation et preuue: Qu'il desseignoit de faire sousleuer ses prouinces, pour se remettre en liberté. Sur quoy par beau iugement, de ceux mesme qui luy auoient dressé cette trahison, on le condamna à estre pendu et estranglé publiquement: luy ayant faict racheter le tourment d'estre bruslé tout vif, par le baptesme qu'on luy donna au supplice mesme. Accident horrible et inouy: qu'il souffrit pourtant sans se desmentir, ny de contenance, ny de parole, d'vne forme et grauité vrayement royalle. Et puis, pour endormir les peuples estonnez et transis de chose si estrange, on contrefit vn grand deuil de sa mort, et luy ordonna on des somptueuses funerailles.

3.6.20 L'autre Roy de Mexico, ayant long temps defendu sa ville assiegee, et montré en ce siege tout ce que peut et la souffrance, et la perseuerance, si onques Prince et peuple le montra: et son malheur l'ayant rendu vif, entre les mains des ennemis, auec capitulation d'estre traité en Roy: aussi ne leur fit-il rien voir en la prison, indigne de ce tiltre: ne trouuant point apres cette victoire, tout l'or qu'ils s'estoient promis: quand ils eurent tout remué, et tout fouillé, ils se mirent à en chercher des nouuelles, par les plus aspres gehennes, dequoy ils se peurent aduiser, sur les prisonniers qu'ils tenoient.

Mais pour n'auoir rien profité, trouuant des courages plus forts que leurs tourments, ils en vindrent en fin à

ENGLISH

many kings, the last ones they drove from power: the king of Peru had been taken in a battle and held to a ransom so excessive that it surpasses all belief, and he had paid it faithfully; in his dealings he had given signs of a frank, liberal and steadfast courage and of a clear and well-ordered understanding. Yet the victors, after extracting from him one million three hundred twenty-five thousand five hundred weight of gold, besides silver and other things that amounted to no less (so that their horses went shod with nothing but solid gold), were seized with the desire to see as well, at the cost of whatever treachery, what the rest of this king's treasures might be, and to enjoy freely what he had stored away.[26]

A false charge and false evidence were rigged up against him: that he was plotting to make his provinces rise so as to set himself free. Whereupon, by the fine judgment of the very men who had contrived this treachery against him, he was condemned to be publicly hanged and strangled, having been made to buy off the torment of being burned alive by the baptism they gave him at the very place of execution. A horrible and unheard-of event, which he nevertheless bore without belying himself either in countenance or in word, with a truly royal bearing and gravity. And then, to lull the peoples, stunned and paralyzed by so strange a thing, they feigned great mourning for his death and ordered sumptuous funeral rites for him.

The other, the king of Mexico, had long defended his besieged city and shown in that siege all that endurance and perseverance can do, if ever prince and people showed it. His misfortune delivered him alive into the hands of the enemy, under terms of surrender that he would be treated as a king; and in prison he showed them nothing unworthy of that title. After this victory the victors did not find all the gold they had promised themselves; so when they had turned everything over and searched everything, they set about seeking news of it by the harshest tortures they could devise, on the prisoners they held.[27]

But having gained nothing, finding courage stronger than their torments, they finally came to

25 See "Of Cannibals" (I.31).
26 Atahualpa, Inca ruler captured by Francisco Pizarro in 1532 and executed in 1533.

FRENCH

telle rage, que contre leur foy et contre tout droict des gens, ils condamnerent le Roy mesme, et l'vn des principaux seigneurs de sa cour à la gehenne, en presence l'vn de l'autre. Ce seigneur se trouuant forcé de la douleur, enuironné de braziers ardens, tourna sur la fin, piteusement sa veue vers son maistre, comme pour luy demander mercy, de ce qu'il n'en pouuoit plus.

Le Roy plantant fierement et rigoureusement les yeux sur luy, pour reproche de sa lascheté et pusillanimité, luy dit seulement ces mots, d'vne voix rude et ferme: Et moy, suis ie dans vn bain, suis-ie pas plus à mon aise que toy? Celuy-là soudain apres succomba aux douleurs, et mourut sur la place. Le Roy à demy rosty, fut emporté de là. Non tant par pitié (car quelle pitié toucha iamais des ames si barbares, qui pour la doubteuse information de quelque vase d'or à piller, fissent griller deuant leurs yeux vn homme: non qu'vn Roy, si grand, et en fortune, et en merite) mais ce fut que sa constance rendoit de plus en plus honteuse leur cruauté.

Ils le pendirent depuis, ayant courageusement entrepris de se deliurer par armes d'vne si longue captiuité et subiection: où il fit sa fin digne d'vn magnanime Prince.

3.6.21 A vne autre fois ils mirent brusler pour vn coup, en mesme feu, quatre cens soixante hommes tous vifs, les quatre cens du commun peuple, les soixante des principaux seigneurs d'vne prouince, prisonniers de guerre simplement. Nous tenons d'eux-mesmes ces narrations: car ilz ne les aduouent pas seulement, ils s'en ventent, et les preschent. Seroit-ce pour tesmoignage de leur iustice, ou zele enuers la religion? Certes ce sont voyes trop diuerses, et ennemies d'vne si saincte fin.

S'ils se fussent proposés d'estendre nostre foy, ils eussent consideré que ce n'est pas en possession de terres qu'elle s'amplifie, mais en possession d'hommes: et se fussent trop contentez des meurtres que la necessité de la guerre apporte, sans y mesler indifferemment vne boucherie, comme sur des bestes sauuages: vniuerselle, autant que le fer et le feu y ont peu attaindre: n'en ayant conserué par leur dessein, qu'autant qu'ils en ont voulu faire de miserables esclaues, pour l'ouurage et seruice de leurs minieres. Si que plusieurs des chefs ont esté punis à mort, sur les lieux de leur conqueste, par ordonnance des Roys

ENGLISH

such a frenzy that, against their word and against all law of nations, they condemned the king himself and one of the chief lords of his court to torture in each other's presence. This lord, overcome by the pain and surrounded by burning braziers, at last turned his eyes piteously toward his master, as if to ask his pardon because he could bear no more.

The king, fixing his eyes proudly and sternly on him in reproach for his cowardice and faintheartedness, said only these words to him, in a harsh, firm voice: "And I—am I in a bath? Am I any more at ease than you?" The lord soon afterward succumbed to the pain and died on the spot. The king, half roasted, was carried away from there—not so much out of pity (for what pity ever touched souls so barbarous that, on dubious information about some golden vessel to plunder, they would have a man grilled before their eyes, let alone a king so great in fortune and in merit), but because his constancy made their cruelty more and more shameful.

They hanged him later, after he had bravely attempted to free himself by arms from so long a captivity and subjection; and there he made an end worthy of a great-souled prince.

Another time they burned alive, at one stroke and in the same fire, four hundred and sixty men: the four hundred from the common people, the sixty from among the chief lords of a province—simply prisoners of war. We have these accounts from the men themselves, for they do not merely admit these things; they boast of them and proclaim them. Could it be as a testimony to their justice, or to their zeal for religion? Certainly these are ways too contrary and too hostile to so holy an end.

If they had set out to spread our faith, they would have considered that it grows not by possession of lands but by possession of men. They would have been more than content with the killings that the necessity of war brings, without adding indiscriminately a butchery, as if on wild beasts—universal, as far as fire and sword could reach—deliberately sparing only as many as they wanted to make into wretched slaves for the work and service of their mines. So much so that several of the leaders have

27 Cuauhtémoc, last Aztec emperor, captured by Cortés in 1521 and hanged in 1525.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
	de Castille, iustement offencez de l'horreur de leurs deportemens, et quasi tous desestimez et mal-voulus.	been put to death in the lands of their conquest by order of the kings of Castile, justly offended by the horror of their conduct, and almost all of them have been held in disrepute and ill will.
	Dieu a meritoirement permis, que ces grands pillages se soient absorbez par la mer en les transportant: ou par les guerres intestines, dequoy ils se sont mangez entre-eux: et la plus part s'enterrerent sur les lieux, sans aucun fruict de leur victoire.	God has deservedly allowed these great plunders to be swallowed up by the sea as they were being shipped, or by the civil wars in which they devoured one another; and most of them were buried on the spot, without any fruit from their victory.
3.6.22	Quant à ce que la recepte, et entre les mains d'vn Prince mesnager, et prudent, respond si peu à l'esperance, qu'on en donna à ses predecesseurs, et à cette premiere abondance de richesses, qu'on rencontra à l'abord de ces nouuelles terres (car encore qu'on en retire beaucoup, nous voyons que ce n'est rien, au prix de ce qui s'en deuoit attendre) c'est que l'vsage de la monnoye estoit entierement incognu, et que par consequent, leur or se trouua tout assemblé, n'estant en autre seruice, que de montre, et de parade, comme vn meuble reserué de pere en fils, par plusieurs puissants Roys, qui espuisoient tousiours leurs mines, pour faire ce grand monceau de vases et statues, à l'ornement de leurs palais, et de leurs temples: au lieu que nostre or est tout en emploite et en commerce.	Why does the revenue, even in the hands of a thrifty and prudent prince, fall so far short of the hopes held out to his predecessors, and of that first abundance of riches found on reaching these new lands? For although a great deal is drawn from them, we see that it is nothing compared with what was to be expected. The reason is that the use of money was entirely unknown there. Consequently their gold was found all gathered in one place, serving no purpose but show and display, like a piece of furniture handed down from father to son by several powerful kings. These kings kept draining their mines to make that great heap of vessels and statues to adorn their palaces and temples. Our gold, by contrast, is all in use and in trade.[28]
	Nous le menuisons et alterons en mille formes, l'espandons et dispersons. Imaginons que nos Roys amoncelassent ainsi tout l'or, qu'ils pourroient trouuer en plusieurs siecles, et le gardassent immobile.	We cut it up small and change it into a thousand forms; we spread it about and scatter it. Imagine our kings heaping up in the same way all the gold they could find over several centuries, and keeping it idle.

THE FIVE SUNS

The Mexicans' belief in five ages of the world, and the great road of the Incas.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
3.6.23	Ceux du royaume de Mexico estoient aucunement plus ciuilisez, et plus artistes, que n'estoient les autres nations de là. Aussi iugeoient-ils, ainsi que nous, que l'vniuers fust proche de sa fin: et en prindrent pour signe la desolation que nous y apportasmes. Ils croyoyent que l'estre du monde, se depart en cinq aages, et en la vie de cinq soleils consecutifs, desquels les quatre auoient desia fourny leurs temps, et que celuy qui leur esclairoit, estoit le cinquiesme. Le premier perit auec toutes les autres creatures, par vniuerselle inondation d'eaux.	The people of the kingdom of Mexico were somewhat more civilized and more skilled in the arts than the other nations over there. So they also judged, as we do, that the universe was near its end, and they took the desolation we brought upon them as a sign of it. They believed that the existence of the world is divided into five ages, the lives of five successive suns. Four of these suns had already run their course, and the one that gave them light was the fifth. The first perished,

28 The prince is Philip II of Spain (reigned 1556–1598).

FRENCH

ENGLISH

Le second, par la cheute du ciel sur nous, qui estouffa toute chose viuante: auquel aage ils assignent les geants, et en firent voir aux Espagnols des ossements; à la proportion desquels, la stature des hommes reuenoit à vingt paumes de hauteur. Le troisiesme, par feu, qui embrasa et consuma tout. Le quatriesme, par vne émotion d'air, et de vent, qui abbatit iusques à plusieurs montaignes: les hommes n'en moururent point, mais ils furent changez en magots (quelles impressions ne souffre la lascheté de l'humaine creance!) Apres la mort de ce quatriesme soleil, le monde fut vingt-cinq ans en perpetuelles tenebres. Au quinziesme desquels fut creé vn homme, et vne femme, qui refirent l'humaine race.

along with all other creatures, in a universal flood of waters.

The second perished when the sky fell upon us and smothered every living thing. To this age they assign the giants, and they showed the Spaniards some of their bones; by their proportions, those men must have stood twenty palms high. The third sun perished by fire, which set everything ablaze and consumed it. The fourth perished by a commotion of air and wind that beat down even several mountains. Men did not die of it, but they were changed into apes. (What impressions will the pliancy of human belief not take!) After the death of this fourth sun, the world lay twenty-five years in perpetual darkness. In the fifteenth of these years a man and a woman were created, and they remade the human race.

Dix ans apres, à certain de leurs iours, le soleil parut nouuellement creé: et commence depuis, le compte de leurs annees par ce iour là. Le troisiesme iour de sa creation, moururent les Dieux anciens: les nouueaux sont nays depuis du iour à la iournee. Ce qu'ils estiment de la maniere que ce dernier soleil perira, mon autheur n'en a rien appris. Mais leur nombre de ce quatriesme changement, rencontre à cette grande conionction des astres, qui produisit il y a huict cens tant d'ans, selon que les astrologiens estiment, plusieurs grandes alterations et nouuelletez au monde.

Ten years later, on a certain one of their days, the sun appeared, newly created, and they have counted their years from that day ever since. On the third day after its creation the old gods died; the new ones have been born since, from day to day. What they think about the way this last sun will perish, my author learned nothing. But their reckoning of this fourth change coincides with that great conjunction of the stars which, some eight hundred years ago by the astrologers' estimate, produced many great alterations and novelties in the world.[29]

3.6.24 Quant à la pompe et magnificence, par où ie suis entré en ce propos, ny Græce, ny Rome, ny Ægypte, ne peut, soit en vtilité, ou difficulté, ou noblesse, comparer aucun de ses ouurages, au chemin qui se voit au Peru, dressé par les Roys du païs, depuis la ville de Quito, iusques à celle de Cusco (il y a trois cens lieuës) droit, vny, large de vingt-cinq pas, paué, reuestu de costé et d'autre de belles et hautes murailles, et le long d'icelles par le dedans, deux ruisseaux perennes, bordez de beaux arbres, qu'ils nomment, Moly. Où ils ont trouué des montaignes et rochers, ils les ont taillez et applanis, et comblé les fondrieres de pierre et chaux.

As for pomp and magnificence, which is where I began this subject: neither Greece, nor Rome, nor Egypt can compare any of its works with the road to be seen in Peru, whether for usefulness, difficulty or nobility. The kings of that country built it from the city of Quito to the city of Cusco, a distance of three hundred leagues. It is straight, level, twenty-five paces wide and paved. On either side it is lined with fine, high walls, and along them, on the inside, run two ever-flowing streams bordered with beautiful trees that they call molly. Where they came upon mountains and rocks, they cut through them and leveled them, and they filled the hollows with stone and lime.[30]

Au chef de chasque iournee, il y a de beaux palais fournis de viures, de vestements, et d'armes, tant pour les voyageurs, que pour les armees qui ont à y passer. En

At the end of each day's journey there are fine palaces stocked with provisions, clothing and

29 Montaigne's author is Francisco López de Gómara, whose General History of the Indies (1552) he read in French translation.
30 The molly, or molle, is the Peruvian pepper tree.

FRENCH

l'estimation de cet ouurage, i'ay compté la difficulté, qui est particulierement considerable en ce lieu là. Ils ne bastissoient point de moindres pierres, que de dix pieds en carré: ils n'auoient autre moyen de charrier, qu'à force de bras en trainant leur charge: et pas seulement l'art d'eschaffauder: n'y sçachants autre finesse, que de hausser autant de terre, contre leur bastiment, comme il s'esleue, pour l'oster apres.

ENGLISH

arms, for travelers as well as for the armies that have to pass that way. In judging this work I have taken the difficulty into account, which is especially considerable in that place. They built with no stones smaller than ten feet square. They had no other means of carrying than the strength of their arms, dragging their loads, and they did not even have the skill of scaffolding. The only trick they knew was to pile earth up against the building as it rose, and to remove it afterward.

3.6.25 Retombons à nos coches. En leur place, et de toute autre voiture, ils se faisoient porter par les hommes, et sur les espaules. Ce dernier Roy du Peru, le iour qu'il fut pris, estoit ainsi porté sur des brancars d'or, et assis dans vne chaize d'or, au milieu de sa bataille. Autant qu'on tuoit de ces porteurs, pour le faire choir à bas, car on le vouloit prendre vif, autant d'autres, et à l'enuy, prenoient la place des morts: de façon qu'on ne le peut onques abbatre, quelque meurtre qu'on fist de ces gens là, iusques à ce qu'vn homme de cheual l'alla saisir au corps, et l'aualla par terre.

Let us fall back on our coaches. Instead of coaches, or any other conveyance, they had themselves carried by men, on their shoulders. That last king of Peru, on the day he was taken, was being carried in this way on golden poles, seated in a golden chair, in the midst of his army. As fast as the Spaniards killed his bearers to bring him down (for they wanted to take him alive), other bearers, vying with one another, took the places of the dead. So he could never be brought down, however many of those people were slaughtered, until a horseman went and seized him bodily and pulled him to the ground.

III.7 Of the Disadvantage of Greatness

De l'incommodité de la grandeur
Montaigne argues that greatness is easy to forgo and that rank isolates princes from honest judgment and real competition.

FRENCH

3.7.1 PVISQVE nous ne la pouuons aueindre, vengeons nous à en mesdire. Si n'est-ce pas entierement mesdire de quelque chose, d'y trouuer des deffauts: il s'en trouue en toutes choses, pour belles et desirables qu'elles soyent. En general, elle a cet euident auantage, qu'elle se raualle quand il luy plaist, et qu'à peu pres, elle a le choix, de l'vne et l'autre condition. Car on ne tombe pas de toute hauteur, il en est plus, desquelles on peut descendre, sans tomber. Bien me semble-il, que nous la faisons trop valoir: et trop valoir aussi la resolution de ceux que nous auons ou veu ou ouy dire, l'auoir mesprisee, ou s'en estre desmis, de leur propre dessein.

Son essence n'est pas si euidemment commode, qu'on ne la puisse refuser sans miracle. Ie trouue l'effort bien difficile à la souffrance des maux, mais au contentement d'vne mediocre mesure de fortune, et fuite de la grandeur, i'y trouue fort peu d'affaire. C'est vne vertu, ce me semble, où moy, qui ne suis qu'vn oyson, arriuerois sans beaucoup de contention. Que doiuent faire ceux, qui mettroient encores en consideration, la gloire qui accompagne ce refus, auquel il peut escheoir plus d'ambition, qu'au desir mesme et iouyssance de la grandeur? D'autant que l'ambition ne se conduit iamais mieux selon soy, que par vne voye esgaree et inusitee.

3.7.2 I'aiguise mon courage vers la patience, ie l'affoiblis vers le desir. Autant ay-ie à souhaitter qu'vn autre, et laisse à mes souhaits autant de liberté et d'indiscretion: mais pourtant, si ne m'est-il iamais aduenu, de souhaitter ny empire ny royauté, ny l'eminence de ces hautes fortunes et commanderesses. Ie ne vise pas de ce costé là: ie m'aime trop. Quand ie pense à croistre, c'est bassement: d'vne accroissance contrainte et coüarde: proprement pour moy: en resolution, en prudence, en santé, en

ENGLISH

Since we cannot attain it, let us take our revenge by speaking ill of it. And yet finding faults in something is not altogether speaking ill of it; faults are found in all things, however beautiful and desirable they may be. In general, greatness has this evident advantage: it can lower itself when it pleases, and it has more or less the choice of either condition. For one does not fall from every height; there are more heights from which one can come down without falling. It does seem to me that we rate it too highly. We also rate too highly the resolve of those whom we have seen, or heard tell of, despising it or giving it up of their own accord.[1]

Its nature is not so evidently advantageous that one cannot refuse it without a miracle. I find it a hard effort to endure ills; but to be content with a moderate measure of fortune, and to shun greatness, I find there is very little to it. It is a virtue, it seems to me, that even I, who am only a silly gosling, could attain without much strain. What, then, of those who would also take into account the glory that goes with this refusal? There may be more ambition in it than in the very desire for greatness and the enjoyment of it. For ambition never follows its own bent better than by an out-of-the-way and unusual path.

I sharpen my courage toward patience; I weaken it toward desire. I have as much to wish for as anyone else, and I leave my wishes as much freedom and recklessness. And yet it has never happened to me to wish for empire or royalty, or for the eminence of those lofty, commanding fortunes. I do not aim in that direction: I love myself too much. When I think of growing, it is in a lowly way, with a constrained and timid growth, suited strictly to

1 "It" is greatness, the subject named in the essay's title.

FRENCH

beauté, et en richesse encore. Mais ce credit, cette auctorité si puissante, foule mon imagination.

Et tout à l'opposite de l'autre, m'aymerois à l'auanture mieux, deuxiesme ou troisiesme à Perigueux, que premier à Paris: au moins sans mentir, mieux troisiesme à Paris, que premier en charge, Ie ne veux ny debattre auec vn huissier de porte, miserable incognu: ny faire fendre en adoration, les presses où ie passe. Ie suis duit à vn estage moyen, comme par mon sort, aussi par mon goust. Et ay montré en la conduitte de ma vie, et de mes entreprinses, que i'ay plustost fuy, qu'autrement, d'eniamber par dessus le degré de fortune, auquel Dieu logea ma naissance. Toute constitution naturelle, est pareillement iuste et aysee.

I'ay ainsi l'ame poltrone, que ie ne mesure pas la bonne fortune selon sa hauteur, ie la mesure selon sa facilité.

3.7.3 Mais si ie n'ay point le cœur gros assez, ie l'ay à l'equipollent ouuert, et qui m'ordonne de publier hardiment sa foiblesse. Qui me donneroit à conferer la vie de L. Thorius Balbus, gallant homme, beau, sçauant, sain, entendu et abondant en toute sorte de commoditez et plaisirs, conduisant vne vie tranquille, et toute sienne, l'ame bien preparee contre la mort, la superstition, les douleurs, et autres encombriers de l'humaine necessité, mourant en fin en bataille, les armes en la main, pour la defense de son païs, d'vne part: et d'autre part la vie de M.

Regulus, ainsi grande et hautaine, que chascun la cognoist, et sa fin admirable: l'vne sans nom, sans dignité: l'autre exemplaire et glorieuse à merueilles: i'en diroy certes ce qu'en dit Cicero, si ie sçauoy aussi bien dire que luy. Mais s'il me les falloit coucher sur la mienne, ie diroy aussi, que la premiere est autant selon ma portee, et selon mon desir, que ie conforme à ma portee, comme la seconde est loing au delà. Qu'à cette cy, ie ne puis aduenir que par veneration: i'aduiendroy volontiers à l'autre par vsage.

ENGLISH

me: in resolution, in prudence, in health, in good looks, and in wealth too. But that standing, that so powerful authority, crushes my imagination.

And quite the opposite of that other man, I would perhaps rather be second or third in Périgueux than first in Paris; at least, to tell no lie, rather third in Paris than first in office. I want neither to be a wretched nobody wrangling with a doorkeeper, nor to have crowds part in adoration wherever I pass. I am suited to a middle station, by my lot and by my taste alike. And I have shown, in the conduct of my life and my undertakings, that I have shunned rather than sought to step over the degree of fortune in which God placed my birth. Every natural constitution is equally just and easy.[2]

My soul is so cowardly that I do not measure good fortune by its height; I measure it by its ease.

But if my heart is not big enough, it is correspondingly open, and it bids me boldly publish its weakness. Suppose someone gave me two lives to compare. On the one hand, the life of L. Thorius Balbus: a fine man, handsome, learned, healthy, understanding, and abounding in every kind of comfort and pleasure; he led a tranquil life entirely his own, his soul well prepared against death, superstition, pain and the other encumbrances of human necessity; and he died at last in battle, weapon in hand, in defense of his country. On the other hand, the life of M.[3]

Regulus, as great and lofty as everyone knows it to be, and his admirable end. The one is without name or dignity; the other is exemplary and wonderfully glorious. I would certainly say of them what Cicero says, if I could speak as well as he. But if I had to measure them against my own life, I would also say this: the first is as much within my reach, and in line with my desire, which I fit to my reach, as the second is far beyond it. The latter I can approach only by veneration; the former I would gladly approach by practice.

2 Julius Caesar is said to have declared, passing a small Alpine village, that he would rather be first there than second in Rome.
3 Cicero contrasts the Epicurean Lucius Thorius Balbus with Regulus, tortured to death by the Carthaginians, in On Ends II.63–65.

THE BURDEN OF KINGS

Montaigne wants no mastery and pities kings, cut off from honest rivalry and true praise.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
3.7.4	Retournons à nostre grandeur temporelle, d'où nous sommes partis. Ie suis desgousté de maistrise, et actiue et passiue. Otanez l'vn des sept, qui auoient droit de pretendre au royaume de Perse, print vn party, que i'eusse prins volontiers: c'est qu'il quitta à ses compagnons son droit d'y pouuoir arriuer par election, ou par sort: pourueu que luy et les siens, vescussent en cet empire hors de toute subiection et maistrise, sauf celle des loix antiques: et y eussent toute liberté, qui ne porteroit preiudice à icelles: impatient de commander, comme d'estre commandé.	Let us return to our worldly greatness, from which we set out. I am disgusted with mastery, both active and passive. Otanes, one of the seven who had a right to claim the kingdom of Persia, took a course that I would gladly have taken. He gave up to his companions his right to attain the throne by election or by lot, on condition that he and his family should live in that empire free of all subjection and mastery, except that of the ancient laws, and should enjoy every liberty that did not prejudice those laws. He was as impatient of commanding as of being commanded.[4]
3.7.5	Le plus aspre et difficile mestier du monde, à mon gré, c'est, faire dignement le Roy. I'excuse plus de leurs fautes, qu'on ne fait communement, en consideration de l'horrible poix de leur charge, qui m'estonne. Il est difficile de garder mesure, à vne puissance si desmesuree. Si est-ce que c'est enuers ceux-mesmes qui sont de moins excellente nature, vne singuliere incitation à la vertu, d'estre logé en tel lieu, où vous ne faciez aucun bien, qui ne soit mis en registre et en compte: et où le moindre bien faire, porte sur tant de gens: et où vostre suffisance, comme celle des prescheurs, s'adresse principallement au peuple, iuge peu exacte, facile à piper, facile à contenter.	The harshest and most difficult trade in the world, in my opinion, is to play the king worthily. I excuse more of kings' faults than people commonly do, in consideration of the horrible weight of their office, which stuns me. It is hard to keep measure with a power so beyond measure. And yet, even for those of a less excellent nature, it is a singular spur to virtue to be placed where you can do no good that is not put on record and on account; where the least good deed bears on so many people; and where your ability, like a preacher's, is addressed chiefly to the people, a judge not very exacting, easy to fool, easy to satisfy.
	Il est peu de choses, ausquelles nous puissions donner le iugement syncere, par ce qu'il en est peu, ausquelles en quelque façon nous n'ayons particulier interest. La superiorité et inferiorité, la maistrise, et la subiection, sont obligees à vne naturelle enuie et contestation: il faut qu'elles s'entrepillent perpetuellement. Ie ne crois ny l'vne ny l'autre, des droicts de sa compagne: laissons en dire à la raison, qui est inflexible et impassible, quand nous en pourrons finer. Ie feuilletois il n'y a pas vn mois, deux liures Escossois, se combattans sur ce subiect. Le populaire rend le Roy de pire condition qu'vn charretier, le monarchique le loge quelques brasses au dessus de Dieu, en puissance et souueraineté.	There are few things on which we can give a sincere judgment, because there are few in which we do not have some private interest. Superiority and inferiority, mastery and subjection, are bound to natural envy and rivalry; they must perpetually plunder each other. I believe neither of them about the rights of its partner. Let reason speak on the matter, which is inflexible and dispassionate, when we can get hold of it. Not a month ago I was leafing through two Scottish books fighting over this subject. The one for the people makes the king worse off than a carter; the one for monarchy sets him some fathoms above God in power and sovereignty.[5]
3.7.6	Or l'incommodité de la grandeur, que i'ay pris icy à remerquer, par quelque occasion qui vient de m'en	Now the inconvenience of greatness that I have undertaken to note here, prompted by an occasion that has just reminded me of it, is this. There is

4 The story is told by Herodotus (Histories III.83).

FRENCH

aduertir, est cette-cy. Il n'est à l'auanture rien plus plaisant au commerce des hommes, que les essais que nous faisons les vns contre les autres, par ialousie d'honneur et de valeur, soit aux exercices du corps ou de l'esprit: ausquels la grandeur souueraine n'a aucune vraye part. A la verité il m'a semblé souuent, qu'à force de respect, on y traicte les Princes desdaigneusement et iniurieusement.

Car ce dequoy ie m'offençois infiniement en mon enfance, que ceux qui s'exerçoient auec moy, espargnassent de s'y employer à bon escient, pour me trouuer indigne contre qui ils s'efforçassent: c'est ce qu'on voit leur aduenir tous les iours, chacun se trouuant indigne de s'efforcer contre eux. Si on recognoist qu'ils ayent tant soit peu d'affection à la victoire, il n'est celuy, qui ne se trauaille à la leur prester: et qui n'ayme mieux trahir sa gloire, que d'offenser la leur. On n'y employe qu'autant d'effort qu'il en faut pour seruir à leur honneur. Quelle part ont ils à la meslee, en laquelle chacun est pour eux?

Il me semble voir ces paladins du temps passé, se presentans aux ioustes et aux combats, auec des corps, et des armes faëes. Brisson courant contre Alexandre, se feignit en la course: Alexandre l'en tança: mais il luy en deuoit faire donner le foüet. Pour cette consideration, Carneades disoit, que les enfans des Princes n'apprennent rien à droict qu'à manier des cheuaux: d'autant qu'en tout autre exercice, chacun fleschit soubs eux, et leur donne gaigné: mais vn cheual qui n'est ny flateur ny courtisan, verse le fils du Roy par terre, comme il feroit le fils d'vn crocheteur.

3.7.7 Homere a esté contrainct de consentir que Venus fut blessee au combat de Troye, vne si douce saincte et si delicate, pour luy donner du courage et de la hardiesse, qualitez qui ne tombent aucunement en ceux qui sont exempts de danger. On fait courroucer, craindre, fuyr les Dieux, s'enialouser, se douloir, et se passionner, pour les honorer des vertus qui se bastissent entre nous, de ces imperfections. Qui ne participe, au hazard et difficulté, ne peut pretendre interest à l'honneur et plaisir qui suit les actions hazardeuses. C'est pitié de pouuoir tant, qu'il aduienne que toutes choses vous cedent. Vostre fortune

ENGLISH

perhaps nothing more pleasant in human company than the trials we make against one another out of rivalry in honor and prowess, whether in exercises of body or of mind. In these, sovereign greatness has no true share. Indeed, it has often seemed to me that out of sheer respect, princes are treated in them disdainfully and insultingly.

In my childhood I was infinitely offended when those who competed with me held back from trying in earnest, because they thought me unworthy of their effort. That is what we see happen to princes every day: everyone thinks himself unworthy to exert himself against them. If anyone notices that they have the least desire for victory, there is no one who does not strive to hand it to them, and who would not rather betray his own glory than offend theirs. People put in only as much effort as serves their honor. What part do they have in a fray in which everyone is on their side?

I seem to see those paladins of olden times presenting themselves at jousts and combats with enchanted bodies and arms. Brisson, running a race against Alexander, slackened his pace on purpose. Alexander scolded him for it, but he ought to have had him whipped. For this reason Carneades used to say that the sons of princes learn nothing properly except how to manage horses. In every other exercise everyone bends before them and lets them win; but a horse, which is neither a flatterer nor a courtier, throws the king's son to the ground just as it would the son of a porter.[6]

Homer was obliged to let Venus, so sweet and delicate a divinity, be wounded in the fighting at Troy, in order to give her courage and boldness, qualities that in no way belong to those who are exempt from danger. The gods are made to grow angry, to fear, to flee, to be jealous, to grieve and to be swept by passion, in order to honor them with the virtues that among us are built out of these imperfections. Whoever has no share in the risk and difficulty can claim no interest in the honor and pleasure that follow hazardous actions. It is a pity to be so powerful that everything gives way before

5 Probably George Buchanan's On the Right of Kingship among the Scots (1579) and Adam Blackwood's reply, Apology for Kings (1581).
6 Plutarch tells this story of the runner Crisso of Himera.

FRENCH

reiette trop loing de vous la societé et la compagnie, elle vous plante trop à l'escart.

Cette aysance et lasche facilité, de faire tout baisser soubs soy, est ennemye de toute sorte de plaisir. C'est glisser cela, ce n'est pas aller: c'est dormir, ce n'est pas viure! Conceuez l'homme accompagné d'omnipotence, vous l'abysmez: il faut qu'il vous demande par aumosne, de l'empeschement et de la resistance. Son estre et son bien est en indigence.

3.7.8 Leurs bonnes qualitez sont mortes et perdues: car elles ne se sentent que par comparaison, et on les en met hors: ils ont peu de cognoissance de la vraye loüange, estans batus d'vne si continuelle approbation et vniforme. Ont ils affaire au plus sot de leurs subiects? ils n'ont aucun moyen de prendre aduantage sur luy: en disant, C'est pour ce qu'il est mon Roy, il luy semble auoir assez dict, qu'il a presté la main à se laisser vaincre. Cette qualité estouffe et consomme les autres qualitez vrayes et essentielles: elles sont enfoncees dans la royauté: et ne leur laisse à eux faire valoir, que les actions qui la touchent directement, et qui luy seruent: les offices de leur charge.

C'est tant estre Roy, qu'il n'est que par là. Cette lueur estrangere qui l'enuironne, le cache, et nous le desrobe: nostre veuë s'y rompt et s'y dissipe, estant remplie et arrestee par cette forte lumiere. Le Senat ordonna le prix d'eloquence à Tybere: il le refusa, n'estimant pas d'vn iugement si peu libre, quand bien il eust esté veritable, il s'en peust ressentir.

3.7.9 Comme on leur cede tous auantages d'honneur, aussi conforte lon et auctorise les deffauts et vices qu'ils ont: non seulement par approbation, mais aussi par imitation. Chacun des suiuans d'Alexandre portoit comme luy, la teste à costé. Et les flateurs de Dionisius, s'entrehurtoient en sa presence, poussoyent et versoient ce qui se rencontroit à leurs pieds, pour dire qu'ils auoient la veuë aussi courte que luy. Les greueures ont aussi par fois seruy de recommandation et faueur. I'en ay veu la surdité en affectation. Et par ce que le maistre hayssoit sa femme, Plutarque a veu les courtisans repudier les leurs, qu'ils aymoient.

Qui plus est, la paillardise s'en est veuë en credit, et toute dissolution: comme aussi la desloyauté, les blasphemes, la cruauté: comme l'heresie, comme la superstition,

ENGLISH

you. Your fortune thrusts society and company too far from you; it plants you too far apart.

This ease, this slack facility of making everything bow beneath you, is the enemy of every kind of pleasure. That is sliding, not walking; it is sleeping, not living! Imagine a man attended by omnipotence: you sink him in an abyss. He must beg you for hindrance and resistance as for alms. His being and his good are in want.

Their good qualities are dead and lost, for qualities are felt only by comparison, and kings are put out of reach of comparison. They know little of true praise, battered as they are by such continual and uniform approval. Do they have to deal with the stupidest of their subjects? They have no way of getting the better of him. He has only to say, "It is because he is my king," and he thinks he has made it plain enough that he lent a hand to his own defeat. This quality smothers and consumes their other true and essential qualities; these are sunk in royalty. It leaves them nothing to show off but the actions that touch it directly and serve it: the duties of their office.

This is being king to such a degree that he exists only through it. That borrowed glow surrounding him hides him and steals him from us; our sight is broken and scattered by it, being filled and stopped by that strong light. The Senate awarded the prize for eloquence to Tiberius. He refused it, thinking he could take no satisfaction from a judgment so little free, even had it been true.

Just as all the advantages of honor are yielded to them, so their defects and vices are encouraged and sanctioned, not only by approval but also by imitation. Each of Alexander's followers carried his head tilted to one side, as he did. And the flatterers of Dionysius bumped into one another in his presence, and knocked over and upset whatever lay at their feet, to show that they were as short-sighted as he. Ruptures, too, have at times served as a recommendation and a source of favor. I have seen deafness put on for affectation. And because the master hated his wife, Plutarch saw the courtiers repudiate their own wives, whom they loved.

What is more, lechery has been seen to come into fashion this way, and every kind of debauchery; and likewise disloyalty, blasphemy, cruelty; and

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
	l'irreligion, la mollesse, et pis si pis il y a. Par vn exemple encores plus dangereux, que celuy des flateurs de Mithridates, qui d'autant que leur maistre pretendoit à l'honneur de bon medecin, luy portoient à inciser et cauteriser leurs membres. Car ces autres souffrent cauteriser leur ame, partie plus delicate et plus noble.	heresy, superstition, irreligion, softness, and worse, if there is worse. This is an example even more dangerous than that of Mithridates' flatterers. Because their master aspired to the honor of being a good physician, they brought him their limbs to cut and cauterize. These others let their souls be cauterized, a more delicate and noble part.
3.7.10	Mais pour acheuer par où i'ay commencé: Adrian l'Empereur debatant auec le philosophe Fauorinus de l'interpretation de quelque mot: Fauorinus luy en quitta bien tost la victoire: ses amys se plaignans à luy: Vous vous moquez, fit-il, voudriez vous qu'il ne fust pas plus sçauant que moy, luy qui commande à trente legions? Auguste escriuit des vers contre Asinius Pollio: Et moy, dit Pollio, ie me tais: ce n'est pas sagesse d'escrire à l'enuy de celuy, qui peut proscrire. Et auoient raison. Car Dionysius pour ne pouuoir esgaller Philoxenus en la poësie, et Platon en discours: en condamna l'vn aux carrieres, et enuoya vendre l'autre esclaue en l'isle d'Ægine.	But to end where I began: the Emperor Hadrian was debating with the philosopher Favorinus over the interpretation of some word, and Favorinus soon conceded him the victory. When his friends complained to him, he said, "You must be joking. Would you have him not be more learned than I, he who commands thirty legions?" Augustus wrote verses against Asinius Pollio. "And I," said Pollio, "keep silent: it is not wise to write in rivalry with a man who can proscribe." And they were right. For Dionysius, because he could not equal Philoxenus in poetry and Plato in reasoning, condemned the one to the quarries and sent the other to be sold as a slave on the island of Aegina.

III.8 Of the Art of Conversation

De l'art de conferer

Montaigne praises vigorous, frank debate as the best exercise for the mind and admits his own faults as a warning to others.

FRENCH

ENGLISH

3.8.1 C'EST vn vsage de nostre iustice, d'en condamner aucuns, pour l'aduertissement des autres. De les condamner, par ce qu'ils ont failly, ce seroit bestise, comme dit Platon. Car ce qui est faict, ne se peut deffaire: mais c'est afin qu'ils ne faillent plus de mesmes, ou qu'on fuye l'exemple de leur faute. On ne corrige pas celuy qu'on pend, on corrige les autres par luy. Ie fais de mesmes. Mes erreurs sont tantost naturelles et incorrigibles et irremediables. Mais ce que les honnestes hommes profitent au public en se faisant imiter, ie le profiteray à l'auanture à me faire euiter. Nónne vides Albi vt malè viuat filius, vtque / Barrus inops?

It is a practice of our justice to condemn some people as a warning to others. To condemn them because they have done wrong would be stupidity, as Plato says, for what is done cannot be undone. It is done so that they will not do wrong in the same way again, or so that others will shun the example of their fault. We do not correct the man we hang; we correct others through him. I do the same. My errors are by now natural, incorrigible and irremediable. But the good that decent men do the public by getting themselves imitated, I shall perhaps do by getting myself avoided. Do you not see how badly Albius' son lives, and how / Barrus is in want?[1]

magnum documentum, ne patriam rem / Perdere quis velit. Publiant et accusant mes imperfections, quelqu'vn apprendra de les craindre. Les parties que i'estime le plus en moy, tirent plus d'honneur de m'accuser, que de me recommander. Voylà pourquoy i'y retombe, et m'y arreste plus souuent. Mais quand tout est compté, on ne parle iamais de soy, sans perte. Les propres condemnations sont tousiours accreuës, les louanges mescruës. Il en peut estre aucuns de ma complexion, qui m'instruis mieux par contrarieté que par similitude: et par fuite que par suite. A cette sorte de discipline regardoit le vieux Caton, quand il dict, que les sages ont plus à apprendre des fols, que les fols des sages.

A great lesson to anyone tempted to squander / his inheritance. By my publishing and accusing my imperfections, someone will learn to fear them. The qualities I most esteem in myself gain more honor from accusing me than from commending me. That is why I fall back on accusation and dwell on it more often. But when all is reckoned, one never speaks of oneself without loss. Self-condemnation is always believed, and then some; self-praise is disbelieved. There may be some people of my temperament who, like me, learn better by contrast than by likeness, by shunning than by following. This is the kind of discipline the elder Cato had in mind when he said that the wise have more to learn from fools than fools from the wise.

Et cet ancien ioueur de lyre, que Pausanias recite, auoir accoustumé contraindre ses disciples d'aller ouyr vn mauuais sonneur, qui logeoit vis à vis de luy: où ils apprinssent à hayr ses desaccords et fauces mesures. L'horreur de la cruauté me reiecte plus auant en la clemence, qu'aucun patron de clemence ne me sçauroit attirer. Vn bon escuyer ne redresse pas tant mon assiete, comme fait vn procureur, ou vn Venitien à cheual. Et vne

So too that ancient lyre player who, as Pausanias relates, used to make his pupils go and hear a bad player who lived opposite him, so that they would learn to hate his discords and false rhythms. The horror of cruelty throws me further into clemency than any model of clemency could draw me. A good riding master does not straighten my seat as

1 Montaigne's word conferer means to discuss or argue face to face. The verses are from Horace, Satires I.4.

FRENCH

mauuaise façon de langage, reforme mieux la mienne, que ne fait la bonne. Tous les iours la sotte contenance d'vn autre, m'aduertit et m'aduise. Ce qui poincte, touche et esueille mieux, que ce qui plaist.

Ce temps est propre à nous amender à reculons, par disconuenance plus que par conuenance; par difference, que par accord. Estant peu apprins par les bons exemples, ie me sers des mauuais: desquels la leçon est ordinaire. Ie me suis efforcé de me rendre autant aggreable comme i'en voyoy de fascheux: aussi ferme, que i'en voyoy de mols: aussi doux, que i'en voyoy d'aspres: aussi bon, que i'en voyoy de meschants. Mais ie me proposoy des mesures inuincibles.

ENGLISH

much as an attorney or a Venetian on horseback does. And a bad way of speaking reforms mine better than a good one. Every day someone else's foolish bearing warns and advises me. What stings touches and rouses us better than what pleases.

Our age is fit to mend us backward: by disagreement more than by agreement, by difference rather than by accord. Being little taught by good examples, I make use of bad ones, whose lesson is everywhere. I have striven to make myself as agreeable as I saw others disagreeable, as firm as I saw others weak, as gentle as I saw others harsh, as good as I saw others wicked. But I set myself unbeatable standards.

CONVERSATION, THE BEST EXERCISE

Montaigne prizes vigorous argument with strong minds above the study of books.

FRENCH

3.8.2 Le plus fructueux et naturel exercice de nostre esprit, c'est à mon gré la conference. I'en trouue l'vsage plus doux, que d'aucune autre action de nostre vie. Et c'est la raison pourquoy, si i'estois à cette heure forcé de choisir, ie consentirois plustost, ce crois-ie, de perdre la veuë, que l'ouyr ou le parler. Les Atheniens, et encore les Romains, conseruoient en grand honneur cet exercice en leurs Academies. De nostre temps, les Italiens en retiennent quelques vestiges, à leur grand profit: comme il se voit par la comparaison de nos entendemens aux leurs. L'estude des liures, c'est vn mouuement languissant et foible qui n'eschauffe point: là où la conference, apprend et exerce en vn coup.

Si ie confere auec vne ame forte, et vn roide iousteur, il me presse les flancs, me picque à gauche et à dextre: ses imaginations eslancent les miennes. La ialousie, la gloire, la contention, me poussent et rehaussent au dessus de moy-mesmes. Et l'vnisson, est qualité du tout ennuyeuse en la conference. Mais comme nostre esprit se fortifie par la communication des esprits vigoureux et reglez, il ne se peut dire, combien il perd, et s'abastardit, par le continuel commerce, et frequentation, que nous auons auec les esprits bas et maladifs. Il n'est contagion qui s'espande comme celle-là. Ie sçay par assez d'experience, combien en vaut l'aune. I'ayme à contester, et à discourir, mais c'est auec peu d'hommes, et pour moy.

ENGLISH

The most fruitful and natural exercise of our mind is, in my opinion, conversation. I find its practice sweeter than that of any other action of our life. That is why, if I were now forced to choose, I would sooner consent, I think, to lose my sight than my hearing or my speech. The Athenians, and the Romans too, held this exercise in great honor in their Academies. In our time the Italians retain some vestiges of it, to their great profit, as can be seen by comparing our minds with theirs. The study of books is a languid, feeble activity that gives off no heat; whereas conversation teaches and exercises us at one stroke.

If I converse with a strong mind and a tough jouster, he presses on my flanks and pricks me left and right; his ideas launch mine. Rivalry, glory and contention drive me on and lift me above myself. And unison is an altogether tiresome quality in conversation. But just as our mind is strengthened by contact with vigorous and well-ordered minds, it is impossible to say how much it loses and degenerates through continual dealings and association with low and sickly minds. No contagion spreads like that one. I know from enough experience exactly what it costs. I love to argue and discuss, but with few men, and for my own sake.

For to serve as a spectacle for the great, and to show off one's wit and one's chatter in competition

FRENCH

Car de seruir de spectacle aux grands, et faire à l'enuy parade de son esprit, et de son caquet, ie trouue que c'est vn mestier tres-messeant à vn homme d'honneur.

3.8.3 La sottise est vne mauuaise qualité, mais de ne la pouuoir supporter, et s'en despiter et ronger, comme il m'aduient, c'est vne autre sorte de maladie, qui ne doit guere à la sottise, en importunité. Et est ce qu'à present ie veux accuser du mien. I'entre en conference et en dispute, auec grande liberté et facilité: d'autant que l'opinion trouue en moy le terrein mal propre à y penetrer, et y pousser de hautes racines. Nulles propositions m'estonnent, nulle creance me blesse, quelque contrarieté qu'elle aye à la mienne. Il n'est si friuole et si extrauagante fantasie, qui ne me semble bien sortable à la production de l'esprit humain.

Nous autres, qui priuons nostre iugement du droict de faire des arrests, regardons mollement les opinions diuerses: et si nous n'y prestons le iugement, nous y prestons aysement l'oreille. Où l'vn plat est vuide du tout en la balance, ie laisse vaciller l'autre, sous les songes d'vne vieille. Et me semble estre excusable, si i'accepte plustost le nombre impair: le ieudy au prix du vendredy: si ie m'aime mieux douziesme ou quatorziesme, que treiziesme à table: si ie vois plus volontiers vn liéure costoyant, que trauersant mon chemin, quand ie voyage: et donne plustost le pied gauche, que le droict, à chausser. Toutes telles reuasseries, qui sont en credit autour de nous, meritent aumoins qu'on les escoute.

Pour moy, elles emportent seulement l'inanité, mais elles l'emportent. Encores sont en poids, les opinions vulgaires et casuelles, autre chose, que rien, en nature. Et qui ne s'y laisse aller iusques là, tombe à l'auanture au vice de l'opiniastreté, pour euiter celuy de la superstition.

3.8.4 Les contradictions donc des iugemens, ne m'offencent, ny m'alterent: elles m'esueillent seulement et m'exercent. Nous fuyons la correction, il s'y faudroit presenter et produire notamment quand elle vient par forme de conference, non de regence. A chasque opposition, on ne regarde pas si elle est iuste, mais, à tort, ou à droit, comme on s'en deffera. Au lieu d'y tendre les bras, nous y tendons les griffes. Ie souffrirois estre rudement heurté par mes amis: Tu és vn sot, tu resues. I'ayme entre les galans hommes, qu'on s'exprime courageusement: que les mots aillent où va la pensee. Il nous faut fortifier l'ouye, et la durcir, contre cette tendreur du son ceremonieux des parolles.

ENGLISH

with others, I find a most unbecoming trade for a man of honor.

Stupidity is a bad quality. But to be unable to bear it, to be vexed and eaten up by it, as happens to me, is another sort of disease, hardly less of a nuisance than stupidity. And that is what I now want to accuse in myself. I enter into conversation and dispute with great freedom and ease, inasmuch as opinion finds me poor soil to penetrate and put down deep roots in. No propositions stun me, no belief wounds me, however contrary it may be to mine. There is no notion so frivolous and so extravagant that it does not seem to me quite a fitting product of the human mind.

We who deny our judgment the right to hand down rulings look mildly on differing opinions; if we do not lend them our judgment, we readily lend them our ear. Where one pan of the scales is completely empty, I let the other waver under an old woman's dreams. And I think I may be excused if I prefer an odd number; Thursday over Friday; if I would rather be twelfth or fourteenth at table than thirteenth; if, when I travel, I would rather see a hare running alongside my path than crossing it; and if I offer my left foot to be shod before my right. All such fancies, which are in credit around us, deserve at least a hearing.

For me, they outweigh only emptiness; but they do outweigh it. Even so, common and chance opinions have some weight; in nature they are something other than nothing. And whoever will not let himself go that far may well fall into the vice of obstinacy while avoiding that of superstition.

Contradictory judgments, then, neither offend me nor upset me; they only rouse and exercise me. We flee correction; we ought to come forward and offer ourselves to it, especially when it comes in the form of conversation, not of schoolmastering. At each objection we do not consider whether it is just, but how, rightly or wrongly, we can get rid of it. Instead of opening our arms to it, we put out our claws. I would put up with being roughly jostled by my friends: "You are a fool, you are dreaming." Among gentlemen I like people to speak out boldly, and words to go where the thought goes. We must toughen our hearing and

FRENCH

ENGLISH

harden it against this tenderness for the ceremonious sound of words.

I'ayme vne societé, et familiarité forte, et virile: vne amitié, qui se flatte en l'aspreté et vigueur de son commerce: comme l'amour, és morsures et esgratigneures sanglantes. Elle n'est pas assez vigoureuse et genereuse, si elle n'est querelleuse: si elle est ciuilisee et artiste: si elle craint le heurt, et a ses allures contreintes. *Neque enim disputari sine reprehensione potest.* Quand on me contrarie, on esueille mon attention, non pas ma cholere: ie m'auance vers celuy qui me contredit, qui m'instruit. La cause de la verité, deuroit estre la cause commune à l'vn et à l'autre. Que respondra-il? la passion du courroux luy a desia frappé le iugement: le trouble s'en est saisi, auant la raison.

I like a strong, manly fellowship and familiarity, a friendship that delights in the sharpness and vigor of its dealings, as love does in bites and bloody scratches. It is not vigorous and generous enough if it is not quarrelsome, if it is civilized and artful, if it fears clashes and moves with a constrained gait. *For there can be no discussion without contradiction.* When I am contradicted, it rouses my attention, not my anger. I go toward the man who contradicts me: he is instructing me. The cause of truth ought to be the common cause of both sides. What will he answer? The passion of anger has already struck down his judgment; turmoil has seized it before reason could.[2]

Il seroit vtile, qu'on passast par gageure, la decision de nos disputes: qu'il y eust vne marque materielle de nos pertes: affin que nous en tinssions estat, et que mon valet me peust dire: Il vous cousta l'annee passee cent escus, à vingt fois, d'auoir esté ignorant et opiniastre. Ie festoye et caresse la verité en quelque main que ie la trouue, et m'y rends alaigrement, et luy tends mes armes vaincues, de loing que ie la vois approcher. Et pourueu qu'on n'y procede d'vne troigne trop imperieusement magistrale, ie prens plaisir à estre reprins. Et m'accommode aux accusateurs, souuent plus, par raison de ciuilité, que par raison d'amendement: aymant à gratifier et à nourrir la liberté de m'aduertir, par la facilité de ceder.

It would be useful to settle our disputes by wager, so that there would be a material mark of our losses, and we would keep account of them, and my valet could tell me: "Last year, on twenty occasions, being ignorant and stubborn cost you a hundred crowns." I welcome and embrace truth in whatever hands I find it. I surrender to it cheerfully and hold out my vanquished arms to it as soon as I see it approaching in the distance. And provided it is not done with too imperiously schoolmasterly a face, I enjoy being reproved. I often accommodate myself to my accusers more for the sake of civility than for the sake of amendment, because I like to gratify and foster people's freedom to admonish me by yielding readily.

3.8.5 Toutesfois il est malaisé d'y attirer les hommes de mon temps. Ils n'ont pas le courage de corriger, par ce qu'ils n'ont pas le courage de souffrir à l'estre. Et parlent tousiours auec dissimulation, en presence les vns des autres. Ie prens si grand plaisir d'estre iugé et cogneu, qu'il m'est comme indifferent, en quelle des deux formes ie le soys. Mon imagination se contredit elle mesme si souuent, et condamne, que ce m'est tout vn, qu'vn autre le face: veu principalement que ie ne donne à sa reprehension, que l'authorité que ie veux.

Yet it is hard to draw the men of my time into this. They lack the courage to correct, because they lack the courage to endure being corrected. And they always speak with dissimulation in one another's presence. I take such great pleasure in being judged and known that it is almost indifferent to me in which of the two ways it is done. My own imagination so often contradicts and condemns itself that it is all one to me if someone else does so, especially since I give his reproof only the authority I choose.

Mais ie romps paille auec celuy, qui se tient si haut à la main: comme i'en cognoy quelqu'vn, qui plaint son aduertissement, s'il n'en est creu: et prend à iniure, si on estriue à le suiure. Ce que Socrates recueilloit tousiours

But I break off with a man who carries himself so high-handedly, like one I know who regrets having given his advice if it is not believed, and takes it as an insult if anyone balks at following it. As for So-

2 Cicero, On Ends I.8.

FRENCH

riant, les contradictions, qu'on opposoit à son discours, on pourroit dire, que sa force en estoit cause: et que l'auantage ayant à tomber certainement de son costé, il les acceptoit, comme matiere de nouuelle victoire. Toutesfois nous voyons au rebours, qu'il n'est rien, qui nous y rende le sentiment si delicat, que l'opinion de la préeminence, et desdaing de l'aduersaire. Et que par raison, c'est au foible plustost, d'accepter de bon gré les oppositions qui le redressent et rabillent.

Ie cherche à la verité plus la frequentation de ceux qui me gourment, que de ceux qui me craignent. C'est vn plaisir fade et nuisible, d'auoir affaire à gens qui nous admirent et facent place. Antisthenes commanda à ses enfans, de ne sçauoir iamais gré ny grace, à homme qui les louast. Ie me sens bien plus fier, de la victoire que ie gaigne sur moy, quand en l'ardeur mesme du combat, ie me faits plier soubs la force de la raison de mon aduersaire: que ie ne me sens gré, de la victoire que ie gaigne sur luy, par sa foiblesse.

En fin, ie reçois et aduoue toute sorte d'atteinctes qui sont de droict fil, pour foibles qu'elles soient: mais ie suis par trop impatient, de celles qui se donnent sans forme.

ENGLISH

crates, who always welcomed with a smile the objections raised against his arguments, one could say that his strength was the cause of it: since the advantage was sure to fall to his side, he accepted them as material for a fresh victory. Yet we see, on the contrary, that nothing makes us so touchy here as a belief in our own superiority and contempt for our opponent. And by rights it is rather for the weak to accept with good grace the objections that set him straight and mend him.

In truth I seek out the company of those who handle me roughly more than of those who fear me. It is an insipid and harmful pleasure to deal with people who admire us and make way for us. Antisthenes commanded his children never to be grateful or obliged to any man who praised them. I feel much prouder of the victory I win over myself when, in the very heat of combat, I make myself bow beneath the force of my opponent's reasoning, than I feel pleased with a victory I win over him through his weakness.

In short, I accept and acknowledge every kind of thrust that comes straight, however weak; but I am far too impatient of those delivered without form.

ORDER IN DEBATE

He cares less who wins than that a dispute keeps order; muddled wrangling makes him rude.

FRENCH

3.8.6 Il me chaut peu de la matiere, et me sont les opinions vnes, et la victoire du subiect à peu pres indifferente. Tout vn iour ie contesteray paisiblement, si la conduicte du debat se suit auec ordre. Ce n'est pas tant la force et la subtilité, que ie demande, comme l'ordre. L'ordre qui se voit tous les iours, aux altercations des bergers et des enfants de boutique: iamais entre nous. S'ils se detraquent, c'est en inciuilité: si faisons nous bien. Mais leur tumulte et impatience, ne les deuoye pas de leur theme. Leur propos suit son cours. S'ils preuiennent l'vn l'autre, s'ils ne s'attendent pas, aumoins ils s'entendent. On respond tousiours trop bien pour moy, si on respond à ce que ie dits.

Mais quand la dispute est trouble et des-reglee, ie quitte la chose, et m'attache à la forme, auec despit et indiscretion: et me iette à vne façon de debattre, testue, malicieuse, et imperieuse, dequoy i'ay à rougir apres. Il

ENGLISH

I care little about the subject matter. Opinions are all one to me, and which side wins on the point at issue is nearly indifferent. I will argue peaceably for a whole day if the debate is conducted in an orderly way. It is not so much force and subtlety that I ask for as order: the order seen every day in the squabbles of shepherds and shop boys, never among us. If they go off the rails, it is into rudeness; and so do we, indeed. But their tumult and impatience do not turn them away from their theme; their talk follows its course. If they jump in ahead of one another, if they do not wait for one another, at least they understand one another. Anyone answers me only too well if he answers what I say.

But when the dispute is muddled and disorderly, I abandon the matter and fasten on the form, with vexation and lack of restraint. I fall into a stub-

FRENCH

est impossible de traitter de bonne foy auec vn sot. Mon iugement ne se corrompt pas seulement à la main d'vn maistre si impetueux: mais aussi ma conscience.

3.8.7 Noz disputes deuroient estre defendues et punies, comme d'autres crimes verbaux. Quel vice n'esueillent elles et n'amoncellent, tousiours regies et commandees par la cholere? Nous entrons en inimitié, premierement contre les raisons, et puis contre les hommes. Nous n'apprenons à disputer que pour contredire: et chascun contredisant et estant contredict, il en aduient que le fruit du disputer, c'est perdre et aneantir la verité. Ainsi Platon en sa republique, prohibe cet exercice aux esprits ineptes et mal nays. A quoy faire vous mettez vous en voye de quester ce qui est, auec celuy qui n'a ny pas, ny alleure qui vaille? On ne fait point tort au subiect, quand on le quicte, pour voir du moyen de le traicter.

Ie ne dis pas moyen scholastique et artiste, ie dis moyen naturel, d'vn sain entendement. Que sera-ce en fin? l'vn va en Orient, l'autre en Occident. Ils perdent le principal, et l'escartent dans la presse des incidens. Au bout d'vne heure de tempeste, ils ne sçauent ce qu'ils cherchent: l'vn est bas, l'autre haut, l'autre costier. Qui se prend à vn mot et vne similitude. Qui ne sent plus ce qu'on luy oppose, tant il est engagé en sa course, et pense à se suiure, non pas à vous.

Qui se trouuant foible de reins, craint tout, refuse tout, mesle dez l'entree, et confond le propos: ou sur l'effort du debat, se mutine à se taire tout plat: par vne ignorance despite, affectant vn orgueilleux mesprix: ou vne sottement modeste fuitte de contention. Pourueu que cettuy-cy frappe, il ne luy chaut combien il se descouure. L'autre compte ses mots, et les poise pour raisons. Celuy-là n'y employe que l'auantage de sa voix, et de ses poulmons. En voyla vn qui conclud contre soy-mesme: et cettuy-cy qui vous assourdit de prefaces et digressions inutiles. Cet autre s'arme de pures iniures, et cherche vne querelle d'Alemaigne, pour se deffaire de la societé et conference d'vn esprit, qui presse le sien.

ENGLISH

born, spiteful and imperious way of arguing that I have to blush for afterward. It is impossible to deal in good faith with a fool. At the hands of so impetuous a master, it is not only my judgment that is corrupted, but my conscience too.

Our disputes ought to be forbidden and punished like other verbal crimes. What vice do they not rouse and heap up, ruled and commanded as they always are by anger? We become hostile first to the reasons and then to the men. We learn to dispute only in order to contradict; and with everyone contradicting and being contradicted, the result is that the fruit of disputing is to lose and annihilate the truth. Thus Plato, in his Republic, forbids this exercise to inept and ill-endowed minds. Why set out in quest of what is with someone whose pace and gait are worth nothing? We do the subject no wrong when we leave it to see about the right means of treating it.

I do not mean a scholastic, artful means; I mean the natural means of a sound understanding. What will it come to in the end? One goes east, the other west. They lose the main point and scatter it in the throng of side issues. After an hour of storm they do not know what they are looking for: one is low, another high, another off to the side. One fastens on a word and a comparison. Another no longer even feels the objections made to him, so caught up is he in his own course; he is thinking of following himself, not you.

Another, finding himself weak in the loins, fears everything, refuses everything, muddles and confuses the issue from the start. Or else, at the height of the debate, he mutinies and falls flatly silent, out of spiteful ignorance, affecting a proud contempt, or out of a foolishly modest avoidance of contention. This one, provided he strikes, does not care how much he exposes himself. That one counts his words and weighs them as if they were reasons. Another relies only on the power of his voice and his lungs. Here is one who reaches a conclusion against himself, and here another who deafens you with useless prefaces and digressions. Yet another arms himself with sheer insults and picks a quarrel over nothing, to escape the company and conversation of a mind that presses his own too hard.

FRENCH	ENGLISH
Ce dernier ne voit rien en la raison, mais il vous tient assiegé sur la closture dialectique de ses clauses, et sur les formules de son art.	This last one sees nothing in reason, but he keeps you besieged within the dialectical enclosure of his clauses and the formulas of his art.

LEARNING WITHOUT JUDGMENT

Logic and learning make no one wiser; in a weak soul knowledge is a fool's bauble.

FRENCH	ENGLISH
3.8.8 Or qui n'entre en deffiance des sciences, et n'est en doubte, s'il s'en peut tirer quelque solide fruict, au besoin de la vie: à considerer l'vsage que nous en auons? *Nihil sanantibus litteris.* Qui a pris de l'entendement en la logique? où sont ses belles promesses? *Nec ad melius viuendum, nec ad commodius disserendum.* Voit-on plus de barbouillage au caquet des harengeres, qu'aux disputes publiques des hommes de cette profession? I'aymeroy mieux, que mon fils apprint aux tauernes à parler, qu'aux escholes de la parlerie.	Now who does not grow distrustful of learning, and doubt whether any solid fruit can be drawn from it for the needs of life, considering the use we make of it? *Letters that cure nothing.* Who has gained understanding from logic? Where are its fine promises? *Neither for living better nor for reasoning more aptly.* Is there more muddle in the chatter of fishwives than in the public disputations of the men of this profession? I would rather my son learned to talk in taverns than in the schools of talkery.[3]
Ayez vn maistre és arts, conferez auec luy, que ne nous fait-il sentir cette excellence artificiele, et ne rauit les femmes, et les ignorans comme nous sommes, par l'admiration de la fermeté de ses raisons, de la beauté de son ordre? que ne nous domine-il et persuade comme il veut? Vn homme si auantageux en matiere, et en conduicte, pourquoy mesle-il à son escrime les iniures, l'indiscretion et la rage? Qu'il oste son chapperon, sa robbe, et son Latin, qu'il ne batte pas nos aureilles d'Aristote tout pur et tout creu, vous le prendrez pour l'vn d'entre nous, ou pis.	Take a master of arts and converse with him. Why does he not make us feel that artful excellence of his, and ravish women and ignorant people like us with admiration for the firmness of his reasons and the beauty of his order? Why does he not dominate us and persuade us as he wishes? A man with such an advantage in matter and method, why does he mix insults, indiscretion and rage into his fencing? Let him take off his hood, his gown and his Latin; let him stop battering our ears with Aristotle pure and raw: you will take him for one of us, or worse.
Il me semble de cette implication et entrelasseure du langage, par où ils nous pressent, qu'il en va comme des ioueurs de passe-passe: leur souplesse combat et force nos sens, mais elle n'esbranle aucunement nostre creance: hors ce bastelage, ils ne font rien qui ne soit commun et vil. Pour estre plus sçauans, ils n'en sont pas moins ineptes. I'ayme et honore le sçauoir, autant que ceux qui l'ont. Et en son vray vsage, c'est le plus noble et puissant acquest des hommes.	This intricacy and interlacing of language with which they press us seems to me like the work of conjurers: their sleight of hand fights and overpowers our senses, but it does not shake our belief in the least. Apart from this juggling, they do nothing that is not common and mean. Being more learned does not make them any less inept. I love and honor knowledge as much as those who have it. And in its true use it is the noblest and most powerful acquisition of mankind.
Mais en ceux-là, et il en est vn nombre infiny de ce genre, qui en establissent leur fondamentale suffisance et valeur: qui se rapportent de leur entendement à leur memoire, *sub aliena vmbra latentes*: et ne peuuent rien que par liure: ie le hay, si ie l'ose dire, vn peu plus que la	But there are those, and there are countless people of this kind, who base their fundamental ability and worth on it; who refer from their understanding to their memory, *hiding in another's shadow*, and can do nothing except out of a book. In them I

3 The first quotation is from Seneca, Letters 59; the second from Cicero, On Ends I.19.

FRENCH

bestise. En mon pays, et de mon temps, la doctrine amande assez les bourses, nullement les ames. Si elle les rencontre mousses, elle les aggraue et suffoque: masse crue et indigeste: si desliees, elle les purifie volontiers, clarifie et subtilise iusques à l'exinanition. C'est chose de qualité à peu pres indifferente: tres-vtile accessoire, à vne ame bien nee, pernicieux à vne autre ame et dommageable.

Ou plustost, chose de tres-precieux vsage, qui ne se laisse pas posseder à vil prix: en quelque main c'est vn sceptre, en quelque autre, vne marotte.

3.8.9 Mais suyuons. Quelle plus grande victoire attendez vous, que d'apprendre à vostre ennemy qu'il ne vous peut combattre? Quand vous gaignez l'auantage de vostre proposition, c'est la verité qui gaigne: quand vous gaignez l'auantage de l'ordre, et de la conduitte, c'est vous qui gaignez. Il m'est aduis qu'en Platon et Xenophon Socrates dispute plus, en faueur des disputants qu'en faueur de la dispute: et pour instruire Euthydemus et Protagoras de la cognoissance de leur impertinence, plus que de l'impertinence de leur art. Il empoigne la premiere matiere, comme celuy qui a vne fin plus vtile que de l'esclaircir, assauoir esclaircir les esprits, qu'il prend à manier et exercer.

L'agitation et la chasse est proprement de nostre gibier, nous ne sommes pas excusables de la conduire mal et impertinemment: de faillir à la prise, c'est autre chose. Car nous sommes nais à quester la verité, il appartient de la posseder à vne plus grande puissance. Elle n'est pas, comme disoit Democritus, cachee dans le fonds des abysmes: mais plustost esleuee en hauteur infinie en la cognoissance diuine. Le monde n'est qu'vne escole d'inquisition. Ce n'est pas à qui mettra dedans, mais à qui fera les plus belles courses. Autant peut faire le sot, celuy qui dit vray, que celuy qui dit faux: car nous sommes sur la maniere, non sur la matiere du dire.

Mon humeur est de regarder autant à la forme, qu'à la substance: autant à l'aduocat qu'à la cause, comme Alcibiades ordonnoit qu'on fist. Et tous les iours m'amuse à lire en des autheurs, sans soing de leur science: y cherchant leur façon, non leur subiect. Tout ainsi que ie poursuy la communication de quelque esprit fameux, non affin qu'il m'enseigne, mais affin que ie le cognoisse,

ENGLISH

hate it, if I dare say so, a little more than stupidity. In my country and in my time, learning improves purses well enough, but souls not at all. If it meets dull souls, it weighs them down and smothers them, a raw and undigested mass; if keen ones, it readily purifies, clarifies and refines them to the point of emptiness. It is a thing of nearly indifferent quality: a very useful accessory to a well-born soul, pernicious and harmful to another.[4]

Or rather, it is a thing of very precious use, which does not let itself be possessed at a low price. In one hand it is a scepter; in another, a fool's bauble.

But let us go on. What greater victory can you expect than to teach your enemy that he cannot fight you? When you gain the advantage for your proposition, it is truth that wins; when you gain the advantage through order and method, it is you who win. It seems to me that in Plato and Xenophon, Socrates argues more for the sake of the arguers than for the sake of the argument, and more to teach Euthydemus and Protagoras their own ineptitude than the ineptitude of their art. He seizes on the first subject that comes along, like a man with a more useful aim than clarifying it: namely, to clarify the minds he takes in hand to work on and exercise.

Stirring up and chasing the game are properly our business. We are not excusable if we conduct the chase badly and ineptly; missing the catch is another matter. For we are born to seek the truth; to possess it belongs to a greater power. It is not, as Democritus said, hidden in the depths of the abyss, but rather raised to an infinite height in divine knowledge. The world is nothing but a school of inquiry. The question is not who will spear the ring, but who will run the finest courses. The man who speaks the truth can play the fool as well as the man who speaks falsely, for we are concerned with the manner of speaking, not the matter.

My temperament is to look at the form as much as at the substance, at the advocate as much as at the cause, as Alcibiades directed people to do. And every day I amuse myself reading authors without caring about their learning, looking for their manner, not their subject. In the same way I seek the company of some famous mind, not so that he

4 Seneca, Letters 33.

FRENCH

et que le cognoissant, s'il le vaut, ie l'imite. Tout homme peut dire veritablement, mais dire ordonnement, prudemment, et suffisamment, peu d'hommes le peuuent. Par ainsi la fauceté qui vient d'ignorance, ne m'offence point: c'est l'ineptie. I'ay rompu plusieurs marchez qui m'estoient vtiles, par l'impertinence de la contestation de ceux, auec qui ie marchandois.

Ie ne m'esmeus pas vne fois l'an, des fautes de ceux sur lesquels i'ay puissance: mais sur le poinct de la bestise et opiniastreté de leurs allegations, excuses et defences, asnieres et brutales, nous sommes tous les iours à nous en prendre à la gorge. Ils n'entendent ny ce qui se dit, ny pourquoy, et respondent de mesme: c'est pour desesperer. Ie ne sens heurter rudement ma teste, que par vne autre teste. Et entre plustost en composition auec le vice de mes gens, qu'auec leur temerité, importunité et leur sottise. Qu'ils facent moins, pourueu qu'ils soient capables de faire. Vous viuez en esperance d'eschauffer leur volonté. Mais d'vne souche, il n'y a ny qu'esperer, ny que iouyr qui vaille.

ENGLISH

may teach me, but so that I may know him, and, knowing him, imitate him if he is worth it. Any man can speak truly; but to speak with order, prudence and competence, few men can. So falsehood that comes from ignorance does not offend me; ineptitude does. I have broken off several bargains that would have been useful to me because of the senseless wrangling of those I was bargaining with.

I am not upset once a year by the faults of those over whom I have authority. But over the stupidity and obstinacy of their assertions, excuses and defenses, asinine and brutish as they are, we are at each other's throats every day. They understand neither what is said nor why, and they answer accordingly: it is enough to drive one to despair. My head is never roughly jarred except by another head. And I come to terms with my people's vices sooner than with their rashness, their importunity and their stupidity. Let them do less, provided they are capable of doing. You live in hope of firing their will. But from a block of wood there is nothing worth hoping for or enjoying.

AGAINST MY OWN IMPATIENCE

Irritation at others' folly is itself folly, and our reproaches usually turn back on ourselves.

FRENCH

3.8.10 Or quoy, si ie prends les choses autrement qu'elles ne sont? Il peut estre. Et pourtant i'accuse mon impatience. Et tiens, premierement, qu'elle est esgallement vitieuse en celuy qui a droit, comme en celuy qui a tort. Car c'est tousiours vn'aigreur tyrannique, de ne pouuoir souffrir vne forme diuerse à la sienne. Et puis, qu'il n'est à la verité point de plus grande fadese, et plus constante, que de s'esmouuoir et piquer des fadeses du monde, ny plus heteroclite. Car elle nous formalise principallement contre nous: et ce philosophe du temps passé n'eust iamais eu faute d'occasion à ses pleurs, tant qu'il se fust consideré.

Mison l'vn des sept sages, d'vne humeur Timoniene et Democritiene interrogé, dequoy il rioit seul: De ce que ie ris seul: respondit-il. Combien de sottises dis-ie, et respons-ie tous les iours, selon moy: et volontiers donq combien plus frequentes, selon autruy? Si ie m'en mors les leures, qu'en doiuent faire les autres? Somme, il faut viure entre les viuants, et laisser la riuiere courre sous le

ENGLISH

But what if I take things otherwise than they are? That may be. And so I blame my impatience. First, I hold that it is just as faulty in the one who is right as in the one who is wrong. For it is always a tyrannical sourness to be unable to endure a way different from one's own. Second, there is truly no greater folly, nor any more persistent, than to be stirred and stung by the follies of the world, nor any more bizarre. For it sets us chiefly against ourselves; and that philosopher of old would never have lacked occasion for his tears so long as he considered himself.[5]

Myson, one of the Seven Sages, whose temperament was like Timon's and Democritus's, was asked what he was laughing at all alone. "At the fact that I am laughing alone," he answered. How many foolish things do I say and answer every day, by my own reckoning; and so, very likely, how many more by other people's? If I bite my lips

5 The philosopher is Heraclitus, traditionally said to weep at human folly.

FRENCH

pont, sans nostre soing: ou à tout le moins, sans nostre alteration. De vray, pourquoy sans nous esmouuoir, rencontrons nous quelqu'vn qui ayt le corps tortu et mal basty, et ne pouuons souffrir le rencontre d'vn esprit mal rengé, sans nous mettre en cholere? Cette vitieuse aspreté tient plus au iuge, qu'à la faute.

Ayons tousiours en la bouche ce mot de Platon: Ce que ie treuue mal sain, n'est-ce pas pour estre moy-mesmes mal sain? Ne suis-ie pas moy-mesmes en coulpe? mon aduertissement se peut-il pas renuerser contre moy? Sage et diuin refrein, qui fouete la plus vniuerselle, et commune erreur des hommes. Non seulement les reproches, que nous faisons les vns aux autres, mais noz raisons aussi, et noz arguments et matieres controuerses, sont ordinairement retorquables à nous: et nous enferrons de noz armes. Dequoy l'ancienneté m'a laissé assez de graues exemples. Ce fut ingenieusement dit et bien à propos, par celuy qui l'inuenta: *Stercus cuique suum bene olet.* Noz yeux ne voyent rien en derriere.

Cent fois le iour, nous nous moquons de nous sur le subiect de nostre voysin, et detestons en d'autres, les defauts qui sont en nous plus clairement: et les admirons d'vne merueilleuse impudence et inaduertence. Encores hier ie fus à mesmes, de veoir vn homme d'entendement se moquant autant plaisamment que iustement, de l'inepte façon d'vn autre, qui rompt la teste à tout le monde du registre de ses genealogies et alliances, plus de moitié fauces (ceux-là se iettent plus volontiers sur tels sots propos, qui ont leurs qualitez plus doubteuses et moins seures) et luy s'il eust reculé sur soy, se fust trouué non guere moins intemperant et ennuyeux à semer et faire valoir la prerogatiue de la race de sa femme.

O importune presomption, de laquelle la femme se voit armee par les mains de son mary mesme? S'il entendoit du Latin, il luy faudroit dire, *Age! si hæc non insanit satis sua sponte, instiga.* Ie ne dis pas, que nul n'accuse, qui ne soit net: car nul n'accuseroit: voire ny net, en mesme sorte de tache. Mais i'entens, que nostre iugement chargeant sur vn autre, duquel pour lors il est question, ne nous espargne pas, d'vne interne et seuere

ENGLISH

over them, what must others do? In short, we must live among the living and let the river flow under the bridge without our concern, or at least without our getting upset. Indeed, why is it that we meet someone with a crooked, ill-made body without being disturbed, yet cannot bear to meet a disordered mind without flying into a rage? This faulty harshness has more to do with the judge than with the fault.[6]

Let us always have on our lips this saying of Plato: "If I find something unsound, is it not because I myself am unsound? Am I not myself at fault? Can my rebuke not be turned back against me?" A wise and divine refrain, which lashes the most universal and common error of mankind. Not only the reproaches we make to one another, but also our reasons, our arguments and the matters we dispute can usually be turned back against us; and we run ourselves through with our own weapons. Antiquity has left me plenty of weighty examples of this. It was cleverly and aptly said by whoever invented it: *Everyone's own dung smells sweet.* Our eyes see nothing behind us.[7]

A hundred times a day we mock ourselves in mocking our neighbor, and detest in others the defects that are more plainly in ourselves, and marvel at them with astonishing impudence and heedlessness. Only yesterday I happened to see a man of understanding mocking, as amusingly as justly, the foolish manner of another who bores everyone to death with the register of his genealogies and family alliances, more than half of them false (those whose titles are the most dubious and least secure are the readiest to launch into such silly talk); and yet he, had he looked back at himself, would have found himself hardly less immoderate and tiresome in spreading abroad and vaunting the distinction of his wife's family.

What troublesome presumption, with which the wife finds herself armed by her husband's own hands! If he understood Latin, one would have to tell him: *Go on! If she is not mad enough of her own accord, egg her on.* I do not say that no one should accuse unless he is clean, for then no one would accuse; nor even unless he is clean of the same kind of stain. But I mean that our judgment, when

6 Democritus was known as the laughing philosopher.
7 A Latin proverb, collected by Erasmus in his Adages.

FRENCH	ENGLISH
iurisdiction. C'est office de charité, que, qui ne peut oster vn vice en soy, cherche ce neantmoins à l'oster en autruy: où il peut auoir moins maligne et reuesche semence.	it bears down on another who is then in question, should not spare us from an inner and severe jurisdiction. It is a duty of charity that one who cannot remove a vice in himself should nonetheless try to remove it in another, where it may have a less malignant and stubborn seed.[8]
Ny ne me semble responce à propos, à celuy, qui m'aduertit de ma faute, dire qu'elle est aussi en luy. Quoy pour cela? Tousiours l'aduertissement est vray et vtile. Si nous auions bon nez, nostre ordure nous deuroit plus puïr, d'autant qu'elle est nostre. Et Socrates est d'aduis, que qui se trouueroit coulpable, et son fils, et vn estranger, de quelque violence et iniure, deuroit commencer par soy, à se presenter à la condamnation de la iustice, et implorer, pour se purger, le secours de la main du bourreau: secondement pour son fils: et dernierement pour l'estranger. Si ce precepte prend le ton vn peu trop haut: au moins se doibt il presenter le premier, à la punition de sa propre conscience.	Nor does it seem to me a fitting reply, to someone who points out my fault, to say that he has it too. What of it? The warning is still true and useful. If we had a good nose, our own filth ought to stink more to us, since it is ours. And Socrates holds that anyone who found himself, his son and a stranger guilty of some violence and wrong should begin with himself, presenting himself for the sentence of justice and imploring the help of the executioner's hand to purge himself; next he should do so for his son; and last for the stranger. If this precept pitches its tone a little too high, at least he ought to present himself first for the punishment of his own conscience.[9]

THE CREDIT OF RANK

Gowns, fortune and silence lend weight to foolish men, and offices go by luck more than merit.

FRENCH	ENGLISH
3.8.11 Les sens sont nos propres et premiers iuges, qui n'apperçoiuent les choses que par les accidens externes: et n'est merueille, si en toutes les pieces du seruice de nostre societé, il y a vn si perpetuel, et vniuersel meslange de ceremonies et apparences superficielles: si que la meilleure et plus effectuelle part des polices, consiste en cela. C'est tousiours à l'homme que nous auons affaire, duquel la condition est merueilleusement corporelle. Que ceux qui nous ont voulu bastir ces annees passees, vn exercice de religion, si contemplatif et immateriel, ne s'estonnent point, s'il en trouue, qui pensent, qu'elle fust eschappée et fondue entre leurs doigts, si elle ne tenoit parmy nous, comme marque, tiltre, et instrument de diuision et de part, plus que par soy-mesmes.	The senses are our own and first judges, and they perceive things only through their external accidents. So it is no wonder if, in every part of the workings of our society, there is so perpetual and universal a mixture of ceremonies and superficial appearances, to the point that the best and most effective part of government consists in them. It is always with man that we have to deal, and his condition is wonderfully corporeal. Let those who in recent years have tried to build us a form of worship so contemplative and immaterial not be astonished if some people think it would have slipped away and melted between their fingers, had it not held its ground among us as a mark, a title and an instrument of division and faction, more than by itself.[10]
Comme en la conference. La grauité, la robbe, et la fortune de celuy qui parle, donne souuent credit à des propos vains et ineptes. Il n'est pas à presumer, qu'vn monsieur, si suiuy, si redouté, n'aye au dedans quelque	So it is in conversation. The gravity, the gown and the fortune of the speaker often lend credit to empty and foolish remarks. No one would suppose that a great gentleman, so attended, so feared, has

8 Terence, The Woman of Andros.
9 Plato, Gorgias.
10 An allusion to the Protestant Reformed churches of France.

FRENCH

suffisance autre que populaire: et qu'vn homme à qui on donne tant de commissions, et de charges, si desdaigneux et si morguant, ne soit plus habile, que cet autre, qui le salue de si loing, et que personne n'employe. Non seulement les mots, mais aussi les grimaces de ces gens là, se considerent et mettent en compte: chacun s'appliquant à y donner quelque belle et solide interpretation.

S'ils se rabaissent à la conference commune, et qu'on leur presente autre chose qu'approbation et reuerence, ils vous assomment de l'authorité de leur experience: ils ont ouy, ils ont veu, ils ont faict, vous estes accablé d'exemples. Ie leur dirois volontiers, que le fruict de l'experience d'vn chirurgien, n'est pas l'histoire de ses practiques, et se souuenir qu'il a guary quatre empestez et trois gouteux, s'il ne sçait de cet vsage, tirer dequoy former son iugement, et ne nous sçait faire sentir, qu'il en soit deuenu plus sage à l'vsage de son art. Comme en vn concert d'instruments, on n'oit pas vn leut, vne espinete, et la flutte: on oyt vne harmonie en globe: l'assemblage et le fruict de tout cet amas.

Si les voyages et les charges les ont amendez, c'est à la production de leur entendement de le faire paroistre. Ce n'est pas assez de compter les experiences, il les faut poiser et assortir: et les faut auoir digerees et alambiquees, pour en tirer les raisons et conclusions qu'elles portent. Il ne fut iamais tant d'historiens. Bon est-il tousiours et vtile de les ouyr, car ils nous fournissent tout plein de belles instructions et louables du magasin de leur memoire. Grande partie certes, au secours de la vie. Mais nous ne cherchons pas cela pour cette heure, nous cherchons si ces recitateurs et recueilleurs sont louables eux-mesmes.

3.8.12 Ie hay toute sorte de tyrannie, et la parliere, et l'effectuelle. Ie me bande volontiers contre ces vaines circonstances, qui pipent nostre iugement par les sens: et me tenant au guet de ces grandeurs extraordinaires, ay trouué que ce sont pour le plus, des hommes comme les autres: *Rarus enim fermè sensus communis in illa / Fortuna.* A l'auanture les estime lon, et apperçoit moindres qu'ils ne sont, d'autant qu'ils entreprennent plus, et se montrent plus, ils ne respondent point au faix qu'ils ont pris. Il faut qu'il y ayt plus de vigueur, et de pouuoir au porteur, qu'en la charge.

ENGLISH

no ability within him beyond the ordinary; or that a man given so many commissions and offices, so disdainful and so haughty, is not more capable than that other man who bows to him from so far off and whom nobody employs. Not only the words but even the grimaces of such people are weighed and taken into account, everyone setting himself to give them some fine and solid interpretation.

If they stoop to ordinary conversation and are offered anything other than approval and reverence, they club you with the authority of their experience: they have heard, they have seen, they have done; you are buried under examples. I would gladly tell them that the fruit of a surgeon's experience is not the history of his cases, nor remembering that he has cured four plague victims and three gout sufferers, if he cannot draw from that practice the means to form his judgment, and cannot make us feel that he has grown wiser in the practice of his skill. Just as in a concert of instruments we do not hear a lute, a spinet and the flute: we hear a harmony as a whole, the union and fruit of the whole ensemble.

If travels and offices have improved them, it is for the products of their understanding to show it. It is not enough to count up experiences; they must be weighed and sorted, and they must have been digested and distilled, to draw from them the reasons and conclusions they contain. There were never so many historians. It is always good and useful to listen to them, for they supply us with plenty of fine and commendable lessons from the storehouse of their memory—certainly a great asset for the help of life. But that is not what we are looking for at present; we are asking whether these narrators and collectors are themselves praiseworthy.

I hate every kind of tyranny, both of words and of deeds. I readily brace myself against those empty trappings that cheat our judgment through the senses; and keeping watch on these extraordinary eminences, I have found that for the most part they are men like any others: *For common sense is generally rare in that high / Station.* Perhaps we judge them and see them as less than they are because they undertake more and show themselves more: they do not measure up to the burden they

FRENCH

ENGLISH

have taken on. There must be more vigor and strength in the bearer than in the load.[11]

Celuy qui n'a pas remply sa force, il vous laisse deuiner, s'il a encore de la force au delà, et s'il a esté essayé iusques à son dernier poinct. Celuy qui succombe à sa charge, il descouure sa mesure, et la foiblesse de ses espaules. C'est pourquoy on voit tant d'ineptes ames entre les sçauantes, et plus que d'autres. Il s'en fust faict des bons hommes de mesnage, bons marchans, bons artizans: leur vigueur naturelle estoit taillee à cette proportion. C'est chose de grand poix que la science, ils fondent dessoubs. Pour estaller et distribuer cette riche et puissante matiere, pour l'employer et s'en ayder: leur engin n'a, ny assez de vigueur, ny assez de maniement.

The man who has not used his full strength leaves you guessing whether he has more strength still beyond it, and whether he has been tested to his utmost. The man who sinks under his load reveals his measure and the weakness of his shoulders. That is why one sees so many inept souls among the learned, more than among others. They would have made good householders, good merchants, good craftsmen: their natural vigor was cut to that size. Learning is a thing of great weight; they collapse under it. To display and dispense this rich and powerful material, to use it and profit from it, their wits have neither enough vigor nor enough dexterity.

Elle ne peut qu'en vne forte nature: or elles sont bien rares. Et les foibles, dit Socrates, corrompent la dignité de la philosophie en la maniant. Elle paroist et inutile et vicieuse, quand elle est mal estuyee. Voyla comment ils se gastent et affollent. *Humani qualis simulator simius oris,*
Quem puer arridens, pretioso stamine serum
Velauit, nudásques nates ac terga reliquit,
Ludibrium mensis. A ceux pareillement, qui nous regissent et commandent, qui tiennent le monde en leur main, ce n'est pas assez d'auoir vn entendement commun: de pouuoir ce que nous pouuons. Ils sont bien loing au dessoubs de nous, s'ils ne sont bien loing au dessus. Comme ils promettent plus, ils doiuent aussi plus.

Learning has power only in a strong nature, and such natures are very rare. And the weak, says Socrates, corrupt the dignity of philosophy by handling it. It looks both useless and harmful when it is badly housed. That is how they spoil themselves and make themselves ridiculous. *Like an ape, that mimic of the human face,*
Whom a laughing boy has dressed in costly silk,
Leaving its buttocks and its back bare,
A joke for the dinner table. Likewise, for those who rule and command us, who hold the world in their hand, it is not enough to have an ordinary understanding, to be able to do what we can do. They are far below us if they are not far above. As they promise more, so they owe more.[12]

3.8.13 Et pourtant leur est le silence, non seulement contenance de respect et grauité, mais encore souuent de profit et de mesnage. Car Megabysus estant allé voir Apelles en son ouurouer, fut long temps sans mot dire: et puis commença à discourir de ses ouurages. Dont il reçeut cette reprimende: Tandis que tu as gardé silence, tu semblois quelque grande chose, à cause de tes cheines et de ta pompe: mais maintenant, qu'on t'a ouy parler, il n'est pas iusques aux garsons de ma boutique qui ne te mesprisent. Ces magnifiques atours, ce grand estat, ne luy permettoient point d'estre ignorant d'vne ignorance populaire: et de parler impertinemment de la peinture. Il deuoit maintenir muet, cette externe et presomptiue suffisance.

And so silence is for them not only a bearing that commands respect and gravity, but often also a source of profit and economy. For Megabyzus, having gone to see Apelles in his studio, stood a long time without saying a word, and then began to hold forth about his works. For this he received the following rebuke: "As long as you kept silent you seemed something great, because of your chains and your pomp; but now that you have been heard speaking, there is not even a boy in my workshop who does not despise you." Those magnificent ornaments, that great state, did not allow him to be ignorant with a common ignorance and to talk nonsense about painting. He should have

11 Juvenal, Satires.
12 Claudian, Against Eutropius.

FRENCH

ENGLISH

preserved that outward and presumed competence by keeping mute.[13]

A combien de sottes ames en mon temps, a seruy vne mine froide et taciturne, de tiltre de prudence et de capacité?

For how many foolish souls in my time has a cold and taciturn air served as a title to wisdom and ability?

3.8.14 Les dignitez, les charges, se donnent necessairement, plus par fortune que par merite: et a lon tort souuent de s'en prendre aux Roys. Au rebours c'est merueille qu'ils y ayent tant d'heur, y ayans si peu d'adresse: *Principis est virtus maxima, nosse suos.* Car la nature ne leur a pas donné la veuë, qui se puisse estendre à tant de peuple, pour en discerner la precellence: et perser nos poitrines, où loge la cognoissance de nostre volonté et de nostre meilleure valeur. Il faut qu'ils nous trient par coniecture, et à tastons: par la race, les richesses, la doctrine, la voix du peuple: tres-foibles argumens.

Honors and offices are necessarily handed out more by fortune than by merit, and people are often wrong to blame kings for it. On the contrary, it is a wonder that they have such luck at it, having so little skill: *The greatest virtue of a prince is to know his own people.* For nature has not given them sight that can extend over so many people to discern who excels, and to pierce our breasts, where the knowledge of our will and of our best worth is lodged. They have to sort us by guesswork and groping: by family, wealth, learning, popular report—very weak evidence.[14]

Qui pourroit trouuer moyen, qu'on en peust iuger par iustice, et choisir les hommes par raison, establiroit de ce seul trait, vne parfaite forme de police.

Whoever could find a way for us to be judged justly and for men to be chosen by reason would, by that single stroke, establish a perfect form of government.

FORTUNE AND OUTCOMES

Success is a poor witness of ability, since chance governs most human affairs.

FRENCH

ENGLISH

3.8.15 Ouy mais, il a mené à poinct ce grand affaire. C'est dire quelque chose; mais ce n'est pas assez dire. Car cette sentence est iustement receuë, Qu'il ne faut pas iuger les conseils par les euenemens. Les Carthaginois punissoient les mauuais aduis de leurs capitaines, encore qu'ils fussent corrigez par vne heureuse yssue. Et le peuple Romain a souuent refusé le triomphe à des grandes et tres-vtiles victoires, par ce que la conduitte du chef ne respondoit point à son bon heur. On s'apperçoit ordinairement aux actions du monde, que la fortune, pour nous apprendre, combien elle peut en toutes choses: et qui prent plaisir à rabatre nostre presomption: n'ayant peu faire les mal-habiles sages, elle les fait heureux, à l'enuy de la vertu.

"Yes, but he brought that great business to a successful end." That is saying something, but it is not saying enough. For this maxim is rightly accepted: that plans should not be judged by their outcomes. The Carthaginians punished the bad counsels of their generals even when they had been set right by a happy outcome. And the Roman people often refused a triumph for great and very useful victories because the commander's conduct did not match his good luck. We commonly observe in the world's affairs that Fortune—to teach us how much power she has in all things, and taking pleasure in humbling our presumption—having been unable to make the inept wise, makes them lucky, in rivalry with virtue.

Et se mesle volontiers à fauoriser les executions, où la trame est plus purement sienne. D'où il se voit tous les iours, que les plus simples d'entre nous, mettent à fin de tres-grandes besongnes et publiques et priuees. Et

And she readily takes a hand in favoring those enterprises whose web is most purely her own. Hence we see every day that the simplest among us carry through very great tasks, both public and

13 Megabyzus was a Persian noble; Apelles was the most celebrated Greek painter of the fourth century BC.
14 Martial, Epigrams.

FRENCH

comme Sirannez le Persien, respondit à ceux qui s'estonnoient comme ses affaires succedoient si mal, veu que ses propos estoient si sages: Qu'il estoit seul maistre de ses propos, mais du succez de ses affaires, c'estoit la fortune. Ceux-cy peuuent respondre de mesme: mais d'vn contraire biais. La plus part des choses du monde se font par elles mesmes. *Fata viam inueniunt.* L'issuë authorise souuent vne tresinepte conduite. Nostre entremise n'est quasi qu'vne routine: et plus communement consideration d'vsage, et d'exemple, que de raison.

Estonné de la grandeur de l'affaire, i'ay autrefois sçeu par ceuz qui l'auoient mené à fin, leurs motifs et leur addresse: ie n'y ay trouué que des aduis vulgaires: et les plus vulgaires et vsitez, sont aussi peut-estre, les plus seurs et plus commodes à la pratique, sinon à la montre. Quoy si les plus plattes raisons, sont les mieux assises: les plus basses et lasches, et les plus battues, se couchent mieux aux affaires? Pour conseruer l'authorité du conseil des Roys, il n'est pas besoing que les personnes profanes y participent, et y voyent plus auant que de la premiere barriere. Il se doibt reuerer à credit et en bloc, qui en veut nourrir la reputation.

Ma consultation esbauche vn peu la matiere, et la considere legerement par ses premiers visages: le fort et principal de la besongne, i'ay accoustumé de le resigner au ciel, *Permitte diuis cætera.*

3.8.16 L'heur et le mal'heur, sont à mon gré deux souueraines puissances. C'est imprudence, d'estimer que l'humaine prudence puisse remplir le rolle de la fortune. Et vaine est l'entreprise de celuy, qui presume d'embrasser et causes et consequences, et mener par la main, le progrez de son faict. Vaine sur tout aux deliberations guerrieres. Il ne fut iamais plus de circonspection et prudence militaire, qu'il s'en voit par fois entre nous. Seroit ce qu'on crainct de se perdre en chemin, se reseruant à la catastrophe de ce ieu? Ie dis plus, que nostre sagesse mesme et consultation, suit pour la plus part la conduicte du hazard.

Ma volonté et mon discours, se remue tantost d'vn air, tantost d'vn autre: et y a plusieurs de ces mouuemens,

ENGLISH

private. And as Siramnes the Persian replied to those who were amazed that his affairs turned out so badly when his words were so wise—that he alone was master of his words, but Fortune was master of the success of his affairs—these people can make the same reply, but from the opposite angle. Most things in the world happen by themselves. *The Fates find a way.* The outcome often lends authority to very inept conduct. Our intervention is hardly more than routine, and more commonly a matter of habit and example than of reason.[15]

Struck by the greatness of some achievement, I once learned from those who had carried it through what their motives and methods had been; I found nothing in them but ordinary notions. And the most ordinary and familiar are perhaps also the surest and handiest in practice, if not for show. What if the flattest reasons are the best grounded, and the lowest, the loosest and the most hackneyed suit affairs best? To preserve the authority of kings' councils, there is no need for the uninitiated to take part in them and see further in than the first barrier. Whoever wants to sustain their reputation must revere them on trust and wholesale.

My deliberation roughs out the matter a little and considers it lightly by its first appearances; the main and hardest part of the work I am accustomed to resign to heaven: *Leave the rest to the gods.*[16]

Good luck and bad luck are, to my mind, two sovereign powers. It is imprudence to think that human prudence can play the part of Fortune. And vain is the undertaking of the man who presumes to embrace both causes and consequences and to lead the progress of his affair by the hand—vain above all in deliberations of war. There was never more military circumspection and caution than is sometimes seen among us. Could it be that people are afraid of getting lost along the way, and are saving themselves for the final act of this play? I say further that our very wisdom and deliberation for the most part follow the lead of chance.

My will and my reasoning move now one way, now another, and many of these movements gov-

15 Virgil, Aeneid.

FRENCH

qui se gouuernent sans moy. Ma raison a des impulsions et agitations iournallieres, et casuelles: *Vertuntur species animorum, et pectora motus*
Nunc alios, alios dum nubila ventus agebat,
Concipiunt. Qu'on regarde qui sont les plus puissans aux villes, et qui font mieux leurs besongnes: on trouuera ordinairement, que ce sont les moins habiles. Il est aduenu aux femmelettes, aux enfans, et aux insensez, de commander des grands estats, à l'esgal des plus suffisans Princes. Et y rencontrent, dit Thucydides, plus ordinairement les grossiers que les subtils. Nous attribuons les effects de leur bonne fortune à leur prudence.

Vt quisque Fortuna vtitur, / Ita præcellet: atque exinde sapere illum omnes dicimus. Parquoy ie dis bien, en toutes façons, que les euenemens, sont maigres tesmoings de nostre prix et capacité.

3.8.17 Or i'estois sur ce poinct, qu'il ne faut que voir vn homme esleué en dignité: quand nous l'aurions cogneu trois iours deuant, homme de peu: il coule insensiblement en nos opinions, vne image de grandeur, de suffisance, et nous persuadons que croissant de train et de credit, il est creu de merite. Nous iugeons de luy non selon sa valeur: mais à la mode des getons, selon la prerogatiue de son rang. Que la chanse tourne aussi, qu'il retombe et se mesle à la presse: chacun s'enquiert auec admiration de la cause qui l'auoit guindé si haut. Est-ce luy? faict on: n'y sçauoit il autre chose quand il y estoit? les Princes se contentent ils de si peu? nous estions vrayement en bonnes mains.

C'est chose que i'ay veu souuent de mon temps. Voyre et le masque des grandeurs, qu'on represente aux comedies, nous touche aucunement et nous pippe. Ce que i'adore moy-mesmes aux Roys, c'est la foule de leurs adorateurs. Toute inclination et soubmission leur est deuë, sauf celle de l'entendement. Ma raison n'est pas duite à se courber et fleschir, ce sont mes genoux. Melanthius interrogé ce qu'il luy sembloit de la tragedie de Dionysius: Ie ne l'ay, dit-il, point veuë, tant elle est offusquee de langage. Aussi la pluspart de ceux qui iugent les discours des grans, deburoient dire: Ie n'ay point entendu son propos, tant il estoit offusqué de grauité, de grandeur, et de majesté.

ENGLISH

ern themselves without me. My reason has daily and accidental impulses and stirrings: *The moods of minds are changed, and breasts conceive*
Now one impulse, now another, as the wind
Drives on the clouds. Look at who are the most powerful in the cities and who do best in their business: you will usually find that they are the least capable. Little women, children and madmen have happened to rule great states as well as the ablest princes. And, says Thucydides, the dull succeed at it more often than the subtle. We attribute the effects of their good fortune to their prudence.[17]

As each man makes use of Fortune, / So he excels; and so we all say he is wise. Therefore I say, in every way, that outcomes are poor witnesses of our worth and ability.[18]

Now I was on this point: that we need only see a man raised to high rank, and even if we had known him three days before as a man of little account, an image of greatness and ability steals imperceptibly into our opinions, and we persuade ourselves that, having grown in retinue and credit, he has grown in merit. We judge him not by his worth but, as with counters, by the privilege of his position. Let the luck turn, let him fall back and mingle with the crowd, and everyone asks in amazement what it was that had hoisted him so high. "Is that him?" they say. "Didn't he know anything more than that when he was up there? Are princes satisfied with so little? We were in good hands indeed!"[19]

It is something I have often seen in my time. Indeed, even the mask of greatness that is represented in plays touches us somewhat and deceives us. What I myself worship in kings is the crowd of their worshipers. All bowing and submission is due to them, except that of the understanding. My reason is not trained to bend and bow; my knees are. Melanthius, asked what he thought of Dionysius's tragedy, said: "I have not seen it, it is so obscured by language." So too most of those who judge the speeches of the great ought to say: "I did

16 Horace, Odes.
17 Virgil, Georgics.
18 Plautus, Pseudolus.
19 Counting tokens, whose value depended on the place where they were set on the counting board.

FRENCH	ENGLISH
	not understand what he said, it was so obscured by gravity, grandeur and majesty."[20]
Antisthenes suadoit vn iour aux Atheniens, qu'ils commandassent, que leurs asnes fussent aussi bien employez au labourage des terres, comme estoyent les cheuaux: sur quoy il luy fut respondu, que cet animal n'estoit pas nay à vn tel seruice: C'est tout vn, repliqua il; il n'y va que de vostre ordonnance: car les plus ignorans et incapables hommes, que vous employez aux commandemens de vos guerres, ne laissent pas d'en deuenir incontinent tres-dignes, par ce que vous les y employez. A quoy touche l'vsage de tant de peuples, qui canonizent le Roy, qu'ils ont faict d'entre eux, et ne se contentent point de l'honnorer, s'ils ne l'adorent.	Antisthenes one day urged the Athenians to order that their donkeys be used to plow the fields just as the horses were. He was told in reply that this animal was not born for such service. "It makes no difference," he answered; "it depends only on your order. For the most ignorant and incapable men you appoint to command in your wars nonetheless become at once most worthy of it, simply because you appoint them." This bears on the custom of so many peoples who canonize the king they have made from among themselves, and are not content to honor him unless they worship him.
Ceux de Mexico, dépuis que les ceremonies de son sacre sont paracheuees, n'osent plus le regarder au visage: ains comme s'ils l'auoient deifié par sa royauté, entre les serments qu'ils luy font iurer, de maintenir leur religion, leurs loix, leurs libertez, d'estre vaillant, iuste et debonnaire: il jure aussi, de faire marcher le soleil en sa lumiere accoustumee: d'esgouster les nuees en temps opportun: courir aux riuieres leurs cours: et faire porter à la terre toutes choses necessaires à son peuple.	The people of Mexico, once the ceremonies of his coronation are completed, no longer dare look him in the face. Rather, as if they had deified him by making him king, among the oaths they make him swear—to maintain their religion, their laws, their liberties, and to be valiant, just and kindly—he also swears to make the sun move in its accustomed light, to make the clouds drain their rain at the proper time, to make the rivers run their courses, and to make the earth bear all things needful for his people.
3.8.18 Ie suis diuers à cette façon commune: et me deffie plus de la suffisance, quand ie la vois accompagnée de grandeur de fortune, et de recommandation populaire. Il nous fault prendre garde, combien c'est, de parler à son heure, de choisir son poinct, de rompre le propos, ou le changer, d'vne authorité magistrale: de se deffendre des oppositions d'autruy, par vn mouuement de teste, vn sous-ris, ou vn silence, deuant vne assistance, qui tremble de reuerence et de respect. Vn homme de monstrueuse fortune, venant mesler son aduis à certain leger propos, qui se demenoit tout laschement, en sa table, commença iustement ainsi: Ce ne peut estre qu'vn menteur ou ignorant, qui dira autrement que, etc. Suyuez cette poincte philosophique, vn poignart à la main.	I differ from this common way: I distrust ability the more when I see it accompanied by great fortune and popular esteem. We must take note how much it counts to speak when one pleases, to pick one's moment, to break off the conversation or change it with magisterial authority; to fend off other people's objections with a nod of the head, a smile or a silence, before an audience trembling with reverence and respect. A man of prodigious fortune, adding his opinion to some light conversation that was idly going on at his table, began exactly like this: "Only a liar or an ignoramus would say otherwise than," etc. Pursue that philosophical point—with a dagger in your hand.

TESTING BORROWED WIT

A fine saying from a fool must be probed to see how far he understands it.

FRENCH	ENGLISH
3.8.19 Voicy vn autre aduertissement, duquel ie tire grand vsage. C'est qu'aux disputes et conferences, tous les mots	Here is another piece of advice from which I get great use. It is that in disputes and conversations,

FRENCH

qui nous semblent bons, ne doiuent pas incontinent estre acceptez. La plus part des hommes sont riches d'vne suffisance estrangere. Il peut bien aduenir à tel, de dire vn beau traict, vne bonne responce et sentence, et la mettre en auant, sans en cognoistre la force. Qu'on ne tient pas tout ce qu'on emprunte, à l'aduenture se pourra-il verifier par moy-mesme. Il n'y faut point tousiours ceder, quelque verité ou beauté qu'elle ayt. Ou il la faut combatre à escient, ou se tirer arriere, soubs couleur de ne l'entendre pas: pour taster de toutes parts, comment elle est logee en son autheur.

Il peut aduenir, que nous nous enferrons, et aydons au coup, outre sa portee. I'ay autrefois employé à la necessité et presse du combat, des reuirades, qui ont faict faucee outre mon dessein, et mon esperance. Ie ne les donnois qu'en nombre, on les reçeuoit en poix. Tout ainsi, comme, quand ie debats contre vn homme vigoureux; ie me plais d'anticiper ses conclusions: ie luy oste la peine de s'interpreter: i'essaye de preuenir son imagination imparfaicte encores et naissante: l'ordre et la pertinence de son entendement, m'aduertit et menace de loing: de ces autres ie fais tout le rebours, il ne faut rien entendre que par eux, ny rien presupposer.

3.8.20 S'ils iugent en parolles vniuerselles: Cecy est bon, cela ne l'est pas; et qu'ils rencontrent, voyez si c'est la fortune, qui rencontre pour eux. Qu'ils circonscriuent et restreignent vn peu leur sentence: Pourquoy c'est; par où c'est. Ces iugements vniuersels, que ie voy si ordinaires, ne disent rien. Ce sont gents, qui salüent tout vn peuple, en foulle et en troupe. Ceux qui en ont vraye cognoissance, le salüent et remarquent nommement et particulierement. Mais c'est vne hazardeuse entreprinse.

D'où i'ay veu plus souuent que tous les iours, aduenir que les esprits foiblement fondez, voulants faire les ingenieux à remarquer en la lecture de quelque ouurage, le point de la beauté: arrestent leur admiration, d'vn si mauuais choix, qu'au lieu de nous apprendre l'excellence de l'autheur, ils nous apprennent leur propre ignorance. Cette exclamation est seure: Voyla qui est beau: ayant oüy vne entiere page de Vergile. Par là se sauuent les fins. Mais d'entreprendre à le suiure par espaulettes, et de iugement expres et trié, vouloir remarquer par où vn bon autheur se surmonte: poisant les mots, les phrases, les

ENGLISH

not every remark that seems good to us should be accepted straightaway. Most men are rich with borrowed ability. A man may well happen to say a fine thing, a good reply or maxim, and put it forward without knowing its force. That we do not truly hold everything we borrow can perhaps be verified by me myself. We must not always yield to it, whatever truth or beauty it has. Either we must fight it in earnest, or draw back on the pretext of not understanding it, so as to probe from every side how it is lodged in its author.

It may happen that we run onto the blade and help the blow beyond its reach. In the need and heat of combat, I have sometimes used counterthrusts that went through further than I intended or hoped. I delivered them only by count; they were received by weight. Just so, when I argue with a vigorous man, I like to anticipate his conclusions; I spare him the trouble of explaining himself; I try to forestall his idea while it is still incomplete and just being born; the order and pertinence of his understanding warn and threaten me from afar. With these others I do just the opposite: we must understand nothing except through them, and presuppose nothing.

If they judge in general terms—"This is good, that is not"—and they hit the mark, see whether it is Fortune that hits it for them. Let them circumscribe and narrow their verdict a little: why it is so, in what respect it is so. These sweeping judgments, which I see so commonly, say nothing. They come from people who greet a whole population in a mass and a crowd. Those who really know it greet each person and pick them out by name and individually. But that is a risky undertaking.

Hence I have seen it happen more often than every day that poorly grounded minds, trying to show their cleverness by pointing out, as they read some work, where its beauty lies, fix their admiration on so bad a choice that instead of teaching us the excellence of the author they teach us their own ignorance. This exclamation is safe: "That is beautiful!" after hearing a whole page of Virgil. That is how the shrewd get by. But to undertake to follow him bit by bit, and, with explicit and dis-

20 Dionysius the Elder wrote tragedies.

FRENCH

inuentions et ses diuerses vertus, l'vne apres l'autre: ostez vous de là.

Videndum est non modo quid quisque loquatur, sed etiam quid quisque sentiat, atque etiam qua de causa quisque sentiat.

3.8.21 I'oy journellement dire à des sots, des mots non sots. Ils disent vne bonne chose: sçachons iusques où ils la cognoissent, voyons par où ils la tiennent. Nous les aydons à employer ce beau mot, et cette belle raison, qu'ils ne possedent pas, ils ne l'ont qu'en garde: ils l'auront produicte à l'auanture, et à tastons, nous la leur mettons en credit et en prix. Vous leur prestez la main. A quoy faire? Ils ne vous en sçauent nul gré, et en deuiennent plus ineptes. Ne les secondez pas, laissez les aller: ils manieront cette matiere, comme gens qui ont peur de s'eschauder, ils n'osent luy changer d'assiette et de iour, ny l'enfoncer.

Croullez la tant soit peu; elle leur eschappe: ils vous la quittent, toute forte et belle qu'elle est. Ce sont belles armes: mais elles sont mal emmanchees. Combien de fois en ay-ie veu l'experience? Or si vous venez à les esclaircir et confirmer, ils vous saisissent et desrobent incontinent cet aduantage de vostre interpretation: C'estoit ce que ie voulois dire: voyla iustement ma conception: si ie ne l'ay ainsin exprimé, ce n'est que faute de langue. Souflez. Il faut employer la malice mesme, à corriger cette fiere bestise. Le dogme d'Hegesias, Qu'il ne faut ny haïr, ny accuser: ains instruire: a de la raison ailleurs.

Mais icy, c'est iniustice et inhumanité de secourir et redresser celuy, qui n'en a que faire, et qui en vaut moins. I'ayme à les laisser embourber et empestrer encore plus qu'ils ne sont: et si auant, s'il est possible, qu'en fin ils se recognoissent.

3.8.22 La sottise et desreglement de sens, n'est pas chose guerissable par vn traict d'aduertissement. Et pouuons proprement dire de cette reparation, ce que Cyrus respond à celuy, qui le presse d'enhorter son ost, sur le point d'vne bataille: Que les hommes ne se rendent pas courageux et belliqueux sur le champ, par vne bonne harangue: non plus qu'on ne deuient incontinent musicien, pour ouyr vne bonne chanson. Ce sont

ENGLISH

criminating judgment, try to point out where a good author surpasses himself, weighing the words, the phrases, the inventions and his various excellences one after another—stay clear of that!

We must consider not only what each man says, but also what he thinks, and even why he thinks it.[21]

Every day I hear fools say things that are not foolish. They say a good thing: let us find out how far they understand it, let us see by what end they hold it. We help them make use of that fine phrase and that fine argument which they do not own—they only have it in safekeeping; they will have brought it out by chance and groping; we give it credit and value for them. You lend them a hand. What for? They are not in the least grateful to you, and they become sillier for it. Don't back them up; let them go on. They will handle that material like people afraid of scalding themselves; they dare not change its position or its light, nor go deeper into it.

Shake it ever so little and it slips from them; they surrender it to you, strong and beautiful as it is. They are fine weapons, but badly hafted. How often have I seen this proved? Now if you go on to clarify and support them, they at once seize and steal from you the advantage of your interpretation: "That was what I meant; that is exactly my idea; if I didn't express it that way, it was only for want of words." Puff away! We must use even malice to correct this proud stupidity. The doctrine of Hegesias, that we should neither hate nor accuse, but instruct, has reason in it elsewhere.

But here it is injustice and inhumanity to rescue and set right someone who has no use for it and is the worse for it. I like to let them get bogged down and entangled even more than they are, and so deeply, if possible, that in the end they recognize themselves.

Stupidity and a disordered mind are not curable by a stroke of admonition. And we may fitly say of this kind of repair what Cyrus answers to the man who urges him to exhort his army on the point of battle: that men are not made brave and warlike on the spot by a good speech, any more than one becomes a musician at once by hearing a good song. These are apprenticeships that have to be

21 Cicero, On Duties.

FRENCH

apprentissages, qui ont à estre faicts auant la main, par longue et constante institution. Nous deuons ce soing aux nostres, et cette assiduité de correction et d'instruction: mais d'aller prescher le premier passant, et regenter l'ignorance ou ineptie du premier rencontré, c'est vn vsage auquel ie veux grand mal.

Rarement le fais-ie, aux propos mesme qui se passent auec moy, et quitte plustost tout, que de venir à ces instructions reculees et magistrales. Mon humeur n'est propre, non plus à parler qu'à escrire, pour les principians. Mais aux choses qui se disent en commun, ou entre autres, pour fauces et absurdes que ie les iuge, ie ne me iette iamais à la trauerse, ny de parole ny de signe.

3.8.23 Au demeurant rien ne me despite tant en la sottise, que, dequoy elle se plaist plus, que aucune raison ne se peut raisonnablement plaire. C'est mal'heur, que la prudence vous deffend de vous satisfaire et fier de vous, et vous en enuoye tousiours mal content et craintif: là où l'opiniastreté et la temerité, remplissent leurs hostes d'esiouïssance et d'asseurance. C'est aux plus mal habiles de regarder les autres hommes par dessus l'espaule, s'en retournans tousiours du combat, pleins de gloire et d'allegresse. Et le plus souuent encore cette outrecuidance de langage et gayeté de visage, leur donne gaigné, à l'endroit de l'assistance, qui est communément foible et incapable de bien iuger, et discerner les vrays aduantages.

ENGLISH

served beforehand, through long and steady education. We owe this care to our own people, and this diligence in correction and instruction; but to go preaching to the first passerby and lecturing the ignorance or foolishness of the first person we meet is a practice I strongly dislike.[22]

I rarely do it, even in conversations held with me, and I would rather give up altogether than resort to these magisterial lessons that go back to first principles. My temperament is not suited to speaking, any more than to writing, for beginners. But as for things said in company or among others, however false and absurd I judge them, I never throw myself in the way, by word or by sign.

For the rest, nothing vexes me so much about stupidity as that it is more pleased with itself than any reason can reasonably be. It is a misfortune that prudence forbids you to be satisfied with yourself and to trust yourself, and always sends you away discontented and fearful, whereas obstinacy and rashness fill their hosts with joy and assurance. It is the least capable who look down on other men over their shoulder, always coming back from the fight full of glory and gladness. And most often, too, this arrogance of speech and cheerfulness of face wins them the day with the audience, which is commonly weak and incapable of judging well and discerning the real advantages.

BANTER AMONG FRIENDS

Sharp, playful teasing is a useful kind of conversation; rough horseplay is not.

FRENCH

L'obstination et ardeur d'opinion, est la plus seure preuue de bestise. Est il rien certain, resolu, dedeigneux, contemplatif, serieux, graue, comme l'asne? Pouuons nous pas mesler au tiltre de la conference et communication, les deuis poinctus et coupez que l'alegresse et la priuauté introduit entre les amis, gaussans et gaudissans plaisamment et vifuement les vns les autres? Exercice auquel ma gayeté naturelle me rend assez propre. Et s'il n'est aussi tendu et serieux que cet autre exercice que ie viens de dire, il n'est pas moins aigu et ingenieux, ny moins profitable, comme il sembloit à Lycurgus.

ENGLISH

Obstinacy and heat of opinion are the surest proof of stupidity. Is there anything as certain, resolute, disdainful, contemplative, serious and grave as the donkey? May we not include under the heading of conversation and exchange the sharp, clipped banter that high spirits and intimacy bring in among friends, teasing and joking with one another pleasantly and briskly? It is an exercise for which my natural gaiety makes me fairly well suited. And if it is not as taut and serious as that other exercise I have just spoken of, it is no

22 Xenophon, The Education of Cyrus.

FRENCH

ENGLISH

less keen and clever, nor less profitable, as Lycurgus thought.[23]

Pour mon regard i'y apporte plus de liberté que d'esprit, et y ay plus d'heur que d'inuention: mais ie suis parfaict en la souffrance: car i'endure la reuenche, non seulement aspre, mais indiscrete aussi, sans alteration. Et à la charge qu'on me fait, si ie n'ay dequoy repartir brusquement sur le champ, ie ne vay pas m'amusant à suiure cette poincte, d'vne contestation ennuyeuse et lasche, tirant à l'opiniastreté. Ie la laisse passer, et baissant ioyeusement les oreilles, remets d'en auoir ma raison à quelque heure meilleure. Il n'est pas marchant qui tousiours gaigne. La plus part changent de visage, et de voix, où la force leur faut: et par vne importune cholere, au lieu de se venger, accusent leur foiblesse, ensemble et leur impatience.

For my part, I bring to it more freedom than wit, and I have more luck at it than invention; but I am perfect at taking it, for I endure retaliation—not only sharp but even tactless—without getting upset. And when I am attacked, if I have nothing to retort smartly on the spot, I do not waste my time pursuing the point with a tedious, feeble wrangle that verges on obstinacy. I let it pass, and, cheerfully lowering my ears, I put off getting even until some better hour. No merchant always makes a profit. Most people change their face and their voice when their strength fails them, and by an unseasonable anger, instead of getting their revenge, they betray their weakness and their impatience together.

En cette gaillardise nous pinçons par fois des cordes secrettes de nos imperfections, lesquelles, rassis, nous ne pouuons toucher sans offence: et nous entraduertissons vtilement de nos deffauts.

In this playfulness we sometimes pluck the secret strings of our imperfections, which we cannot touch in a calmer mood without giving offense; and we usefully warn one another of our faults.

3.8.24 Il y a d'autres ieux de main, indiscrets et aspres, à la Françoise: que ie hay mortellement: i'ay la peau tendre et sensible: i'en ay veu en ma vie, enterrer deux Princes de nostre sang royal. Il fait laid se battre en s'esbatant.

There are other games of horseplay, tactless and rough, in the French manner, which I hate mortally: I have a tender, sensitive skin. In my lifetime I have seen two princes of our royal blood buried because of them. It is an ugly thing to come to blows in fun.[24]

JUDGING A MAN'S WORK

He asks writers what they think best in their work, and doubts his own judgment of the Essays.

FRENCH

ENGLISH

3.8.25 Au reste, quand ie veux iuger de quelqu'vn, ie luy demande combien il se contente de soy: iusques où son parler ou sa besongne luy plaist. Ie veux euiter ces belles excuses, Ie le fis en me ioüant: *Ablatum mediis opus est incudibus istud:* ie n'y fus pas vne heure: ie ne l'ay reueu depuis. Or dis-ie, laissons donc ces pieces, donnez m'en vne qui vous represente bien entier, par laquelle il vous plaise qu'on vous mesure. Et puis: que trouuez vous le plus beau en vostre ouurage? est-ce ou cette partie, ou cette cy? la grace, ou la matiere, ou l'inuention, ou le iugement, ou la science? Car ordinairement ie m'apperçoy, qu'on faut autant à iuger de sa propre besongne, que de celle d'autruy.

Moreover, when I want to judge someone, I ask him how far he is satisfied with himself, how much his speech or his work pleases him. I want to avoid those fine excuses: "I did it for fun"; *This work was taken from the anvil half-finished*; "I wasn't at it for an hour"; "I haven't looked at it since." Well then, I say, let us leave those pieces aside; give me one that represents you whole, one by which you would like to be measured. And then: what do you find finest in your work? Is it this part or that one? The grace, or the matter, or the invention, or the judgment, or the learning? For I usu-

23 Plutarch reports that Lycurgus encouraged banter among the Spartans.
24 One was probably François de Bourbon, Count of Enghien, killed in 1546 when a chest was thrown from a window during a mock snowball battle.

FRENCH

ENGLISH

ally notice that people err as much in judging their own work as in judging other people's.[25]

Non seulement pour l'affection qu'on y mesle: mais pour n'auoir la suffisance de la cognoistre et distinguer. L'ouurage de sa propre force, et fortune, peult seconder l'ouurier et le deuancer outre son inuention, et cognoissance. Pour moy, ie ne iuge la valeur d'autre besongne, plus obscurement que de la mienne: et loge les Essais tantost bas, tantost haut, fort inconstamment et doubteusement. Il y a plusieurs liures vtiles à raison de leurs subiects, desquels l'autheur ne tire aucune recommandation: et des bons liures, comme des bons ouurages, qui font honte à l'ouurier.

Not only because of the affection they mix into it, but because they lack the ability to know it and to distinguish its parts. A work, by its own force and fortune, can second the workman and outstrip him beyond his invention and knowledge. For my part, I judge the worth of no one else's work more obscurely than my own; and I place the Essays now low, now high, very inconstantly and doubtfully. There are many books that are useful by reason of their subjects, from which the author gains no credit; and there are good books, as there are good works, that put the workman to shame.

I'escriray la façon de nos conuiues, et de nos vestemens: et l'escriray de mauuaise grace: ie publieray les edicts de mon temps, et les lettres des Princes qui passent és mains publiques: ie feray vn abbregé sur vn bon liure (et tout abbregé sur vn bon liure est vn sot abbregé) lequel liure viendra à se perdre: et choses semblables. La posterité retirera vtilité singuliere de telles compositions: moy quel honneur, si ce n'est de ma bonne fortune? Bonne part des liures fameux, sont de cette condition.

I will write about the fashion of our banquets and of our clothes, and write about it gracelessly; I will publish the edicts of my time and the letters of princes that pass into public hands; I will make an abridgment of a good book (and every abridgment of a good book is a foolish abridgment), which book will then come to be lost; and things like that. Posterity will derive singular use from such compositions; but what honor will there be for me, except for my good luck? A good many famous books are of this kind.

3.8.26 Quand ie leuz Philippes de Comines, il y a plusieurs annees, tresbon autheur certes; i'y remarquay ce mot pour non vulgaire: Qu'il se faut bien garder de faire tant de seruice à son maistre, qu'on l'empesche d'en trouuer la iuste recompence. Ie deuois louer l'inuention, non pas luy. Ie la rencontray en Tacitus, il n'y a pas long temps: *Beneficia eò vsque læta sunt, dum videntur exolui posse; vbi multum anteuenere, pro gratia odium redditur.* Et Seneque vigoureusement: *Nam qui putat esse turpe non reddere, non vult esse cui reddat.* Q.

When I read Philippe de Commynes several years ago—a very good author, certainly—I noted in him this saying as uncommon: that one must take good care not to do one's master so much service that one prevents him from finding a fitting reward for it. I should have praised the idea, not him. I came across it in Tacitus not long ago: *Benefits are welcome so long as they seem repayable; when they go far beyond that, hatred is returned instead of gratitude.* And Seneca, vigorously: *For he who thinks it shameful not to repay does not want there to be anyone to repay.* Q.

Cicero d'vn biais plus lasche: *Qui se non putat satisfacere modo amicus esse nullo, potest.* Le subiect selon qu'il est, peut faire trouuer vn homme sçauant et memorieux: mais pour iuger en luy les parties plus siennes, et plus dignes, la force et beaute de son ame: il faut sçauoir ce qui est sien, et ce qui ne l'est point: et en ce qui n'est pas sien, combien on luy doibt en consideration du choix, disposition, ornement, et langage qu'il a fourny. Quoy, s'il y a emprunté la matiere, et empiré la forme? comme il aduient souuent.

Cicero, from a slacker angle: *Whoever thinks he cannot repay you can in no way be your friend.* The subject, depending on what it is, may make a man seem learned and gifted with a good memory; but to judge the qualities in him that are most his own and most worthy, the strength and beauty of his soul, we must know what is his and what is not; and, in what is not his, how much we owe him for the choice, arrangement, ornament and language

25 Ovid, Tristia.

FRENCH

Nous autres qui auons peu de practique auec les liures, sommes en cette peine: que quand nous voyons quelque belle inuention en vn poëte nouueau, quelque fort argument en vn prescheur, nous n'osons pourtant les en louer, que nous n'ayons prins instruction de quelque sçauant, si cette piece leur est propre, ou si elle est estrangere. Iusques lors ie me tiens tousiours sur mes gardes.

ENGLISH

he has supplied. What if he has borrowed the matter and spoiled the form, as often happens?[26]

Those of us who have little familiarity with books are in this difficulty: when we see some fine idea in a new poet, some strong argument in a preacher, we still dare not praise them for it until we have learned from some scholar whether this piece is their own or borrowed. Until then I always stay on my guard.

READING TACITUS

A verdict on Tacitus: his judgment, his style, his view of Pompey and his reports of prodigies.

FRENCH

3.8.27 Ie viens de courre d'vn fil, l'histoire de Tacitus (ce qui ne m'aduient guere, il y a vingt ans que ie ne mis en liure, vne heure de suite) et l'ay faict, à la suasion d'vn Gentilhomme que la France estime beaucoup: tant pour sa valeur propre, que pour vne constante forme de suffisance, et bonté, qui se voit en plusieurs freres qu'ils sont. Ie ne sçache point d'autheur, qui mesle à vn registre public, tant de consideration des mœurs, et inclinations particulieres.

Et me semble le rebours, de ce qu'il luy semble à luy: qu'ayant specialement à suiure les vies des Empereurs de son temps, si diuerses et extremes, en toute sorte de formes: tant de notables actions, que nommément leur cruauté produisit en leurs subiects: il auoit vne matiere plus forte et attirante, à discourir et à narrer, que s'il eust eu à dire des batailles et agitations vniuerselles. Si que souuent ie le trouue sterile, courant par dessus ces belles morts, comme s'il craignoit nous fascher de leur multitude et longueur. Cette forme d'histoire, est de beaucoup la plus vtile. Les mouuemens publics, dependent plus de la conduicte de la Fortune, les priuez de la nostre.

C'est plustost vn iugement, que deduction d'histoire: il y a plus de preceptes, que de contes: ce n'est pas vn liure à lire, c'est vn liure à estudier et apprendre: il est si plein de sentences, qu'il y en a à tort et à droict: c'est vne pepiniere de discours ethiques, et politiques, pour la prouision et ornement de ceux, qui tiennent quelque rang au maniement du monde. Il plaide tousiours par raisons solides et vigoureuses, d'vne façon poinctue, et subtile: suyuant le stile affecté du siecle. Ils aymoient

ENGLISH

I have just read straight through Tacitus's history (which hardly ever happens to me: it is twenty years since I spent a single hour at a stretch on a book), and I did so at the urging of a gentleman whom France holds in high esteem, both for his own worth and for a constant form of ability and goodness that is seen in the several brothers that they are. I know of no author who mixes into a public record so much consideration of private manners and inclinations.

And I think the opposite of what he thinks: that, having in particular to follow the lives of the emperors of his time, so strange and extreme in every sort of way, and so many notable actions that their cruelty above all produced in their subjects, he had stronger and more attractive material to discuss and narrate than if he had had to tell of battles and general upheavals. So much so that I often find him barren, running over those fine deaths as if he feared to weary us with their number and length. This form of history is by far the most useful. Public movements depend more on the guidance of Fortune, private ones on our own.

It is a judgment rather than a narration of history; there are more precepts than stories in it; it is not a book to read, it is a book to study and learn. It is so full of maxims that they are scattered everywhere, right and left: it is a nursery of ethical and political reflections, for the supply and adornment of those who hold some rank in the management of the world. He always pleads with solid and vigorous reasons, in a pointed and subtle manner, fol-

26 Quintus Cicero, brother of the orator, in his Handbook on Electioneering.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
	tant à s'enfler, qu'où ils ne trouuoyent de la poincte et subtilité aux choses, ils l'empruntoyent des parolles. Il ne retire pas mal à l'escrire de Seneque. Il me semble plus charnu, Seneque plus aigu.	lowing the affected style of the age. They loved so much to puff themselves up that where they found no point or subtlety in things, they borrowed it from words. His writing is not unlike Seneca's. He seems to me meatier, Seneca sharper.
	Son seruice est plus propre à vn estat trouble et malade, comme est le nostre present: vous diriez souuent qu'il nous peinct et qu'il nous pinse.	His service is better suited to a troubled and sick state, such as ours is at present: you would often say he is painting us and pinching us.
3.8.28	Ceux qui doubtent de sa foy, s'accusent assez de luy vouloir mal d'ailleurs. Il a les opinions saines, et pend du bon party aux affaires Romaines. Ie me plains vn peu toutesfois, dequoy il a iugé de Pompeius plus aigrement, que ne porte l'aduis des gens de bien, qui ont vescu et traicté auec luy: de l'auoir estimé du tout pareil à Marius et à Sylla, sinon d'autant qu'il estoit plus couuert. On n'a pas exempté d'ambition, son intention au gouuernement des affaires, ny de vengeance: et ont crainct ses amis mesmes, que la victoire l'eust emporté outre les bornes de la raison: mais non pas iusques a vne mesure si effrenee.	Those who doubt his good faith give themselves away well enough as bearing him ill will for other reasons. His opinions are sound, and he leans to the right side in Roman affairs. I do complain a little, though, that he judged Pompey more harshly than the opinion of the good men who lived and dealt with him warrants, and thought him altogether like Marius and Sulla, except that he was more secretive. Pompey's intentions in the government of affairs have not been held free of ambition, nor of vengeance; and even his friends feared that victory would have carried him beyond the bounds of reason—but not to so unbridled a degree.[27]
	Il n'y a rien en sa vie, qui nous ayt menassé d'vne si expresse cruauté et tyrannie. Encores ne faut-il pas contrepoiser le souspçon à l'euidence: ainsi ie ne l'en crois pas. Que ses narrations soient naifues et droictes, il se pourroit à l'auanture argumenter de cecy mesme: Qu'elles ne s'appliquent pas tousiours exactement aux conclusions de ses iugements: lesquels il suit selon la pente qu'il y a prise, souuent outre la matiere qu'il nous montre: laquelle il n'a daigné incliner d'vn seul air. Il n'a pas besoing d'excuse, d'auoir approuué la religion de son temps, selon les loix qui luy commandoient, et ignoré la vraye. Cela, c'est son malheur, non pas son defaut.	There is nothing in his life that threatened us with such outright cruelty and tyranny. Besides, suspicion must not be weighed against evidence; so I do not believe Tacitus on this. That his narratives are artless and straightforward could perhaps be argued from this very fact: that they do not always fit exactly the conclusions of his judgments, which he follows according to the bent he has taken, often beyond the material he shows us, and that material he has not deigned to tilt in the slightest. He needs no excuse for having approved the religion of his time, according to the laws that commanded him, and for having been ignorant of the true one. That is his misfortune, not his defect.
3.8.29	I'ay principalement consideré son iugement, et n'en suis pas bien esclaircy par tout. Comme ces mots de la lettre que Tibere vieil et malade, enuoyoit au Senat: Que vous escriray-ie messieurs, ou comment vous escriray-ie, ou que ne vous escriray-ie point, en ce temps? Les dieux, et les deesses me perdent pirement, que ie ne me sens tous les iours perir, si ie le sçay. Ie n'apperçoy pas pourquoy il les applique si certainement, à vn poignant remors qui tourmente la conscience de Tibere. Aumoins lors que i'estois à mesme, ie ne le vis point.	I have chiefly considered his judgment, and I am not entirely clear about it throughout. Take these words from the letter that Tiberius, old and ill, sent to the Senate: "What shall I write to you, sirs, or how shall I write to you, or what shall I not write to you at this time? May the gods and goddesses destroy me worse than I feel myself perishing every day, if I know." I do not see why he applies them so confidently to a stinging remorse

27 Marius and Sulla, rival leaders of the first century BC, each carried out bloody purges in Rome.

FRENCH

ENGLISH

tormenting Tiberius's conscience. At least when I was reading it, I did not see it.

3.8.30 Cela m'a semblé aussi vn peu lasche, qu'ayant eu à dire, qu'il auoit exercé certain honnorable magistrat à Rome, il s'aille excusant que ce n'est point par ostentation, qu'il l'a dict. Ce traict me semble bas de poil, pour vne ame de sa sorte. Car le n'oser parler rondement de soy, accuse quelque faute de cœur. Vn iugement roide et hautain, et qui iuge sainement, et seurement: il vse à toutes mains, des propres exemples, ainsi que de chose estrangere: et tesmoigne franchement de luy, comme de chose tierce. Il faut passer par dessus ces regles populaires, de la ciuilité, en faueur de la verité, et de la liberté. I'ose non seulement parler de moy: mais parler seulement de moy.

It also seemed to me a little weak that, having had to mention that he had held a certain honorable magistracy in Rome, he goes on to excuse himself, saying that it was not out of ostentation that he said so. This trait seems to me shabby for a soul of his kind. For not daring to speak plainly of oneself betrays some lack of heart. A firm and lofty judgment, one that judges soundly and surely, uses its own examples on every occasion just as it would something foreign, and testifies frankly about itself as about a third party. We must pass over these common rules of civility in favor of truth and freedom. I dare not only to speak of myself, but to speak only of myself.

Ie fouruoye quand i'escry d'autre chose, et me desrobe à mon subiect. Ie ne m'ayme pas si indiscretement, et ne suis si attaché et meslé à moy, que ie ne me puisse distinguer et considerer à quartier: comme vn voysin, comme vn arbre. C'est pareillement faillir, de ne veoir pas iusques où on vaut, ou d'en dire plus qu'on n'en void. Nous deuons plus d'amour à Dieu, qu'à nous, et le cognoissons moins, et si en parlons tout nostre saoul.

I go astray when I write of anything else, and slip away from my subject. I do not love myself so indiscreetly, and am not so bound up and mingled with myself, that I cannot distinguish myself and consider myself apart, as a neighbor, as a tree. It is equally an error not to see how far one's worth extends, or to say more of it than one sees. We owe more love to God than to ourselves, and we know him less, and yet we talk of him to our heart's content.

3.8.31 Si ses escrits rapportent aucune chose de ses conditions: c'estoit vn grand personnage, droicturier, et courageux, non d'vne vertu superstitieuse, mais philosophique et genereuse. On le pourra trouuer hardy en ses tesmoignages. Comme où il tient, qu'vn soldat portant vn fais de bois, ses mains se roidirent de froid, et se collerent à sa charge, si qu'elles y demeurerent attachees et mortes, s'estants departies des bras. I'ay accoustumé en telles choses, de plier soubs l'authorité de si grands tesmoings.

If his writings reflect anything of his character, he was a great personage, upright and courageous, not with a superstitious virtue but with a philosophical and generous one. He may be found bold in his testimony. As where he maintains that a soldier carrying a load of wood had his hands stiffen with cold and stick to his burden, so that they stayed fastened there, dead, having come away from his arms. In such matters I am accustomed to bow to the authority of such great witnesses.

3.8.32 Ce qu'il dit aussi, que Vespasian, par la faueur du Dieu Serapis, guarit en Alexandrie vne femme aueugle, en luy oignant les yeux de sa saliue: et ie ne sçay quel autre miracle: il le fait par l'exemple et deuoir de tous bons historiens. Ils tiennent registres des euenements d'importance. Parmy les accidens publics, sont aussi les bruits et opinions populaires. C'est leur rolle, de reciter les communes creances, non pas de les regler. Cette part touche les theologiens, et les philosophes directeurs des consciences.

As for what he also says, that Vespasian, by the favor of the god Serapis, healed a blind woman in Alexandria by anointing her eyes with his spittle, and some other miracle or other: he does it following the example and the duty of all good historians. They keep records of important events, and among public occurrences are also popular rumors and opinions. It is their role to report common beliefs, not to regulate them. That part belongs to the theologians, and to the philosophers who direct consciences.

FRENCH

Pourtant tres-sagement, ce sien compagnon et grand homme comme luy: *Equidem plura transcribo quàm credo: nam nec affirmare sustineo de quibus dubito, nec subducere quæ accepi*: et l'autre: *Hæc neque affirmare neque refellere operæ pretium est: famæ rerum standum est.* Et escriuant en vn siecle, auquel la creance des prodiges commençoit à diminuer, il dit ne vouloir pourtant laisser d'inserer en ses annales, et donner pied à chose receuë de tant de gens de bien, et auec si grande reuerence de l'antiquité. C'est tresbien dict. Qu'ils nous rendent l'histoire, plus selon qu'ils reçoyuent, que selon qu'ils estiment. Moy qui suis Roy de la matiere que ie traicte, et qui n'en dois compte à personne, ne m'en crois pourtant pas du tout.

Ie hazarde souuent des boutades de mon esprit, desquelles ie me deffie: et certaines finesses verbales dequoy ie secoue les oreilles: mais ie les laisse courir à l'auanture, ie voys qu'on s'honore de pareilles choses: ce n'est pas à moy seul d'en iuger. Ie me presente debout; et couché; le deuant et le derriere; à droitte et à gauche; et en touts mes naturels plis. Les esprits, voire pareils en force, ne sont pas tousiours pareils en application et en goust. Voyla ce que la memoire m'en presente en gros, et assez incertainement. Tous iugemens en gros, sont lasches et imparfaicts.

ENGLISH

Therefore very wisely did that fellow historian of his, a great man like him, say: *Indeed I transcribe more than I believe; for I can neither bring myself to affirm what I doubt, nor withhold what I have been told*; and the other: *These things are worth neither affirming nor refuting; we must abide by report.* And writing in an age when belief in prodigies was beginning to decline, he says that he nevertheless does not want to fail to include in his annals, and to give a footing to, a thing accepted by so many good men and with such great reverence for antiquity. That is very well said. Let them give us history more as they receive it than as they judge it. I, who am king of the matter I treat and owe no one an account of it, nevertheless do not wholly believe myself about it.[28]

I often venture sallies of my mind that I distrust, and certain verbal subtleties at which I shake my ears; but I let them take their chance. I see that people take pride in such things; it is not for me alone to judge them. I present myself standing and lying down, front and back, right and left, and in all my natural folds. Minds, even when equal in strength, are not always equal in application and taste. That is what my memory presents to me about him, broadly and rather uncertainly. All broad judgments are loose and imperfect.

28 The first quotation is from Quintus Curtius, historian of Alexander the Great; the second, and the remark on prodigies, are from Livy.

III.9 Of Vanity

De la vanité

Montaigne ranges over writing, travel, household cares, and public duty, defending his love of wandering and his Roman citizenship.

FRENCH

ENGLISH

3.9.1 IL n'en est à l'auanture aucune plus expresse, que d'en escrire si vainement. Ce que la diuinité nous en a si diuinement exprimé, deburoit estre soigneusement et continuellement medité, par les gens d'entendement. Qui ne voit, que i'ay pris vne route, par laquelle sans cesse et sans trauail, i'iray autant, qu'il y aura d'ancre et de papier au monde? Ie ne puis tenir registre de ma vie, par mes actions: Fortune les met trop bas: ie le tiens par mes fantasies. Si ay-ie veu vn Gentil-homme, qui ne communiquoit sa vie, que par les operations de son ventre. Vous voyiez chez luy, en montre, vn ordre de bassins de sept ou huict iours. C'estoit son estude, ses discours. Tout autre propos luy puoit.

There is perhaps no more obvious vanity than to write about it so vainly. What the Divinity has so divinely expressed to us on this subject ought to be meditated carefully and continually by people of understanding. Who does not see that I have taken a road along which I shall go on, without stopping and without effort, as long as there is ink and paper in the world? I cannot keep a record of my life by my actions: Fortune sets them too low. I keep it by my notions. Yet I have seen a gentleman who communicated his life only through the workings of his belly. At his house you would see on display a row of chamber pots, seven or eight days' worth. That was his study, his conversation. Every other topic stank to him.[1]

Ce sont icy, vn peu plus ciuilement, des excremens d'vn vieil esprit: dur tantost, tantost lasche: et tousiours indigeste. Et quand seray-ie à bout de representer vne continuelle agitation et mutation de mes pensees, en quelque matiere qu'elles tombent, puisque Diomedes remplit six mille liures, du seul subiect de la grammaire? Que doit produire le babil, puisque le begaiement et desnouement de la langue, estouffa le monde d'vne si horrible charge de volumes? Tant de paroles, pour les paroles seules. O Pythagoras, que n'esconjuras-tu cette tempeste! On accusoit vn Galba du temps passé, de ce qu'il viuoit oyseusement. Il respondit, que chacun deuoit rendre raison de ses actions, non pas de son seiour.

Here, a little more politely, are the excrements of an old mind: hard at times, at times loose, and always undigested. And when shall I ever finish portraying the continual agitation and change of my thoughts, whatever subject they fall on, since Diomedes filled six thousand books with the subject of grammar alone? What must babbling produce, since the stammering and first loosening of the tongue smothered the world under so horrible a load of volumes? So many words, for the sake of words alone! O Pythagoras, why did you not conjure away this storm? A Galba of olden times was accused of living idly. He replied that each man must give an account of his actions, not of his leisure.[2]

Il se trompoit: car la iustice a cognoissance et animaduersion aussi, sur ceux qui chaument. Mais il y deuroit auoir quelque coërction des loix, contre les escriuains ineptes et inutiles, comme il y a contre les vagabons et faineants. On banniroit des mains de nostre

He was wrong: for justice also takes notice of those who sit idle, and punishes them. But there ought to be some legal restraint against inept and useless writers, as there is against vagabonds and idlers. Both I and a hundred others would be ban-

1 The "Divinity" alludes to Ecclesiastes: "Vanity of vanities, all is vanity."
2 Montaigne probably means Didymus, the Alexandrian grammarian said by Seneca to have written four thousand books. Pythagoras imposed years of silence on his disciples.

FRENCH

peuple, et moy, et cent autres. Ce n'est pas moquerie. L'escriuaillerie semble estre quelque symptome d'vn siecle desbordé. Quand escriuismes nous tant, que depuis que nous sommes en trouble? quand les Romains tant, que lors de leur ruyne? Outre-ce que l'affinement des esprits, ce n'en est pas l'assagissement, en vne police: cet embesongnement oisif, naist de ce que chacun se prent laschement à l'office de sa vacation, et s'en desbauche.

La corruption du siecle se fait, par la contribution particuliere de chacun de nous. Les vns y conferent la trahison, les autres l'iniustice, l'irreligion, la tyrannie, l'auarice, la cruauté, selon qu'ils sont plus puissans: les plus foibles y apportent la sottise, la vanité, l'oisiueté: desquels ie suis. Il semble que ce soit la saison des choses vaines, quand les dommageables nous pressent. En vn temps, où le meschamment faire est si commun, de ne faire qu'inutilement, il est comme louable. Ie me console que ie seray des derniers, sur qui il faudra mettre la main. Ce pendant qu'on pouruoira aux plus pressans, i'auray loy de m'amender. Car il me semble que ce seroit contre raison, de poursuyure les menus inconuenients, quand les grands nous infestent.

Et le medecin Philotimus, à vn qui luy presentoit le doigt à penser, auquel il recognoissoit au visage, et à l'haleine, vn vlcere aux poulmons: Mon amy, fit-il, ce n'est pas à cette heure le temps de t'amuser à tes ongles.

3.9.2 Ie vis pourtant sur ce propos, il y a quelques annees, qu'vn personnage, de qui i'ay la memoire en recommandation singuliere, au milieu de nos grands maux, qu'il n'y auoit ny loy, ny iustice, ny magistrat, qui fist son office: non plus qu'à cette heure: alla publier ie ne sçay quelles chetiues reformations, sur les habillemens, la cuisine et la chicane. Ce sont amusoires dequoy on paist vn peuple mal-mené, pour dire qu'on ne l'a pas du tout mis en oubly. Ces autres font de mesme, qui s'arrestent à deffendre à toute instance, des formes de parler, les dances, et les ieux, à vn peuple abandonné à toute sorte de vices execrables.

Il n'est pas temps de se lauer et decrasser, quand on est atteint d'vne bonne fiéure. C'est à faire aux seuls Spartiates, de se mettre à se peigner et testonner, sur le poinct qu'ils se vont precipiter à quelque extreme hazard de leur vie. Quant à moy, i'ay cette autre pire coustume,

ENGLISH

ished from our people's hands. This is no joke. Scribbling seems to be a kind of symptom of an unruly age. When did we ever write so much as since our troubles began? When did the Romans, as at the time of their ruin? Besides the fact that sharpening minds does not make them wiser in a state, this idle busyness comes from each man applying himself slackly to the duty of his calling, and straying from it.

The corruption of the age is made up of the particular contribution of each of us. Some contribute treachery, others injustice, irreligion, tyranny, avarice, cruelty, according to how powerful they are; the weaker bring folly, vanity, idleness—and I am one of these. It seems to be the season for vain things when harmful ones press upon us. In a time when doing wickedly is so common, to do only what is useless is almost praiseworthy. I console myself that I shall be among the last to be laid hold of. While the more pressing cases are being dealt with, I shall have time to mend my ways. For it seems to me that it would be against reason to prosecute petty nuisances when great ones are plaguing us.

As the physician Philotimus said to a man who held out his finger for him to dress, and in whom he recognized, by his face and his breath, an ulcer of the lungs: "My friend, this is no time to be fussing over your fingernails."[3]

Yet on this subject I saw, some years ago, a personage whose memory I hold in singular esteem go and publish, in the midst of our great ills, when there was neither law nor justice nor magistrate doing its duty—any more than there is now—I know not what paltry reforms concerning clothes, cooking and legal chicanery. These are toys with which a mistreated people is fed, to show that it has not been wholly forgotten. Those others do the same who insist with all urgency on forbidding certain ways of speaking, dances and games to a people abandoned to every sort of execrable vice.

It is no time to wash and scrub yourself when you are in the grip of a good fever. Only the Spartans would set about combing and dressing their hair at the very moment they were about to hurl themselves into some extreme peril of their lives. As for

3 Philotimus was a Greek physician; the anecdote comes from Plutarch.

FRENCH

que si i'ay vn escarpin de trauers, ie laisse encores de trauers, et ma chemise et ma cappe: ie desdaigne de m'amender à demy. Quand ie suis en mauuais estat, ie m'acharne au mal. Ie m'abandonne par desespoir, et me laisse aller vers la cheute, et iette, comme lon dit, le manche apres la coignee. Ie m'obstine à l'empirement: et ne m'estime plus digne de mon soing. Ou tout bien ou tout mal.

Ce m'est faueur, que la desolation de cet estat, se rencontre à la desolation de mon aage. Ie souffre plus volontiers, que mes maux en soient rechargez, que si mes biens en eussent esté troublez. Les paroles que i'exprime au mal-heur, sont paroles de despit. Mon courage se herisse au lieu de s'applatir. Et au rebours des autres, ie me trouue plus deuost, en la bonne, qu'en la mauuaise fortune: suyuant le precepte de Xenophon, sinon suyuant sa raison. Et fais plus volontiers les doux yeux au ciel, pour le remercier, que pour le requerir. I'ay plus de soing d'augmenter la santé, quand elle me rit, que ie n'ay de la remettre, quand ie l'ay escartee.

Les prosperitez me seruent de discipline et d'instruction, comme aux autres, les aduersitez et les verges. Comme si la bonne fortune estoit incompatible auec la bonne conscience: les hommes ne se rendent gents de bien, qu'en la mauuaise. Le bon heur m'est vn singulier aiguillon, à la moderation, et modestie. La priere me gaigne, la menace me rebute, la faueur me ploye, la crainte me roydit. Parmy les conditions humaines, cette-cy est assez commune, de nous plaire plus des choses estrangeres que des nostres, et d'aymer le remuement et le changement. *Ipsa dies ideo nos grato perluit haustu, / Quód permutatis hora recurrit equis.* I'en tiens ma part.

Ceux qui suyuent l'autre extremité, de s'aggreer en eux-mesmes: d'estimer ce qu'ils tiennent au dessus du reste: et de ne recognoistre aucune forme plus belle, que celle qu'ils voyent: s'ils ne sont plus aduisez que nous, ils sont à la verité plus heureux. Ie n'enuie point leur sagesse, mais ouy leur bonne fortune. Cette humeur auide des choses nouuelles et incognues, ayde bien à nourrir en moy, le desir de voyager: mais assez d'autres circonstances y conferent. Ie me destourne volontiers du gouuernement de ma maison. Il y a quelque commodité à commander, fust ce dans vne grange, et à estre obey des

ENGLISH

me, I have this other, worse habit: if one of my slippers is on crooked, I leave my shirt and my cloak crooked too; I disdain to mend myself by halves. When I am in a bad way, I throw myself into the ill. I abandon myself in despair and let myself slide toward the fall, and throw, as they say, the handle after the axe. I persist in getting worse, and no longer think myself worth my own care. Either all good or all bad.

It is a favor to me that the desolation of this state coincides with the desolation of my age. I more readily accept that my ills should be added to by it than I would if my goods had been disturbed by it. The words I utter in misfortune are words of spite. My heart bristles instead of lying flat. And contrary to others, I find myself more devout in good fortune than in bad, following the precept of Xenophon, if not his reasoning. And I more readily make sweet eyes at heaven to thank it than to petition it. I take more care to increase my health when it smiles on me than to restore it when I have lost it.[4]

Prosperity serves me as discipline and instruction, as adversity and the rod serve others. As if good fortune were incompatible with a good conscience, men become good only in bad fortune. Good luck is a singular spur to me toward moderation and modesty. Entreaty wins me, threats repel me; favor bends me, fear stiffens me. Among human traits this one is fairly common: to be more pleased with other people's things than with our own, and to love movement and change. *The daylight itself delights us with its welcome draught for this reason, / that the hour comes round with changed horses.* I have my share of it.[5]

Those who follow the other extreme—being pleased with themselves, valuing what they possess above all else, and recognizing no form more beautiful than the one they see—if they are not wiser than we are, they are in truth happier. I do not envy their wisdom, but I do envy their good fortune. This temperament, greedy for new and unknown things, does much to feed in me the desire to travel; but plenty of other circumstances contribute to it. I readily turn away from managing my household. There is some satisfaction in

4 In the Cyropaedia Xenophon advises praying to the gods in prosperity so as to be heard by them in adversity.
5 Petronius.

FRENCH	ENGLISH
siens. Mais c'est vn plaisir trop vniforme et languissant. Et puis il est par necessité meslé de plusieurs pensements fascheux.	commanding, even if only in a barn, and in being obeyed by one's own people. But it is too monotonous and languid a pleasure. And then it is necessarily mixed with many vexing thoughts.
Tantost l'indigence et l'oppression de vostre peuple: tantost la querelle d'entre vos voysins: tantost l'vsurpation qu'ils font sur vous, vous afflige: *Aut verberatæ grandine vineæ,* *Fundusque mendax, arbore nunc aquas* *Culpante, nunc torrentia agros* *Sydera, nunc hyemes iniquas.* Et qu'à peine en six mois, enuoyera Dieu vne saison, dequoy vostre receueur se contente bien à plain: et que si elle sert aux vignes, elle ne nuyse aux prez. *Aut nimiis torret feruoribus ætherius sol,* *Aut subiti perimunt imbres, gelidæque pruinæ,* *Flabràque ventorum violento turbine vexant.* Ioinct le soulier neuf, et bien formé, de cet homme du temps passé, qui vous blesse le pied.	Now it is the poverty and oppression of your people, now a quarrel between your neighbors, now their encroachments on you, that afflict you: *Or vines beaten down by hail,* *and the farm that betrays its promise, the trees blaming now the rains,* *now the stars that scorch* *the fields, now the cruel winters.* And the fact that in six months God will scarcely send one season that fully satisfies your steward, or one that, if it is good for the vines, does not harm the meadows: *Either the sun in the heavens scorches with excessive heat,* *or sudden rains and icy frosts destroy,* *and blasts of wind harry with violent whirlwinds.* Add to this the new, well-made shoe of that man of olden times, which pinches your foot.[6]
Et que l'estranger n'entend pas, combien il vous couste, et combien vous prestez, à maintenir l'apparence de cet ordre, qu'on void en vostre famille: et qu'à l'auanture l'achetez vous trop cher.	And the fact that outsiders do not understand how much it costs you, and how much you contribute, to keep up the appearance of the order seen in your household; and that perhaps you pay too dear for it.

RUNNING A HOUSEHOLD

Montaigne dislikes managing his estate, whose small domestic thorns sting him more than great ills.

FRENCH	ENGLISH
3.9.3 Ie me suis pris tard au mesnage. Ceux que Nature auoit fait naistre auant moy, m'en ont deschargé long temps. I'auois des-ja pris vn autre ply, plus selon ma complexion. Toutesfois de ce que i'en ay veu, c'est vn' occupation plus empeschante, que difficile. Quiconque est capable d'autre chose, le sera bien aysément de celle là. Si ie cherchois à m'enrichir, cette voye me sembleroit trop longue. I'eusse seruy les Roys, trafique plus fertile que toute autre.	I took up household management late. Those whom Nature had caused to be born before me relieved me of it for a long time. I had already taken another bent, more in keeping with my constitution. Still, from what I have seen of it, it is an occupation more bothersome than difficult. Anyone capable of anything else will very easily be capable of that. If I were seeking to grow rich, this road would seem too long to me. I would have served kings, a more profitable trade than any other.
Puis que ie ne pretens acquerir que la reputation de n'auoir rien acquis, non plus que dissipé: conformément au reste de ma vie, impropre à faire bien et à faire mal qui vaille: et que ie ne cherche qu'à passer, ie le puis faire,	Since I aim to acquire only the reputation of having acquired nothing, nor squandered anything either—in keeping with the rest of my life, unfit for doing either good or ill of any account—and since I

6 The verses are from Horace, Odes, and Lucretius, On the Nature of Things. The shoe is that of the Roman in Plutarch who, divorcing his wife, said that no one but the wearer knows where a fine shoe pinches.

FRENCH

Dieu mercy, sans grande attention. Au pis aller, courez tousiours par retranchement de despence, deuant la pauureté. C'est à quoy ie m'attends, et de me reformer, auant qu'elle m'y force. I'ay estably au demeurant, en mon ame, assez de degrez, à me passer de moins, que ce que i'ay. Ie dis, passer auec contentement.

Non æstimatione census, verùm victu atque cultu, terminatur pecuniæ modus. Mon vray besoing n'occupe pas si iustement tout mon auoir, que sans venir au vif, Fortune n'ait où mordre sur moy. Ma presence, toute ignorante et desdaigneuse qu'elle est, preste grande espaule à mes affaires domestiques. Ie m'y employe, mais despiteusement. Ioinct que i'ay cela chez moy, que pour brusler à part, la chandelle par mon bout, l'autre bout ne s'espargne de rien.

3.9.4 Les voyages ne me blessent que par la despence, qui est grande, et outre mes forces: ayant accoustumé d'y estre auec equippage non necessaire seulement, mais aussi honneste. Il me les en faut faire d'autant plus courts et moins frequents: et n'y employe que l'escume, et ma reserue, temporisant et differant, selon qu'elle vient. Ie ne veux pas, que le plaisir de me promener, corrompe le plaisir de me retirer. Au rebours, i'entends qu'ils se nourrissent, et fauorisent l'vn l'autre. La Fortune m'a aydé en cecy: que puis que ma principale profession en cette vie, estoit de la viure mollement, et plustost laschement qu'affaireusement; elle m'a osté le besoing de multiplier en richesses, pour pouruoir à la multitude de mes heritiers.

Pour vn, s'il n'a assez de ce, dequoy i'ay eu si plantureusement assez, à son dam. Son imprudence ne meritera pas, que ie luy en desire d'auantage. Et chascun, selon l'exemple de Phocion, pouruoid suffisamment à ses enfants, qui leur pouruoid, en tant qu'ils ne luy sont dissemblables. Nullement seroy-ie d'aduis du faict de Crates. Il laissa son argent chez vn banquier, auec cette condition: si ses enfants estoient des sots, qu'il le leur donnast; s'ils estoient habiles, qu'il le distribuast aux plus sots du peuple. Comme si les sots, pour estre moins capables de s'en passer, estoient plus capables d'vser des richesses.

Tant y a, que le dommage qui vient de mon absence, ne me semble point meriter, pendant que i'auroy dequoy le

ENGLISH

seek only to get by, I can do it, thank God, without much attention. At worst, always run ahead of poverty by cutting expenses. That is what I am counting on: to reform myself before it forces me to. Besides, I have set up in my soul enough steps for doing with less than I have. I mean doing with it contentedly.

It is not by the assessment of one's property but by one's way of living and keeping that the measure of wealth is fixed. My real need does not take up all my property so exactly that Fortune has nowhere to bite me without cutting to the quick. My presence, ignorant and disdainful as it is, lends great support to my domestic affairs. I apply myself to them, but grudgingly. Besides, in my house it is so arranged that, for all I burn the candle at my own end, the other end is not spared in the least.[7]

Travel hurts me only through the expense, which is great and beyond my means, since I am used to traveling with a retinue that is not only necessary but also respectable. So I must make my journeys all the shorter and less frequent, and I spend on them only the skimmings and my reserve, waiting and postponing according as it comes in. I do not want the pleasure of roaming to spoil the pleasure of retirement. On the contrary, I intend them to nourish and favor each other. Fortune has helped me in this: since my principal profession in this life was to live it softly, and lazily rather than busily, she has spared me the need to multiply my riches to provide for a multitude of heirs.

As for my one heir: if he does not have enough of what I have had so plentifully enough of, so much the worse for him. His imprudence will not deserve my wishing him more. And everyone, following the example of Phocion, provides sufficiently for his children who provides for them insofar as they are not unlike him. I would by no means approve of what Crates did. He left his money with a banker on this condition: if his children were fools, he was to give it to them; if they were capable, he was to distribute it among the biggest fools of the people. As if fools, being less able to do without riches, were more able to use them.

Be that as it may, the damage that comes from my absence does not seem to me to warrant, as long

FRENCH

porter, que ie refuse d'accepter les occasions qui se presentent, de me distraire de cette assistance penible.

3.9.5 Il y a tousiours quelque piece qui va de trauers. Les negoces, tantost d'vne maison, tantost d'vne autre, vous tirassent. Vous esclairez toutes choses de trop pres. Votre perspicacité vous nuit icy, comme si fait elle assez ailleurs. Ie me desrobe aux occasions de me fascher: et me destourne de la cognoissance des choses, qui vont mal. Et si ne puis tant faire, qu'à toute heure ie ne heurte chez moy, en quelque rencontre, qui me desplaise. Et les fripponneries, qu'on me cache le plus, sont celles que ie sçay le mieux. Il en est que pour faire moins mal, il faut ayder soy mesme à cacher. Vaines pointures: vaines par fois, mais tousiours pointures. Les plus menus et graisles empeschemens, sont les plus persans.

Et comme les petites lettres lassent plus les yeux, aussi nous piquent plus les petits affaires: la tourbe des menus maux, offence plus, que la violence d'vn, pour grand qu'il soit. A mesure que ces espines domestiques sont drues et desliees, elles nous mordent plus aigu, et sans menace, nous surprenant facilement à l'impourueu. Ie ne suis pas philosophe. Les maux me foullent selon qu'ils poisent: et poisent selon la forme, comme selon la matiere: et souuent plus. I'y ay plus de perspicacité que le vulgaire, si i'y ay plus de patience. En fin s'ils ne me blessent, ils me poisent. C'est chose tendre que la vie, et aysee à troubler.

Depuis que i'ay le visage tourné vers le chagrin, *nemo enim resistit sibi cùm cœperit impelli*, pour sotte cause qui m'y ayt porté: i'irrite l'humeur de ce costé là: qui se nourrit apres, et s'exaspere, de son propre branle, attirant et ammoncellant vne matiere sur autre, dequoy se paistre. *Stillicidi casus lapidem cauat.* Ces ordinaires goutieres me mangent, et m'vlcerent. Les inconuenients ordinaires ne sont iamais legers. Ils sont continuels et irreparables, quand ils naissent des membres du mesnage, continuels et inseparables. Quand ie considere mes affaires de loing, et en gros; ie trouue, soit pour n'en auoir la memoire gueres exacte, qu'ils sont allez iusques à cette heure, en prosperant, outre mes contes et mes raisons.

ENGLISH

as I have the means to bear it, my refusing the opportunities that come up to get away from this tiresome attendance.

There is always some piece going awry. Business, now from one house, now from another, tugs at you. You see everything from too close. Your sharp-sightedness harms you here, as it does often enough elsewhere. I slip away from occasions for vexation, and turn away from knowing about things that are going badly. And yet I cannot manage it so well that at every hour I do not bump into something at home that displeases me. And the knaveries most hidden from me are the ones I know best. There are some that, to make things less bad, you must help to hide yourself. Vain stings—vain at times, but always stings. The smallest and slenderest hindrances are the most piercing.

And just as small print tires the eyes more, so small matters sting us more: a throng of petty ills offends more than the violence of one, however great. The thicker and finer these domestic thorns are, the more sharply they bite us, and without warning, easily catching us unawares. I am not a philosopher. Ills crush me according to their weight; and they weigh according to their form as well as their matter, and often more. I see into them more keenly than ordinary people do, and yet I also have more patience. In short, if they do not wound me, they weigh on me. Life is a tender thing, and easily disturbed.

Once my face is turned toward vexation—*for no one resists himself once he has begun to be pushed*—however silly the cause that brought me there, I provoke my temper in that direction, and afterward it feeds itself and grows exasperated by its own motion, drawing in and heaping up one material on another to feed on. *The falling of drops hollows the stone.* These ordinary drippings eat away at me and ulcerate me. Ordinary troubles are never light. They are continual and irreparable, especially when they arise from members of the household, who are continual and inseparable. When I consider my affairs from afar and as a whole, I find—perhaps because I do not remember them very exactly—that up to now they have gone

7 Cicero, Paradoxes of the Stoics.

FRENCH

ENGLISH

on prospering beyond my reckonings and calculations.[8]

I'en retire ce me semble plus, qu'il n'y en a: leur bon heur me trahit. Mais suis-ie au dedans de la besongne, voy-ie marcher toutes ces parcelles? *Tum verò in curas animum diducimur omnes:* mille choses m'y donnent à desirer et craindre. De les abandonner du tout, il m'est tres-facile: de m'y prendre sans m'en peiner, tres-difficile. C'est pitié, d'estre en lieu où tout ce que vous voyez, vous embesongne, et vous concerne. Et me semble iouyr plus gayement les plaisirs d'vne maison estrangere, et y apporter le goust plus libre et pur. Diogenes respondit selon moy, à celuy qui luy demanda quelle sorte de vin il trouuoit le meilleur: L'estranger, feit il.

I get more out of them, it seems to me, than there is in them: their good luck deceives me. But when I am inside the work, and see all these little parts moving—*Then indeed our mind is pulled apart into every care*—a thousand things there make me wish and fear. To abandon them altogether is very easy for me; to take them on without fretting, very hard. It is a pitiful thing to be in a place where everything you see keeps you busy and concerns you. And I seem to enjoy the pleasures of another man's house more gaily, and to bring to them a freer and purer taste. Diogenes answered as I would to the man who asked him what kind of wine he found best: "Someone else's," he said.[9]

3.9.6 Mon pere aymoit à bastir Montaigne, où il estoit nay: et en toute cette police d'affaires domestiques, i'ayme à me seruir de son exemple, et de ses regles; et y attacheray mes successeurs autant que ie pourray. Si ie pouuois mieux pour luy, ie le feroys. Ie me glorifie que sa volonté s'exerce encores, et agisse par moy. Ia Dieu ne permette que ie laisse faillir entre mes mains, aucune image de vie, que ie puisse rendre à vn si bon pere. Ce que ie me suis meslé d'acheuer quelque vieux pan de mur, et de renger quelque piece de bastiment mal dolé, ç'a esté certes, regardant plus à son intention, qu'à mon contentement.

My father loved building at Montaigne, where he was born; and in all this administration of domestic affairs I like to follow his example and his rules, and I shall bind my successors to them as far as I can. If I could do better for him, I would. I take pride that his will still operates and acts through me. God forbid that I should let fail in my hands any image of life that I can give back to so good a father. Whatever I have taken it upon myself to do in finishing some old section of wall, or putting in order some badly hewn part of the building, has certainly been more out of regard for his intention than for my own satisfaction.[10]

Et accuse ma faineance, de n'auoir passé outre, à parfaire les commencements qu'il a laissez en sa maison: d'autant plus, que ie suis en grands termes d'en estre le dernier possesseur de ma race, et d'y porter la derniere main. Car quant à mon application particuliere, ny ce plaisir de bastir, qu'on dit estre si attrayant, ny la chasse, ny les iardins, ny ces autres plaisirs de la vie retiree, ne me peuuent beaucoup amuser. C'est chose dequoy ie me veux mal, comme de toutes autres opinions qui me sont incommodes. Ie ne me soucie pas tant de les auoir vigoureuses et doctes, comme ie me soucie de les auoir aisees et commodes à la vie.

And I blame my idleness for not having gone further and completed what he began in his house—all the more since I am very likely to be the last owner of it of my line, and to put the last hand to it. For as for my own inclination, neither this pleasure of building, which they say is so attractive, nor hunting, nor gardens, nor the other pleasures of the retired life can amuse me much. That is something I hold against myself, as I do all my other opinions that are inconvenient to me. I do not care so much to have them vigorous and learned as I care to have them easy and convenient for living.

Elles sont bien assez vrayes et saines, si elles sont vtiles et aggreables. Ceux qui m'oyans dire mon insuffisance aux occupations du mesnage, me viennent souffler aux

They are true and sound enough if they are useful and agreeable. Those who, hearing me speak of my incompetence in household matters, come

8 Seneca, Letters, and Lucretius.
9 Virgil, Aeneid.
10 Pierre Eyquem enlarged and rebuilt the family house.

FRENCH

oreilles que c'est desdaing, et que ie laisse de sçauoir les instrumens du labourage, ses saisons, son ordre, comment on fait mes vins, comme on ente, et de sçauoir le nom et la forme des herbes et des fruicts, et l'apprest des viandes, dequoy ie vis: le nom et prix des estoffes, de quoy ie m'abille, pour auoir à cœur quelque plus haute science, ils me font mourir. Cela, c'est sottise: et plustost bestise, que gloire. Ie m'aymerois mieux bon escuyer, que bon logicien.

Quin tu aliquid saltem potius quorum indiget vsus, / Viminibus mollique paras detexere iunco? Nous empeschons noz pensees du general, et des causes et conduittes vniuerselles: qui se conduisent tresbien sans nous: et laissons en arriere nostre faict: et Michel, qui nous touche encore de plus pres que l'homme.

3.9.7 Or i'arreste bien chez moy le plus ordinairement: mais ie voudrois m'y plaire plus qu'ailleurs. *Sit meæ sedes vtinam senectæ,*
Sit modus lasso maris, et viarum,
Militiæque! Ie ne sçay si i'en viendray à bout. Ie voudrois qu'au lieu de quelque autre piece de sa succession, mon pere m'eut resigné cette passionnee amour, qu'en ses vieux ans il portoit à son mesnage. Il estoit bien heureux, de ramener ses desirs, à sa fortune, et de se sçauoir plaire de ce qu'il auoit. La philosophie politique aura bel accuser la bassesse et sterilité de mon occupation, si i'en puis vne fois prendre le goust, comme luy.

Ie suis de cet auis, que la plus honorable vacation, est de seruir au publiq, et estre vtile à beaucoup. *Fructus enim ingenij et virtutis, omnisque præstantiæ tum maximus accipitur, quum in proximum quemque confertur.* Pour mon regard ie m'en despars: partie par conscience: (car par où ie vois le poix qui touche telles vacations, ie vois aussi le peu de moyen que i'ay d'y fournir: et Platon maistre ouurier en tout gouuernement politique, ne laissa de s'en abstenir) partie par poltronerie. Ie me contente de iouïr le monde, sans m'en empresser: de viure vne vie, seulement excusable: et qui seulement ne poise, ny à moy, ny à autruy.

3.9.8 Iamais homme ne se laissa aller plus plainement et plus laschement, au soing et gouuernement d'vn tiers, que ie

ENGLISH

whispering in my ear that it is disdain, and that I neglect to know the tools of farming, its seasons, its order, how my wines are made, how grafting is done, and to know the names and forms of the plants and fruits, and the preparation of the foods I live on, the names and prices of the cloth I dress in, because I have set my heart on some higher science—they are the death of me. That is foolishness, and stupidity rather than glory. I would rather be a good horseman than a good logician.

Why not rather set about weaving at least something that need requires, / out of osiers and soft rushes? We encumber our thoughts with the general, and with universal causes and workings, which run perfectly well without us; and we leave behind our own business, and Michel, who touches us even more closely than man does.

Now I do stay at home most of the time, but I would like to take more pleasure in it than anywhere else. *Would that it might be the home of my old age,*
the end for one weary of sea and roads
and soldiering! I do not know whether I shall manage it. I wish that, instead of some other part of his estate, my father had handed down to me the passionate love he bore for his household in his old age. He was very happy to bring his desires down to the level of his fortune, and to know how to be pleased with what he had. Political philosophy may condemn the lowliness and barrenness of my occupation all it likes, if I can once acquire a taste for it, as he did.

I am of the opinion that the most honorable calling is to serve the public and be useful to many. *For the fruits of talent, of virtue and of every excellence are most fully reaped when they are bestowed on those nearest us.* For my part, I hold back from it: partly out of conscience (for just as I see the weight that bears on such callings, I also see how little means I have to meet it; and Plato, a master craftsman in all political government, nonetheless abstained from it), partly out of cowardice. I am content to enjoy the world without bustling about in it; to live a life that is merely excusable, and that merely does not burden either me or anyone else.

Never did a man let himself go more completely and more limply into the care and governance of

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
	ferois, si i'auois à qui. L'vn de mes souhaits pour cette heure, ce seroit de trouuer vn gendre, qui sçeust appaster commodément mes vieux ans, et les endormir: entre les mains de qui ie deposasse en toute souuerainеté, la conduite et vsage de mes biens: qu'il en fist ce que i'en fais, et gaignast sur moy ce que i'y gaigne: pourueu qu'il y apportast vn courage vrayement recognoissant, et amy. Mais quoy? nous viuons en vn monde, où la loyauté des propres enfans est incognue.	someone else than I would, if I had someone to do it. One of my wishes at present would be to find a son-in-law who could comfortably feed my old age and lull it to sleep; into whose hands I might deposit, in full sovereignty, the management and use of my property; let him do with it what I do, and gain from me what I gain from it, provided he brought to it a truly grateful and friendly heart. But what can you do? We live in a world where loyalty is unknown even in one's own children.

TRUSTING SERVANTS

He lets others keep his purse and prefers not knowing to suspicion and constant accounting.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
3.9.9	Qui a la garde de ma bourse en voyage, il l'a pure et sans contrerolle: aussi bien me tromperoit il en comptant. Et si ce n'est vn diable, ie l'oblige à bien faire, par vne si abandonnee confiance. *Multi fallere docuerunt, dum timent falli, et aliis ius peccandi suspicando fecerunt.* La plus commune seureté, que ie prens de mes gens, c'est la mescognoissance. Ie ne presume les vices qu'apres que ie les aye veuz: et m'en fie plus aux ieunes, que i'estime moins gastez par mauuais exemple. I'oy plus volontiers dire, au bout de deux mois, que i'ay despandu quatre cens escus, que d'auoir les oreilles battues tous les soirs, de trois, cinq, sept.	Whoever keeps my purse when I travel has it entirely and without audit; he could cheat me in his reckoning anyway. And unless he is a devil, I oblige him to behave well by so unreserved a trust. *Many have taught others to deceive by fearing to be deceived, and by suspecting them have given them the right to do wrong.* The commonest security I take with my people is not knowing. I do not presume vices until I have seen them, and I trust the young more, thinking them less spoiled by bad example. I would rather hear at the end of two months that I have spent four hundred crowns than have my ears battered every evening with three, five, seven.
	Si ay-ie esté desrobé aussi peu qu'vn autre de cette sorte de larrecin. Il est vray, que ie preste la main à l'ignorance. Ie nourris à escient, aucunement trouble et incertaine la science de mon argent. Iusques à certaine mesure, ie suis content, d'en pouuoir doubter. Il faut laisser vn peu de place à la desloyauté, ou imprudence de vostre valet. S'il nous en reste en gros, dequoy faire nostre effect, cet excez de la liberalité de la Fortune, laissons le vn peu plus courre à sa mercy. La portion du glanneur. Apres tout, ie ne prise pas tant la foy de mes gents, comme ie mesprise leur iniure. O le vilain et sot estude, d'estudier son argent, se plaire à le manier et recomter!	And yet I have been robbed in this way as little as anyone. It is true that I lend a hand to my own ignorance. I deliberately keep my knowledge of my money somewhat muddled and uncertain. Up to a certain point I am content to be able to doubt it. You must leave a little room for your servant's dishonesty or carelessness. If on the whole we have enough left to do what we need, let us leave this surplus of Fortune's liberality to run a little more at her mercy. The gleaner's share. After all, I do not prize my people's honesty as much as I make light of the wrongs they do me. Oh, what a vile and stupid study, to study one's money, to take pleasure in handling it and counting it over!
	c'est par là, que l'auarice faict ses approches.	it is by that path that avarice makes its approaches.
3.9.10	Dépuis dix huict ans, que ie gouuerne des biens, ie n'ay sçeu gaigner sur moy, de voir, ny tiltres, ny mes principaux affaires qui ont necessairement à passer par	In the eighteen years I have been managing property, I have never been able to bring myself to look at either the title deeds or my principal affairs,

FRENCH

ENGLISH

ma science, et par mon soing. Ce n'est pas vn mespris philosophique, des choses transitoires et mondaines: ie n'ay pas le goust si espuré, et les prise pour le moins ce qu'elles valent: mais certes c'est paresse et negligence inexcusable et puerile. Que ne feroy ie plustost que de lire vn contract? Et plustost, que d'aller secoüant ces paperasses poudreuses, serf de mes negoces? ou encore pis, de ceux d'autruy, comme font tant de gents à prix d'argent? Ie n'ay rien cher que le soucy et la peine: et ne cherche qu'à m'anonchalir et auachir.

which must necessarily pass through my knowledge and my care. It is not a philosophical contempt for transitory and worldly things: my taste is not so refined, and I value them at least at what they are worth. No, it is certainly an inexcusable and childish laziness and negligence. What would I not do rather than read a contract? Rather than go shaking out those dusty papers, a slave to my own business? Or, worse still, to other people's, as so many do for money? Nothing costs me as dear as care and trouble, and I seek only to grow slack and idle.

I'estoy, ce croy-je, plus propre, à viure de la fortune d'autruy, s'il se pouuoit, sans obligation et sans seruitude. Et si ne sçay, à l'examiner de pres, si selon mon humeur et mon sort, ce que i'ay à souffrir des affaires, et des seruiteurs, et des domestiques, n'a point plus d'abiection, d'importunité, et d'aigreur, que n'auroit la suitte d'vn homme, nay plus grand que moy, qui me guidast vn peu à mon aise. *Seruitus obedientia est fracti animi et abiecti, arbitrio carentis suo.* Crates fit pis, qui se ietta en la franchise de la pauureté, pour se deffaire des indignitez et cures de la maison. Cela ne ferois-ie pas.

I was better suited, I believe, to live on someone else's fortune, if that could be done without obligation and without servitude. And yet, looking at it closely, I do not know whether, given my temperament and my lot, what I have to put up with from my affairs, my servants and my household does not involve more abjection, importunity and bitterness than following in the train of a man born greater than I, who would guide me a little at my ease. *Servitude is the obedience of a broken and abject spirit that lacks a will of its own.* Crates did worse: he threw himself into the freedom of poverty to rid himself of the indignities and cares of a household. That I would not do.

Ie hay la pauureté à pair de la douleur: mais ouy bien, changer cette sorte de vie, à vne autre moins braue, et moins affaireuse.

I hate poverty as much as pain. But I would indeed exchange this kind of life for another less grand and less busy.

3.9.11 Absent, ie me despouille de tous tels pensemens: et sentirois moins lors la ruyne d'vne tour, que ie ne fais present, la cheute d'vne ardoyse. Mon ame se démesle bien ayséement à part, mais en presence, elle souffre, comme celle d'vn vigneron. Vne rene de trauers à mon cheual, vn bout d'estriuiere qui batte ma iambe, me tiendront tout vn iour en eschec. I'esleue assez mon courage à l'encontre des inconueniens, les yeux, ie ne puis. *Sensus! ô superi sensus!*

When I am away, I strip myself of all such thoughts, and I would then feel the collapse of a tower less than I feel, when present, the fall of a slate. My mind disentangles itself easily when it is apart, but on the spot it suffers like a vinedresser's. A rein crooked on my horse, an end of stirrup leather flapping against my leg, will keep me out of sorts a whole day. I can raise my courage well enough against misfortunes; my eyes, I cannot. *O senses! O gods above, the senses!*

3.9.12 Ie suis chez moy, respondant de tout ce qui va mal. Peu de maistres, ie parle de ceux de moyenne condition, comme est la mienne: et s'il en est, ils sont plus heureux: se peuuent tant reposer, sur vn second, qu'il ne leur reste bonne part de la charge. Cela oste volontiers quelque chose de ma façon, au traittement des suruenants: et en ay peu arrester quelcun par aduenture plus par ma cuisine, que par ma grace: comme font les fascheux: et

At home I am answerable for everything that goes wrong. Few masters—I mean those of middling station like mine, and if there are any, they are luckier—can rely so much on a deputy that a good part of the burden does not remain on them. This tends to take something away from my manner in receiving visitors; and I may perhaps have kept someone there more by my cooking than by my graciousness, as tiresome people do; and it takes

FRENCH

oste beaucoup du plaisir que ie deurois prendre chez moy, de la visitation et assemblees de mes amys.

La plus sotte contenance d'vn Gentil-homme en sa maison, c'est de le voir empesché du train de sa police: parler à l'oreille d'vn valet, en menacer vn autre des yeux. Elle doit couler insensiblement, et representer vn cours ordinaire. Et treuue laid, qu'on entretienne ses hostes, du traictement qu'on leur fait, autant à l'excuser qu'à le vanter. I'ayme l'ordre et la netteté, *Et cantharus et lanx / Ostendunt mihi me,* au prix de l'abondance: et regarde chez moy exactement à la necessité, peu à la parade. Si vn valet se bat chez autruy, si vn plat se verse, vous n'en faites que rire: vous dormez ce pendant que monsieur renge auec son maistre d'hostel, son faict, pour vostre traictement du lendemain. I'en parle selon moy.

Ne laissant pas en general d'estimer, combien c'est vn doux amusement à certaines natures, qu'vn mesnage paisible, prospere, conduict par vn ordre reglé. Et ne voulant attacher à la chose, mes propres erreurs et inconuenients. Ny desdire Platon, qui estime la plus heureuse occupation à chascun, faire ses particuliers affaires sans iniustice.

3.9.13 Quand ie voyage, ie n'ay à penser qu'à moy, et à l'emploicte de mon argent: cela se dispose d'vn seul precepte. Il est requis trop de parties à amasser: ie n'y entens rien. A despendre, ie m'y entens vn peu, et à donner iour à ma despence: qui est de vray son principal vsage. Mais ie m'y attens trop ambitieusement; qui la rend inegalle et difforme: et en outre immoderee en l'vn et l'autre visage. Si elle paroist, si elle sert, ie m'y laisse indiscretement aller: et me resserre autant indiscretement, si elle ne luyt, et si elle ne me rit.

Qui que ce soit, ou art, ou nature, qui nous imprime cette condition de viure, par la relation à autruy, nous fait beaucoup plus de mal que de bien. Nous nous defraudons de nos propres vtilitez, pour former les apparences à l'opinion commune. Il ne nous chaut pas tant, quel soit nostre estre, en nous, et en effect, comme quel il soit, en la cognoissance publique. Les biens mesmes de l'esprit, et la sagesse, nous semblent sans fruict, si elle n'est iouye que de nous: si elle ne se produict à la veuë et approbation estrangere. Il y en a, de qui l'or coulle à gros bouillons, par des lieux sousterreins, imperceptiblement: d'autres l'estendent tout en lames et en feuilles.

ENGLISH

away much of the pleasure I ought to have at home from the visits and gatherings of my friends.

The silliest figure a gentleman can cut in his own house is to be seen preoccupied with running his establishment, whispering in one servant's ear, threatening another with his eyes. It should all flow imperceptibly and look like the ordinary course of things. And I find it unseemly to entertain one's guests with talk of how they are being treated, whether to excuse it or to boast of it. I love order and cleanliness—*and the tankard and the dish / show me myself*—rather than abundance; and at home I look carefully to what is necessary, little to show. If a servant gets into a fight in someone else's house, if a dish is upset, you only laugh; you sleep while the master of the house goes over his arrangements with his steward for your entertainment the next day. I speak for myself.

Not that I fail, in general, to recognize what a sweet pastime a peaceful, prosperous household, run in an orderly way, is for certain natures. Nor do I want to pin my own failings and inconveniences on the thing itself. Nor to contradict Plato, who considers the happiest occupation for each person to be conducting his own affairs without injustice.

When I travel, I have only myself to think about, and the use of my money; that is settled by a single precept. Amassing requires too many qualities: I know nothing about it. Spending I understand a little, and letting my spending be seen—which is in truth its principal use. But I go about it too ambitiously, which makes it uneven and misshapen, and moreover immoderate in both directions. If it shows, if it serves, I let myself go indiscreetly; and I tighten up just as indiscreetly if it does not shine and does not smile on me.

Whatever it is, art or nature, that has stamped on us this condition of living by reference to others, it does us much more harm than good. We cheat ourselves of our own advantages to shape appearances to common opinion. We care less what our being is in ourselves and in reality than what it is in public knowledge. Even the goods of the mind, and wisdom, seem fruitless to us if they are enjoyed only by ourselves, if they are not displayed to the sight and approval of others. There are some whose gold flows in great streams through under-

FRENCH

ENGLISH

ground channels, imperceptibly; others beat it all out into plates and leaves.

Si qu'aux vns les liars valent escuz, aux autres le contraire: le monde estimant l'emploite et la valeur, selon la montre. Tout soing curieux autour des richesses sent à l'auarice. Leur dispensation mesme, et la liberalité trop ordonnee et artificielle: elles ne valent pas vne aduertance et sollicitude penible. Qui veut faire sa despense iuste, la fait estroitte et contrainte. La garde, ou l'emploitte, sont de soy choses indifferentes, et ne prennent couleur de bien ou de mal, que selon l'application de nostre volonté.

So that for some, farthings pass for crowns, and for others the reverse, since the world judges use and value by show. All overcareful attention to riches smacks of avarice. Even giving them out, and a liberality that is too regulated and contrived—riches are not worth painful heed and anxiety. Whoever wants to make his spending exactly right makes it narrow and constrained. Keeping and spending are in themselves indifferent, and take on the color of good or evil only according to how our will applies them.

LIVING AMONG CIVIL WARS

The corruption of the age is another reason to travel; yet societies hold together despite their vices.

FRENCH

ENGLISH

3.9.14 L'autre cause qui me conuie à ces promenades, c'est la disconuenance aux mœurs presentes de nostre estat: ie me consolerois aysement de cette corruption, pour le regard de l'interest public: *Peioraque sæcula ferri Temporibus, quorum sceleri non inuenit ipsa Nomen, et à nullo posuit natura metallo:* mais pour le mien, non. I'en suis en particulier trop pressé. Car en mon voisinage, nous sommes tantost par la longue licence de ces guerres ciuiles, enuieillis en vne forme d'estat si desbordee, *Quippe vbi fas versum atque nefas:* qu'à la verité, c'est merueille qu'elle se puisse maintenir.

The other cause that invites me on these outings is my disagreement with the present morals of our state. I would easily console myself for this corruption as far as the public interest is concerned—*Ages worse than the times of iron, for whose wickedness nature herself has found no name, nor named it after any metal*—but as far as my own is concerned, no. It presses too hard on me personally. For in my neighborhood we have by now, through the long license of these civil wars, grown old in so unruly a form of state—*where right and wrong are turned upside down*—that it is truly a wonder it can hold together.[11]

Armati terram exercent, sempérque recentes / Conuectare iuuat prædas, et viuere rapto. En fin ie vois par nostre exemple, que la societé des hommes se tient et se coust, à quelque prix que ce soit. En quelque assiette qu'on les couche, ils s'appilent, et se rengent, en se remuant et s'entassant: comme des corps mal vnis qu'on empoche sans ordre, trouuent d'eux mesmes la façon de se ioindre, et s'emplacer, les vns parmy les autres: souuent mieux, que l'art ne les eust sçeu disposer. Le Roy Philippus fit vn amas, des plus meschans hommes et incorrigibles qu'il peut trouuer, et les logea tous en vne ville, qu'il leur fit bastir, qui en portoit le nom.

They work the land in arms, and always delight / in carrying off fresh plunder and living on what they seize. In short, I see by our example that human society holds and is stitched together at whatever cost. In whatever position you lay men down, they pile up and sort themselves out by shifting and crowding together, as ill-matched objects stuffed into a bag without order find by themselves the way to fit together and settle in among one another, often better than art could have arranged them. King Philip gathered together the most wicked and incorrigible men he could find and lodged them all in a city he had built for them, which bore their name.[12]

I'estime qu'ils dresserent des vices mesme, vne contexture politique entre eux, et vne commode et iuste

I suppose that out of their very vices they built a political structure among themselves, and a con-

FRENCH

societé. Ie vois, non vne action, ou trois, ou cent, mais des mœurs, en vsage commun et reçeu, si farouches, en inhumanité sur tout et desloyauté, qui est pour moy la pire espece des vices, que ie n'ay point le courage de les conceuoir sans horreur: et les admire, quasi autant que ie les deteste. L'exercice de ces meschancetez insignes, porte marque de vigueur et force d'ame, autant que d'erreur et desreglement. La necessité compose les hommes et les assemble. Cette couture fortuite se forme apres en loix.

Car il en a esté d'aussi sauuages qu'aucune opinion humaine puisse enfanter, qui toutesfois ont maintenu leurs corps, auec autant de santé et longueur de vie, que celles de Platon et Aristote sçauroient faire. Et certes toutes ces descriptions de police, feintes par art, se trouuent ridicules, et ineptes à mettre en practique.

3.9.15 Ces grandes et longues altercations, de la meilleure forme de societé: et des regles plus commodes à nous attacher, sont altercations propres seulement à l'exercice de nostre esprit. Comme il se trouue és arts, plusieurs subiects qui ont leur essence en l'agitation et en la dispute, et n'ont aucune vie hors de là. Telle peinture de police, seroit de mise, en vn nouueau monde: mais nous prenons vn monde desia faict et formé à certaines coustumes. Nous ne l'engendrons pas comme Pyrrha, ou comme Cadmus. Par quelque moyen que nous ayons loy de le redresser, et renger de nouueau, nous ne pouuons gueres le tordre de son accoustumé ply, que nous ne rompions tout.

On demandoit à Solon, s'il auoit estably les meilleures loyx qu'il auoit peu aux Atheniens: Ouy bien, respondit-il, de celles qu'ils eussent receuës. Varro s'excuse de pareil air: Que s'il auoit tout de nouueau à escrire de la religion, il diroit ce, qu'il en croid. Mais, estant desia receuë, il en dira selon l'vsage, plus que selon nature.

ENGLISH

venient and just society. I see, not one action, or three, or a hundred, but morals in common and accepted use, so ferocious—in inhumanity above all, and in treachery, which is for me the worst kind of vice—that I have not the heart to think of them without horror; and I marvel at them almost as much as I detest them. The practice of these signal wickednesses bears the mark of vigor and strength of soul as much as of error and disorder. Necessity puts men together and assembles them. This chance stitching later takes shape as laws.

For there have been laws as wild as any human opinion could give birth to, which nonetheless kept their bodies politic in as much health and length of life as those of Plato and Aristotle could have done. And certainly all those descriptions of government invented by art prove ridiculous and unfit to put into practice.

These great and long disputes about the best form of society, and about the most convenient rules to bind us, are disputes fit only for exercising our minds—just as in the arts there are many subjects whose essence lies in agitation and dispute, and which have no life outside them. Such a picture of government would be in place in a new world; but we take a world already made and shaped to certain customs. We do not engender it as Pyrrha or Cadmus did. By whatever means we may have the right to straighten it and reorder it, we can hardly twist it out of its accustomed bend without breaking everything.[13]

Solon was asked whether he had given the Athenians the best laws he could: "Yes indeed," he replied, "the best of those they would have accepted." Varro excuses himself in a similar vein: if he were writing about religion afresh, he would say what he believes about it; but since it is already accepted, he will speak of it according to usage rather than according to nature.[14]

12 Philip II of Macedon; according to Plutarch the city was called Poneropolis, "City of the Wicked."
11 Juvenal, Satires.
13 After the Flood, Pyrrha and Deucalion repopulated the earth by throwing stones that became people; Cadmus sowed dragon's teeth from which armed men sprang.
14 Marcus Terentius Varro (116–27 BC), Roman scholar, quoted by Augustine in The City of God.

AGAINST INNOVATION

The best government is the one a nation already has; overturning a state to cure it usually kills it.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
3.9.16	Non par opinion, mais en verité, l'excellente et meilleure police, est à chacune nation, celle soubs laquelle elle s'est maintenuë. Sa forme et commodité essentielle despend de l'vsage. Nous nous desplaisons volontiers de la condition presente. Mais ie tiens pourtant, que d'aller desirant le commandement de peu, en vn estat populaire: ou en la monarchie, vne autre espece de gouuernement, c'est vice et folie. *Ayme l'estat tel que tu le vois estre:* *S'il est royal, ayme la royauté;* *S'il est de peu, ou bien communauté,* *Ayme l'aussi, car Dieu t'y a faict naistre.* Ainsin en parloit le bon monsieur de Pibrac, que nous venons de perdre: vn esprit si gentil, les opinions si saines, les mœurs si douces.	Not in opinion but in truth, the excellent and best government for each nation is the one under which it has preserved itself. Its form and essential advantage depend on usage. We are readily displeased with our present condition. But I hold nonetheless that to go about wishing for rule by the few in a popular state, or for another kind of government in a monarchy, is vice and folly. *Love the state such as you see it to be:* *if it is royal, love royalty;* *if it is rule by the few, or else a commonwealth,* *love it too, for God had you born there.* So said the good Monsieur de Pibrac, whom we have just lost: so fine a mind, such sound opinions, such gentle manners.[15]
	Cette perte, et celle qu'en mesme temps nous auons faicte de monsieur de Foix, sont pertes importantes à nostre couronne. Ie ne sçay s'il reste à la France dequoy substituer vne autre coupple, pareille à ces deux Gascons, en syncerité, et en suffisance, pour le conseil de nos Roys. C'estoyent ames diuersement belles, et certes selon le siecle, rares et belles, chacune en sa forme. Mais qui les auoit logees en cet aage, si desconuenables et si disproportionnees à nostre corruption, et à nos tempestes?	This loss, and the one we suffered at the same time in Monsieur de Foix, are serious losses to our crown. I do not know whether France has anything left with which to replace them by another pair like these two Gascons, in sincerity and ability, for the councils of our kings. They were souls beautiful in different ways, and certainly, for this age, rare and beautiful, each in its own form. But who had lodged them in this age, so ill-suited and so out of proportion to our corruption and our storms?[16]
3.9.17	Rien ne presse vn estat que l'innouation: le changement donne seul forme à l'iniustice, et à la tyrannie. Quand quelque piece se démanche, on peut l'estayer: on peut s'opposer à ce que l'alteration et corruption naturelle à toutes choses, ne nous esloigne trop de nos commencemens et principes. Mais d'entreprendre à refondre vne si grande masse, et à changer les fondements d'vn si grand bastiment, c'est à faire à ceux qui pour descrasser effacent: qui veulent amender les deffauts particuliers, par vne confusion vniuerselle, et guarir les maladies par la mort: *non tam commutandarum quàm euertendarum rerum cupidi.* Le monde est inepte à se guarir. Il est si impatient de ce qui le presse, qu'il ne vise qu'à s'en deffaire, sans regarder à quel prix.	Nothing weighs on a state like innovation: change alone gives shape to injustice and tyranny. When some piece comes loose, it can be propped up; we can prevent the alteration and corruption natural to all things from carrying us too far from our beginnings and principles. But to undertake to recast so great a mass, and to change the foundations of so great a building, is for those who wipe out in order to clean; who want to amend particular defects by universal confusion, and cure diseases by death: *eager not so much to change things as to overturn them.* The world is incapable of curing itself. It is so impatient of whatever oppresses it that it aims only at getting rid of it, without considering at what cost.

15 Guy du Faur de Pibrac (1529–1584), magistrate and poet, author of moral Quatrains.
16 Paul de Foix (1528–1584), archbishop of Toulouse and diplomat.

FRENCH

Nous voyons par mille exemples, qu'il se guarit ordinairement à ses despens: la descharge du mal present, n'est pas guarison, s'il n'y a en general amendement de condition. La fin du chirurgien, n'est pas de faire mourir la mauuaise chair: ce n'est que l'acheminement de sa cure: il regarde au delà, d'y faire renaistre la naturelle, et rendre la partie à son deu estre. Quiconque propose seulement d'emporter ce qui le masche, il demeure court: car le bien ne succede pas necessairement au mal: vn autre mal luy peut succeder; et pire. Comme il aduint aux tueurs de Cesar, qui ietterent la chose publique à tel poinct, qu'ils eurent à se repentir de s'en estre meslez.

A plusieurs depuis, iusques à nos siecles, il est aduenu de mesmes. Les François mes contemporanees sçauent bien qu'en dire. Toutes grandes mutations esbranlent l'estat, et le desordonnent.

3.9.18 Qui viseroit droit à la guarison, et en consulteroit auant toute œuure, se refroidiroit volontiers d'y mettre la main. Pacuuius Calauius corrigea le vice de ce proceder, par vn exemple insigne. Ses concitoyens estoient mutinez contre leurs magistrats: luy personnage de grande authorité en la ville de Capouë, trouua vn iour moyen d'enfermer le Senat dans le Palais: et conuoquant le peuple en la place, leur dit: Que le iour estoit venu, auquel en pleine liberté ils pouuoient prendre vengeance des tyrans qui les auoyent si long temps oppressez, lesquels il tenoit à sa mercy seuls et desarmez.

Fut d'aduis, qu'au sort, on les tirast hors, l'vn apres l'autre: et de chacun on ordonnast particulierement: faisant sur le champ, executer ce qui en seroit decreté: pourueu aussi que tout d'vn train ils aduisassent d'establir quelque homme de bien, en la place du condamné, affin qu'elle ne demeurast vuide d'officier. Ils n'eurent pas plustost ouy le nom d'vn senateur, qu'il s'esleua vn cry de mescontentement vniuersel à l'encontre de luy: Ie voy bien, dit Pacuuius, il faut demettre cettuy-cy: c'est vn meschant: ayons en vn bon en change. Ce fut vn prompt silence: tout le monde se trouuant bien empesché au choix. Au premier plus effronté, qui dit le sien: voyla vn consentement de voix encore plus grand à refuser celuy là.

ENGLISH

We see by a thousand examples that it usually cures itself at its own expense: relief from the present ill is no cure unless there is a general improvement of condition. The surgeon's aim is not to kill the bad flesh; that is only the path toward his cure. He looks beyond, to making the natural flesh grow again and restoring the part to its proper state. Whoever proposes only to remove what is gnawing at him falls short, for good does not necessarily follow evil: another evil may follow it, and a worse one. So it happened to Caesar's killers, who threw the commonwealth into such a state that they had cause to repent of having meddled with it.

The same has happened to many since, down to our own times. We French of today know well what to say about it. All great changes shake the state and throw it into disorder.

Anyone who aimed straight at the cure, and deliberated about it before setting to work, would be inclined to lose his enthusiasm for putting his hand to it. Pacuvius Calavius corrected the flaw in this way of proceeding by a notable example. His fellow citizens had risen against their magistrates. He, a man of great authority in the city of Capua, found a way one day to shut the Senate up in the palace; and, summoning the people to the square, told them that the day had come when, in full liberty, they could take revenge on the tyrants who had oppressed them so long, and whom he held at his mercy, alone and unarmed.[17]

He advised that they be drawn out by lot, one after another, and that a decision be made on each one individually, whatever was decreed being carried out on the spot—provided also that at the same time they took care to install some good man in the place of the condemned one, so that the post would not be left without an officer. No sooner had they heard the name of one senator than a cry of universal discontent rose up against him. "I see," said Pacuvius, "this one must be removed: he is a wicked man. Let us have a good one in exchange." There was a sudden silence, everyone finding himself much at a loss in the choice. When the first and most brazen of them named his man,

17 Pacuvius Calavius, chief magistrate of Capua in 216 BC; the story is from Livy.

FRENCH

Cent imperfections, et iustes causes, de le rebuter. Ces humeurs contradictoires, s'estans eschauffees, il aduint encore pis du second Senateur, et du tiers. Autant de discorde à l'election, que de conuenance à la demission. S'estans inutilement lassez à ce trouble, ils commencent, qui deçà, qui delà, à se desrober peu à peu de l'assemblee: rapportant chacun cette resolution en son ame, que le plus vieil et mieux cogneu mal, est tousiours plus supportable, que le mal recent et inexperimenté.

3.9.19 Pour nous voir bien piteusement agitez: car que n'auons nous faict? *Eheu! cicatricum et sceleris pudet,*
Fratrúmque: quid nos dura refugimus
Ætas? quid intactum nefasti
Liquimus? vnde manus iuuentus
Metu Deorum continuit? quibus
Pepercit aris? ie ne vay pas soudain me resoluant, *Ipsa si velit Salus,*
Seruare prorsus non potest hanc familiam. Nous ne sommes pas pourtant à l'auanture, à nostre dernier periode. La conseruation des estats, est chose qui vray-semblablement surpasse nostre intelligence. C'est, comme dit Platon, chose puissante, et de difficile dissolution, qu'vne ciuile police, elle dure souuent contre des maladies mortelles et intestines: contre l'iniure des loix iniustes, contre la tyrannie, contre le debordement et ignorance des magistrats, licence et sedition des peuples.

En toutes nos fortunes, nous nous comparons à ce qui est au dessus de nous, et regardons vers ceux qui sont mieux. Mesurons nous à ce qui est au dessous: il n'en est point de si miserable, qui ne trouue mille exemples où se consoler. C'est nostre vice, que nous voyons plus mal volontiers, ce qui est dessus nous, que volontiers, ce qui est dessoubs. Si disoit Solon, qui dresseroit vn tas de tous les maux ensemble, qu'il n'est aucun, qui ne choisist plustost de remporter auec soy les maux qu'il a, que de venir à diuision legitime, auec tous les autres hommes, de ce tas de maux, et en prendre sa quotte part. Nostre police se porte mal.

ENGLISH

there was an even greater consensus of voices to reject that one.

A hundred imperfections, and just reasons for turning him down. These contradictory humors having grown heated, it went even worse with the second senator, and the third. As much discord over the election as agreement over the removal. Having worn themselves out uselessly in this turmoil, they begin, some this way, some that, to slip away little by little from the assembly, each carrying away in his soul this resolution: that the older and better-known ill is always more bearable than the new and untried one.

Though we see ourselves pitiably tossed about—for what have we not done? *Alas! we are ashamed of our scars and our crime*
and of our brothers. What have we, a hardened age, shrunk from? What wickedness have we left untouched? From what has our youth held back its hands
for fear of the gods? What
altars has it spared?—I do not hastily conclude that *Even if Salvation herself wished it,*
she could not possibly save this household. Yet perhaps we have not reached our final period. The preservation of states is something that very probably surpasses our understanding. A civil polity, as Plato says, is a powerful thing and hard to dissolve; it often holds out against mortal internal diseases: against the harm of unjust laws, against tyranny, against the excesses and ignorance of magistrates, the license and sedition of the people.[18]

In all our fortunes we compare ourselves with what is above us, and look toward those who are better off. Let us measure ourselves against what is below: there is no one so wretched that he cannot find a thousand examples to console himself with. It is our failing that we look at what is above us with more displeasure than we look at what is below us with pleasure. Solon used to say that if someone made a heap of all ills together, there is no one who would not rather take back home the ills he has than come to a lawful division of that heap with all other men and take his share. Our government is in poor health.

Yet there have been sicker ones that did not die. The gods play ball with us and toss us about every

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
	Il en a esté pourtant de plus malades, sans mourir. Les dieux s'esbatent de nous à la pelote, et nous agitent à toutes mains, *enimuero Dij nos homines quasi pilas habent*.	which way: *the gods indeed treat us men as their balls.*[19]

ROME AND THE SURVIVAL OF STATES

Rome outlasted worse disorders, and a great state holds together by more than one nail.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
3.9.20	Les astres ont fatalement destiné l'estat de Rome, pour exemplaire de ce qu'ils peuuent en ce genre. Il comprend en soy toutes les formes et auantures, qui touchent vn estat: tout ce que l'ordre y peut, et le trouble, et l'heur, et le mal'heur. Qui se doit desesperer de sa condition, voyant les secousses et mouuemens dequoy celuy là fut agité, et qu'il supporta? Si l'estendue de la domination, est la santé d'vn estat, dequoy ie ne suis aucunement d'aduis (et me plaist Isocrates, qui instruit Nicocles, non d'enuier les Princes, qui ont des dominations larges, mais qui sçauent bien conseruer celles qui leur sont escheuës) celuy-là ne fut iamais si sain, que quand il fut le plus malade.	The stars have fatefully destined the Roman state to be the model of what they can do in this kind. It contains within it all the forms and adventures that can befall a state: all that order can do, and disorder, and good fortune and misfortune. Who should despair of his condition, seeing the shocks and upheavals by which that state was shaken, and which it withstood? If extent of dominion is the health of a state—which I do not at all believe (and I like Isocrates, who teaches Nicocles to envy not the princes who have wide dominions but those who know how to keep the ones that have fallen to them)—that state was never so healthy as when it was most sick.
	La pire de ses formes, luy fut la plus fortunee. A peine recognoist-on l'image d'aucune police, soubs les premiers Empereurs: c'est la plus horrible et la plus espesse confusion qu'on puisse conceuoir. Toutesfois il la supporta: et y dura, conseruant, non pas vne monarchie resserree en ses limites, mais tant de nations, si diuerses, si esloignees, si mal affectionnees, si desordonnement commandees, et iniustement conquises. *Nec gentibus vllis Commodat in populum, terræ pelagique potentem, Inuidiam fortuna suam.* Tout ce qui branle ne tombe pas. La contexture d'vn si grand corps tient à plus d'vn clou.	The worst of its forms was the most fortunate for it. One can scarcely recognize the image of any government under the first emperors: it is the most horrible and dense confusion one can conceive. Yet it bore it and endured in it, preserving not a monarchy confined within its borders but so many nations, so diverse, so distant, so ill-disposed, so disorderly governed and unjustly conquered. *Nor to any nations does Fortune lend her enmity against the people mighty over land and sea.* Not everything that totters falls. The fabric of so great a body holds by more than one nail.[20]
	Il tient mesme par son antiquité: comme les vieux bastimens, ausquels l'aage a desrobé le pied, sans crouste et sans cyment, qui pourtant viuent et soustiennent en leur propre poix, *Nec iam validis radicibus hærens, / Pondere tuta suo est.*	It holds even by its age, like old buildings whose footings time has worn away, without plaster and without cement, which nevertheless live and hold up by their own weight: *No longer clinging by strong roots, / it is safe by its own weight.*
3.9.21	D'auantage ce n'est pas bien procedé, de recognoistre seulement le flanc et le fossé: pour iuger de la seureté d'vne place, il faut voir, par où on y peut venir, en quel estat est l'assaillant. Peu de vaisseaux fondent de leur	Moreover, it is not a sound procedure to reconnoiter only the flank and the moat. To judge how secure a stronghold is, you must see by what way it can be approached and what condition the at-

18 Horace, Odes I.35; Terence, The Brothers; Salus was the Roman goddess of safety and welfare.
19 Plautus, The Captives.
20 Lucan, Pharsalia.

FRENCH	ENGLISH
propre poix, et sans violence estrangere. Or tournons les yeux par tout, tout croulle autour de nous.	tacker is in. Few ships founder under their own weight, without violence from outside. Now let us turn our eyes in every direction: everything is crumbling around us.
En tous les grands estats, soit de Chrestienté, soit d'ailleurs, que nous cognoissons, regardez y, vous y trouuerez vne euidente menasse de changement et de ruyne: *Et sua sunt illis incommoda, párque per omnes / Tempestas.* Les astrologues ont beau ieu, à nous aduertir, comme ils font, de grandes alterations, et mutations prochaines: leurs deuinations sont presentes et palpables, il ne faut pas aller au ciel pour cela. Nous n'auons pas seulement à tirer consolation, de cette societé vniuerselle de mal et de menasse: mais encores quelque esperance, pour la duree de nostre estat: d'autant que naturellement, rien ne tombe, là où tout tombe. La maladie vniuerselle est la santé particuliere. La conformité, est qualité ennemie à la dissolution.	In all the great states we know, whether in Christendom or elsewhere, take a look: you will find an evident threat of change and ruin. *They too have their own troubles, and the same storm / hangs over all.* The astrologers have an easy game warning us, as they do, of great alterations and changes close at hand. Their divinations are present and palpable; there is no need to go to the heavens for that. From this universal fellowship in ill and in menace we should draw not only consolation but also some hope for the survival of our state, since, naturally, nothing falls where everything falls. Universal sickness is individual health. Conformity is a quality hostile to dissolution.[21]
Pour moy, ie n'en entre point au desespoir, et me semble y voir des routes à nous sauuer! *Deus hæc fortasse benigna / Reducet in sedem vice.* Qui sçait, si Dieu voudra qu'il en aduienne, comme des corps qui se purgent, et remettent en meilleur estat, par longues et griefues maladies: lesquelles leur rendent vne santé plus entiere et plus nette, que celle qu'elles leur auoient osté? Ce qui me poise le plus, c'est qu'à conter les symptomes de nostre mal, i'en vois autant de naturels, et de ceux que le ciel nous enuoye, et proprement siens, que de ceux que nostre desreglement, et l'imprudence humaine y conferent. Il semble que les astres mesmes ordonnent, que nous auons assez duré, et outre les termes ordinaires.	For my part, I do not fall into despair over it, and I think I can see roads by which we may be saved. *Perhaps God, by a kindly turn, / will restore these things to their place.* Who knows whether God will have it turn out as with bodies that purge themselves and are restored to a better state by long and grievous illnesses, which give them back a health more complete and cleaner than the one they took away? What weighs on me most is that, when I count the symptoms of our sickness, I see as many that are natural, sent to us by heaven and properly its own, as those that our disorder and human imprudence contribute. It seems that the very stars decree that we have lasted long enough, and beyond the ordinary limits.[22]
Et cecy aussi me poise, que le plus voysin mal, qui nous menace, ce n'est pas alteration en la masse entiere et solide, mais sa dissipation et diuulsion: l'extreme de noz craintes.	And this too weighs on me: that the nearest ill threatening us is not an alteration in the whole, solid mass, but its dissipation and tearing apart—the extreme of our fears.

MEMORY AND PUBLIC SPEAKING

His failing memory makes him avoid prepared speeches and formal occasions.

FRENCH	ENGLISH
3.9.22 Encores en ces reuasseries icy crains-ie la trahison, de ma memoire, que par inaduertance, elle m'aye faict enregistrer vne chose deux fois. Ie hay à me recognoistre: et ne retaste iamais qu'enuis ce qui m'est vne fois	Even in these ramblings here I fear the treachery of my memory, that through inadvertence it may have made me record something twice. I hate going back over myself, and I never re-handle, ex-

21 Adapted from Virgil, Aeneid XI.
22 Horace, Epodes XIII.

FRENCH

eschappé. Or ie n'apporte icy rien de nouuel apprentissage. Ce sont imaginations communes: les ayant à l'auanture conceuës cent fois, i'ay peur de les auoir desia enrollees. La redicte est par tout ennuyeuse, fut ce dans Homere. Mais elle est ruyneuse, aux choses qui n'ont qu'vne montre superficielle et passagere. Ie me desplais de l'inculcation, voire aux choses vtiles, comme en Seneque.

Et l'vsage de son escole Stoïque me desplaist, de redire sur chasque matiere, tout au long et au large, les principes et presuppositions, qui seruent en general: et realleguer tousiours de nouueau les arguments et raisons communes et vniuerselles.

3.9.23 Ma memoire s'empire cruellement tous les iours: *Pocula Lethæos vt si ducentia somnos, / Arente fauce traxerim.* Il faudra doresnauant (car Dieu mercy iusques à cette heure, il n'en est pas aduenu de faute) qu'au lieu que les autres cherchent temps, et occasion de penser à ce qu'ils ont à dire, ie fuye à me preparer, de peur de m'attacher à quelque obligation, de laquelle i'aye à despendre. L'estre tenu et obligé, me fouruoye et le despendre d'vn si foible instrument qu'est ma memoire. Ie ne lis iamais cette histoire, que ie ne m'en offence, d'vn ressentiment propre et naturel.

Lyncestez accusé de coniuration, contre Alexandre, le iour qu'il fut mené en la presence de l'armée, suiuant la coustume, pour estre ouy en ses deffences, auoit en sa teste vne harangue estudiée, de laquelle tout hesitant et begayant il prononça quelques paroles. Comme il se troubloit de plus en plus, ce pendant qu'il lucte auec sa memoire, et qu'il la retaste, le voila chargé et tué à coups de pique, par les soldats, qui luy estoyent plus voisins: le tenans pour conuaincu. Son estonnement et son silence, leur seruit de confession. Ayant eu en prison tant de loysir de se preparer, ce n'est à leur aduis, plus la memoire qui luy manque: c'est la conscience qui luy bride la langue, et luy oste la force.

Vrayement c'est bien dit. Le lieu estonne, l'assistance, l'expectation, lors mesme qu'il n'y va que de l'ambition de bien dire. Que peut on faire, quand c'est vne harangue, qui porte la vie en consequence?

ENGLISH

cept reluctantly, what has once escaped me. Now, I bring nothing here that is newly learned. These are common notions; having perhaps conceived them a hundred times, I am afraid I have already entered them on the roll. Repetition is tedious everywhere, even in Homer. But it is ruinous in things that have only a superficial and passing show. I dislike having things hammered in, even useful things, as in Seneca.

And I dislike the habit of his Stoic school of repeating on every subject, at full length and breadth, the principles and presuppositions that apply in general, and of always bringing out anew the common and universal arguments and reasons.

My memory grows cruelly worse every day: *As if, with parched throat, I had drained cups / that bring the sleep of Lethe.* From now on (for, thank God, no failure has come of it so far), whereas others look for time and occasion to think about what they have to say, I shall have to avoid preparing myself, for fear of binding myself to some obligation on which I would have to depend. Being bound and obliged throws me off, and so does depending on so feeble an instrument as my memory. I never read this story without being stung by it, with a feeling that is personal and natural to me.[23]

Lyncestes, accused of conspiracy against Alexander, was brought before the army on the appointed day, according to custom, to be heard in his defense. He had a studied speech in his head, of which, hesitating and stammering, he delivered a few words. As he grew more and more confused, while he wrestled with his memory and groped through it, there he was, set upon and killed with pike thrusts by the soldiers nearest him, who took him as convicted. His bewilderment and his silence served them as a confession. Since he had had so much leisure in prison to prepare himself, it was no longer, in their opinion, his memory that failed him: it was his conscience that bridled his tongue and took away his strength.[24]

Truly, that is well said! The place stuns us, the audience, the expectation, even when nothing more is at stake than the ambition to speak well.

23 Horace, Epodes XIV. Lethe was the river of forgetfulness in the underworld.
24 Alexander of Lyncestis, executed for conspiracy in 330 BC; the story is told by Quintus Curtius.

FRENCH

ENGLISH

What can one do when the speech has one's life riding on it?

3.9.24 Pour moy, cela mesme, que ie sois lié à ce que i'ay à dire, sert à m'en desprendre. Quand ie me suis commis et assigné entierement à ma memoire, ie pends si fort sur elle, que ie l'accable: elle s'effraye de sa charge. Autant que ie m'en rapporte à elle, ie me mets hors de moy: iusques à essayer ma contenance. Et me suis veu quelque iour en peine, de celer la seruitude en laquelle i'estois entraué.

For my part, the very fact that I am bound to what I have to say serves to shake me loose from it. When I have committed and entrusted myself entirely to my memory, I lean on it so heavily that I overwhelm it: it takes fright at its burden. The more I rely on it, the more I am thrown out of myself, to the point of putting my composure to the test. And I have found myself at times hard put to hide the servitude in which I was shackled.

Là où mon dessein est, de representer en parlant, vne profonde nonchalance d'accent et de visage, et des mouuemens fortuites et impremeditez, comme naissans des occasions presentes: aymant aussi cher ne rien dire qui vaille, que de montrer estre venu preparé pour bien dire: chose messeante, sur tout à gens de ma profession: et chose de trop grande obligation, à qui ne peut beaucoup tenir. L'apprest donne plus à esperer, qu'il ne porte. On se met souuent sottement en pourpoinct, pour ne sauter pas mieux qu'en saye.

For my aim, when I speak, is to display a deep nonchalance of tone and expression, and movements that are casual and unpremeditated, as if born of the present occasion. I would just as soon say nothing worth hearing as show that I came prepared to speak well—a thing unbecoming, above all, in people of my profession, and too great a commitment for one who cannot retain much. Preparation raises more hopes than it delivers. People often foolishly strip down to their doublet only to jump no better than they would in their coat.[25]

Nihil est his, qui placere volunt, tam aduersarium, quàm expectatio. Ils ont laissé par escrit de l'orateur Curio, que quand il proposoit la distribution des pieces de son oraison, en trois, ou en quatre: ou le nombre de ses arguments et raisons, il luy aduenoit volontiers, ou d'en oublier quelqu'vn, ou d'y en adiouster vn ou deux de plus. I'ay tousiours bien euité, de tomber en cet inconuenient: ayant hay ces promesses et prescriptions: non seulement pour la deffiance de ma memoire: mais aussi pource que cette forme retire trop à l'artiste. *Simpliciora militares decent.* Baste, que ie me suis meshuy promis, de ne prendre plus la charge de parler en lieu de respect.

Nothing is so damaging to those who want to please as expectation. It has been recorded of the orator Curio that when he announced the division of his speech into three or four parts, or the number of his arguments and reasons, he would often either forget one of them or add one or two more. I have always taken care to avoid falling into that trouble, having hated such announcements and outlines, not only from distrust of my memory but also because that form smacks too much of the professional. *Simpler things suit soldiers.* Enough: I have now promised myself never again to take on the task of speaking on a formal occasion.[26]

Car quant à parler en lisant son escript: outre ce qu'il est tresinepte, il est de grand desauantage à ceux, qui par nature pouuoient quelque chose en l'action. Et de me ietter à la mercy de mon inuention presente, encore moins: ie l'ay lourde et trouble, qui ne sçauroit fournir aux soudaines necessitez, et importantes.

For as for speaking by reading out one's text, besides being most inept, it is a great disadvantage to those who by nature had some gift for delivery. And as for throwing myself on the mercy of my improvisation of the moment, even less: mine is heavy and muddled, unable to meet sudden and important demands.

25 Montaigne means the nobility, whose profession was arms.
26 The first quotation is from Cicero, Academica II; Gaius Scribonius Curio (1st century BC) is described in Cicero's Brutus; the second quotation is from Quintilian.

I ADD BUT DO NOT CORRECT

Montaigne explains why he adds to his book without revising what is already printed.

FRENCH

3.9.25 Laisse Lecteur courir encore ce coup d'essay, et ce troisiesme alongeail, du reste des pieces de ma peinture. I'adiouste, mais ie ne corrige pas. Premierement, par ce que celuy qui a hypothequé au monde son ouurage, ie trouue apparence, qu'il n'y ayt plus de droict. Qu'il die, s'il peut, mieux ailleurs, et ne corrompe la besongne qu'il a venduë. De telles gens, il ne faudroit rien acheter qu'apres leur mort. Qu'ils y pensent bien, auant que de se produire. Qui les haste? Mon liure est tousiours vn: sauf qu'à mesure, qu'on se met à le renouueller, afin que l'achetteur ne s'en aille les mains du tout vuides, ie me donne loy d'y attacher (comme ce n'est qu'vne marqueterie mal iointe) quelque embleme supernumeraire.

Ce ne sont que surpoids, qui ne condamnent point la premiere forme, mais donnent quelque prix particulier à chacune des suiuantes, par vne petite subtilité ambitieuse. De là toutesfois il aduiendra facilement, qu'il s'y mesle quelque transposition de chronologie: mes contes prenants place selon leur opportunité, non tousiours selon leur aage.

3.9.26 Secondement, à cause que pour mon regard, ie crains de perdre au change. Mon entendement ne va pas tousiours auant, il va à reculons aussi. Ie ne me deffie gueres moins de mes fantasies, pour estre secondes ou tierces, que premieres: ou presentes, que passees. Nous nous corrigeons aussi sottement souuent, comme nous corrigeons les autres. Ie suis enuieilly de nombre d'ans, depuis mes premieres publications, qui furent l'an mille cinq cens quatre vingts. Mais ie fais doute que ie sois assagi d'vn pouce. Moy à cette heure, et moy tantost, sommes bien deux. Quand meilleur, ie n'en puis rien dire. Il feroit bel estre vieil, si nous ne marchions, que vers l'amendement.

C'est vn mouuement d'yuroigne, titubant, vertigineux, informe: ou des ionchez, que l'air manie casuellement selon soy. Antiochus auoit vigoureusement escript en faueur de l'Academie: il print sur ses vieux ans vn autre party: lequel des deux ie suyuisse, seroit ce pas tousiours

ENGLISH

Reader, let this further essay run its course too, this third extension made of the remaining pieces of my portrait. I add, but I do not correct. First, because when a man has mortgaged his work to the world, it seems reasonable to me that he should have no more right in it. Let him say it better elsewhere, if he can, and not spoil the goods he has sold. From such people one should buy nothing until after their death. Let them think it over well before they bring themselves before the public. Who is hurrying them? My book is always one and the same. Except that, as people set about issuing it anew, so that the buyer may not go away entirely empty-handed, I allow myself to attach to it (since it is only a badly joined marquetry) some extra emblem.[27]

These are only makeweights, which do not condemn the original form but give some particular value to each of the later ones, by a little ambitious subtlety. From this, however, it will easily happen that some transposition of chronology gets mixed in, my stories taking their place according to their timeliness, not always according to their age.

Second, because for my own part I fear losing in the exchange. My understanding does not always go forward; it goes backward too. I distrust my notions hardly less for being second or third than first, or present than past. We often correct ourselves as foolishly as we correct others. I have grown older by a good number of years since my first publications, which were in the year 1580. But I doubt that I have grown an inch wiser. Myself now and myself a while ago are indeed two; but which is better, I cannot say. It would be a fine thing to be old if we were marching only toward improvement.

It is the movement of a drunkard, staggering, dizzy, shapeless; or of rushes that the wind tosses at random as it pleases. Antiochus had written vigorously in favor of the Academy; in his old age he took the other side. Whichever of the two I fol-

27 The third book was added in the edition of 1588.

FRENCH

ENGLISH

suiure Antiochus? Apres auoir estably le doubte, vouloir establir la certitude des opinions humaines, estoit ce pas establir le doubte, non la certitude? et promettre, qui luy eust donné encore vn aage à durer, qu'il estoit tousiours en termes de nouuelle agitation: non tant meilleure, qu'autre?

lowed, would I not always be following Antiochus? After establishing doubt, to want to establish the certainty of human opinions—was that not establishing doubt, not certainty? And was it not promising that, had he been given another lifetime, he would still be in a state of fresh agitation, not so much better as different?[28]

3.9.27 La faueur publique m'a donné vn peu plus de hardiesse que ie n'esperois: mais ce que ie crains le plus, c'est de saouler. I'aymerois mieux poindre que lasser. Comme a faict vn sçauant homme de mon temps. La louange est tousiours plaisante, de qui, et pourquoy elle vienne. Si faut-il pour s'en aggreer iustement, estre informé de sa cause. Les imperfections mesme ont leur moyen de se recommander. L'estimation vulgaire et commune, se voit peu heureuse en rencontre. Et de mon temps, ie suis trompé, si les pires escrits ne sont ceux qui ont gaigné le dessus du vent populaire. Certes ie rends graces à des honnestes hommes, qui daignent prendre en bonne part, mes foibles efforts.

Il n'est lieu où les fautes de la façon paroissent tant, qu'en vne matiere qui de soy n'a point de recommandation. Ne te prens point à moy, Lecteur, de celles qui se coulent icy, par la fantasie, ou inaduertance d'autruy: chasque main, chasque ouurier, y apporte les siennes. Ie ne me mesle, ny d'orthographe, et ordonne seulement qu'ils suiuent l'ancienne, ny de la punctuation: ie suis peu expert en l'vn et en l'autre. Où ils rompent du tout le sens, ie m'en donne peu de peine, car aumoins ils me deschargent. Mais où ils en substituent vn faux, comme ils font si souuent, et me destournent à leur conception, ils me ruynent.

Toutesfois quand la sentence n'est forte à ma mesure, vn honneste homme la doit refuser pour mienne. Qui cognoistra combien ie suis peu laborieux, combien ie suis faict à ma mode, croira facilement, que ie redicterois plus volontiers, encore autant d'Essais, que de m'assuiettir à resuiure ceux-cy, pour cette puerile correction.

Public favor has given me a little more boldness than I hoped. But what I fear most is to surfeit. I would rather prick than weary, as a learned man of my time has done. Praise is always pleasant, from whomever and for whatever reason it comes. Yet to be rightly pleased with it, one must know its cause. Even imperfections have their way of recommending themselves. Common, popular esteem is seldom happy in its choices; and in my time, unless I am mistaken, the worst writings are those that have caught the popular wind. Certainly I give thanks to the decent men who deign to take my feeble efforts in good part.

Nowhere do faults of workmanship show so much as in a subject that has nothing to recommend it in itself. Do not blame me, reader, for those that slip in here through the whims or carelessness of others: each hand, each workman, brings his own. I do not concern myself with spelling—I only order them to follow the old one—nor with punctuation; I am little expert in either. Where they break the sense altogether, I take little trouble over it, for at least they relieve me of responsibility. But where they substitute a false one, as they so often do, and twist me to their own conception, they ruin me.

However, when a sentence is not as strong as I would make it, a decent man ought to refuse it as mine. Anyone who knows how little industrious I am, how much I am made in my own fashion, will easily believe that I would sooner dictate as many Essays again than subject myself to going back over these for such childish correction.

SAFETY IN A LAWLESS COUNTRY

His open house has escaped pillage, but he hates owing his safety to others' favor.

FRENCH

ENGLISH

3.9.28 Ie disois donc tantost, qu'estant planté en la plus profonde miniere de ce nouueau metal, non seulement ie

I was saying, then, a little while ago, that being planted in the deepest mine of this new metal, I

28 Antiochus of Ascalon (1st century BC) abandoned the skepticism of the New Academy for a dogmatic philosophy.

FRENCH

suis priué de grande familiarité, auec gens d'autres mœurs que les miennes: et d'autres opinions, par lesquelles ils tiennent ensemble d'vn nœud, qui commande tout autre nœud. Mais encore ie ne suis pas sans hazard, parmy ceux, à qui tout est esgalement loisible: et desquels la plus part ne peut empirer meshuy son marché, vers nostre iustice. D'où naist l'extreme degré de licence. Comptant toutes les particulieres circonstances qui me regardent, ie ne trouue homme des nostres, à qui la deffence des loix, couste, et en gain cessant, et en dommage emergeant, disent les clercs, plus qu'à moy.

Et tels font bien les braues, de leur chaleur et aspreté, qui font beaucoup moins que moy, en iuste balance. Comme maison de tout temps libre, de grand abbord, et officieuse à chacun (car ie ne me suis iamais laissé induire, d'en faire vn outil de guerre: laquelle ie vois chercher plus volontiers, où elle est le plus esloingnee de mon voisinage) ma maison a merité assez d'affection populaire: et seroit bien mal-aisé de me gourmander sur mon fumier. Et i'estime à vn merueilleux chef d'œuure, et exemplaire, qu'elle soit encore vierge de sang, et de sac, soubs vn si long orage, tant de changemens et agitations voisines.

Car à dire vray, il estoit possible à vn homme de ma complexion, d'eschapper à vne forme constante, et continue, telle qu'elle fust. Mais les inuasions et incursions contraires, et alternations et vicissitudes de la fortune, au tour de moy, ont iusqu'à cette heure plus exasperé qu'amolly l'humeur du pays: et me rechargent de dangers, et difficultez inuincibles.

3.9.29 I'eschape. Mais il me desplaist que ce soit plus par fortune: voire, et par ma prudence, que par iustice: et me desplaist d'estre hors la protection des loix, et soubs autre sauuegarde que la leur. Comme les choses sont, ie vis plus qu'à demy, de la faueur d'autruy: qui est vne rude obligation. Ie ne veux debuoir ma seureté, ny à la bonté, et benignité des grands, qui s'aggreent de ma legalité et liberté: ny à la facilité des mœurs de mes predecesseurs, et miennes: car quoy si i'estois autre?

Si mes desportemens et la franchise de ma conuersation, obligent mes voisins, ou la parenté: c'est cruauté qu'ils s'en puissent acquitter, en me laissant viure, et qu'ils

ENGLISH

am not only deprived of close familiarity with people of ways other than mine, and of other opinions, by which they hold together with a knot that overrides every other knot. I am also not without danger among those to whom everything is equally permitted, and most of whom can no longer make their bargain with our justice any worse—whence arises the extreme degree of license. Counting all the particular circumstances that concern me, I find no man on our side whom the defense of the laws costs more than me, both in profits forgone and in losses incurred, as the lawyers say.

And some make a great show of bravado with their zeal and harshness who, weighed in a fair balance, do much less than I. My house, having always been open, easy of access, and obliging to everyone (for I have never let myself be induced to make it an instrument of war, which I prefer to go and seek where it is farthest from my neighborhood), has earned a good deal of popular affection, and it would be very hard to bully me on my own dunghill. And I consider it a marvelous masterpiece, and an exemplary one, that it is still virgin of blood and pillage under so long a storm, with so many changes and upheavals close by.

For, to tell the truth, it was possible for a man of my temperament to escape from one constant and continuous state of affairs, whatever it might be. But the contrary invasions and incursions, and the alternations and vicissitudes of fortune around me, have so far exasperated rather than softened the temper of the region, and they heap upon me dangers and insurmountable difficulties.

I escape. But it displeases me that it is more by luck, and even by my own prudence, than by justice; and it displeases me to be outside the protection of the laws and under some safeguard other than theirs. As things stand, I live more than half by the favor of others, which is a hard obligation. I do not want to owe my safety either to the kindness and benevolence of the great, who approve of my respect for the law and my freedom, or to the easygoing ways of my predecessors and my own: for what if I were different?

If my conduct and the frankness of my dealings put my neighbors or my kin under obligation, it is cruel that they can discharge it by letting me live,

FRENCH

puissent dire: Nous luy condonons la libre continuation du seruice diuin, en la chapelle de sa maison, toutes les eglises d'autour, estants par nous desertées: et luy condonons l'vsage de ses biens, et sa vie, comme il conserue nos femmes, et nos bœufs au besoing. De longue main chez moy, nous auons part à la louange de Lycurgus Athenien, qui estoit general depositaire et gardien des bourses de ses concitoyens. Or ie tiens, qu'il faut viure par droict, et par auctorité, non par recompense ny par grace.

ENGLISH

and that they can say: "We grant him the free continuation of divine service in the chapel of his house, when all the churches around have been laid waste by us; and we grant him the use of his goods and his life, since he shelters our wives and our cattle in time of need." For a long time now my house has had a share in the praise given to Lycurgus the Athenian, who was the general depositary and guardian of his fellow citizens' purses. Now I hold that one must live by right and by authority, not by reward or by favor.[29]

THE BURDEN OF OBLIGATION

He would rather pay money than owe gratitude, and avoids being bound to anyone.

FRENCH

Combien de galans hommes ont mieux aymé perdre la vie, que la deuoir? Ie fuis à me submettre à toute sorte d'obligation. Mais sur tout, à celle qui m'attache, par deuoir d'honneur. Ie ne trouue rien si cher, que ce qui m'est donné: et ce pourquoy, ma volonté demeure hypothequee par tiltre de gratitude. Et reçois plus volontiers les offices, qui sont à vendre. Ie croy bien. Pour ceux-cy, ie ne donne que de l'argent: pour les autres, ie me donne moy-mesme.

3.9.30 Le neud, qui me tient par la loy d'honnesteté, me semble bien plus pressant et plus poisant, que n'est celuy de la contraincte ciuile. On me garotte plus doucement par vn notaire, que par moy. N'est-ce pas raison, que ma conscience soit beaucoup plus engagee, à ce, en quoy on s'est simplement fié d'elle? Ailleurs, ma foy ne doit rien: car on ne luy a rien presté. Qu'on s'ayde de la fiance et asseurance, qu'on a prise hors de moy. I'aymeroy bien plus cher, rompre la prison d'vne muraille, et des loix, que de ma parole. Ie suis delicat à l'obseruation de mes promesses, iusques à la superstition: et les fay en tous subiects volontiers incertaines et conditionnelles.

A celles, qui sont de nul poids, ie donne poids de la ialousie de ma regle: elle me gehenne et charge de son propre interest. Ouy, és entreprinses toutes miennes et libres, si i'en dy le poinct, il me semble, que ie me les prescry: et que, le donner à la science d'autruy, c'est le preordonner à soy. Il me semble que ie le promets, quand ie le dy. Ainsi i'euente peu mes propositions. La condemnation que ie fais de moy, est plus vifue et roide,

ENGLISH

How many gallant men have preferred to lose their lives rather than owe them? I shun submitting myself to any kind of obligation, but above all to the kind that binds me by a duty of honor. I find nothing so costly as what is given to me, and for which my will remains mortgaged by right of gratitude. And I more willingly accept services that are for sale. No wonder: for these I give only money; for the others, I give myself.

The bond that holds me by the law of honor seems to me much tighter and heavier than that of civil constraint. A notary ties me up more gently than I tie myself. Is it not reasonable that my conscience should be far more engaged in what has simply been entrusted to it? Elsewhere my word owes nothing, for nothing has been lent to it. Let people make do with the trust and security they have taken from outside me. I would much rather break out of the prison of a wall and of the laws than out of my word. I am scrupulous to the point of superstition in keeping my promises, and in every matter I readily make them uncertain and conditional.

To those that have no weight I give weight by my jealous regard for my rule: it torments me and burdens me with its own interest. Yes, even in undertakings that are entirely my own and free, if I state my intention, it seems to me that I prescribe it to myself, and that to let another know of it is to preordain it for oneself. It seems to me that I

29 Lycurgus, Athenian orator and statesman of the 4th century BC, famed for his honest management of public funds.

FRENCH

que n'est celle des iuges, qui ne me prennent que par le visage de l'obligation commune: l'estreinte de ma conscience plus serree, et plus seuere. Ie suy laschement les debuoirs ausquels on m'entraineroit, si ie n'y allois.

Hoc ipsum ita iustum est quod rectè fit, si est voluntarium. Si l'action n'a quelque splendeur de liberté, elle n'a point de grace, ny d'honneur. *Quod me ius cogit, vix voluntate impetrent.* Où la necessité me tire, i'ayme à lacher la volonté. *Quia quicquid imperio cogitur, exigenti magis, quàm præstanti acceptum refertur.* I'en sçay qui suyuent cet air, iusques à l'iniustice: donnent plustost qu'ils ne rendent, prestent plustost qu'ilz ne payent: font plus escharsement bien à celuy, à qui ils en sont tenus. Ie ne vois pas là, mais ie touche contre.

3.9.31 I'ayme tant à me descharger et desobliger, que i'ay parfois compté à profit, les ingratitudes, offences, et indignitez, que i'auois reçeu de ceux, à qui ou par nature, ou par accident, i'auois quelque deuoir d'amitié: prenant cette occasion de leur faute, pour autant d'acquit, et descharge de ma debte. Encore que ie continue à leur payer les offices apparents, de la raison publique, ie trouue grande espargne pourtant à faire par iustice, ce que ie faysoy par affection, et à me soulager vn peu, de l'attention et sollicitude, de ma volonté au dedans. *Est prudentis sustinere vt cursum, sic impetum beneuolentiæ.* Laquelle i'ay trop vrgente et pressante, où ie m'addonne: aumoins pour vn homme, qui ne veut estre aucunement en presse.

Et me sert cette mesnagerie, de quelque consolation, aux imperfections de ceux qui me touchent. Ie suis bien desplaisant qu'ils en vaillent moins, mais tant y a, que i'en espargne aussi quelque chose de mon application et engagement enuers eux. I'approuue celuy qui ayme moins son enfant, d'autant qu'il est ou teigneux ou bossu. Et non seulement, quand il est malicieux; mais aussi quand il est malheureux, et mal nay (Dieu mesme en a rabbatu cela de son prix, et estimation naturelle) pourueu qu'il se porte en ce refroidissement, auec

ENGLISH

promise it when I say it. So I air my plans very little. The sentence I pass on myself is sharper and stiffer than that of the judges, who see me only in the light of common obligation; the grip of my conscience is tighter and more severe. I perform sluggishly the duties to which I would be dragged if I did not go of my own accord.

Even what is rightly done is just only if it is voluntary. If an action does not have some luster of freedom, it has neither grace nor honor. *What duty compels me to do, they will hardly get from my good will.* Where necessity pulls me, I like to let my will go slack. *For whatever is compelled by command is credited more to the one who exacts it than to the one who performs it.* I know some who follow this bent to the point of injustice: they would rather give than repay, rather lend than pay, and they do good more stingily to the one to whom they are bound to do it. I do not go that far, but I come close.[30]

I so love to unburden myself and be released from obligation that I have sometimes counted as profit the ingratitude, offenses, and indignities I had received from those to whom, by nature or by accident, I owed some duty of friendship, taking the occasion of their fault as so much acquittance and discharge of my debt. Although I go on paying them the outward courtesies that public reason requires, I nevertheless find it a great saving to do out of justice what I used to do out of affection, and to relieve myself a little of the inner attention and solicitude of my will. *A prudent man should rein in the onrush of goodwill as he would a race in full career.* In me it is too urgent and pressing where I give myself to it—at least for a man who does not want to be under any pressure at all.[31]

And this economy gives me some consolation for the imperfections of those close to me. I am truly sorry that they are worth less for them; but the fact remains that I also save something of my application and commitment toward them. I approve of the man who loves his child less for being scabby or hunchbacked—and not only when he is ill-natured, but also when he is unfortunate and ill-formed from birth (God himself has docked that much from his value and natural esteem), provided he conducts himself in this cooling with

30 Cicero, On Duties; Terence, The Brothers; Valerius Maximus.
31 Cicero, On Friendship.

FRENCH

moderation, et iustice exacte. En moy, la proximité n'allege pas les deffauts, elle les aggraue plustost.

3.9.32 Apres tout, selon que ie m'entends en la science du bienfaict et de recognoissance, qui est vne subtile science et de grand vsage, ie ne vois personne, plus libre et moins endebté, que ie suis iusques à cette heure. Ce que ie doibs, ie le doibs simplement aux obligations communes et naturelles. Il n'en est point, qui soit plus nettement quitte d'ailleurs. *Nec sunt mihi nota potentum / Munera.* Les Princes me donnent prou, s'ils ne m'ostent rien: et me font assez de bien, quand ils ne me font point de mal: c'est tout ce que i'en demande.

O combien ie suis tenu à Dieu, de ce qu'il luy a pleu, que i'aye reçeu immediatement de sa grace, tout ce que i'ay: qu'il a retenu particulierement à soy toute ma debte! Combien ie supplie instamment sa saincte misericorde, que iamais ie ne doiue vn essentiel grammercy à personne! Bien heureuse franchise: qui m'a conduit si loing. Qu'elle acheue. I'essaye à n'auoir expres besoing de nul. *In me omnis spes est mihi.* C'est chose que chacun peut en soy: mais plus facilement ceux, que Dieu a mis à l'abry des necessitez naturelles et vrgentes. Il fait bien piteux, et hazardeux, despendre d'vn autre. Nous mesmes qui est la plus iuste adresse, et la plus seure, ne nous sommes pas assez asseurez.

Ie n'ay rien mien, que moy; et si en est la possession en partie manque et empruntee. Ie me cultiue et en courage, qui est le plus fort: et encores en fortune, pour y trouuer dequoy me satisfaire, quand ailleurs tout m'abandonneroit. Eleus Hippias ne se fournit pas seulement de science, pour au giron des muses se pouuoir ioyeusement esquarter de toute autre compagnie au besoing: ny seulement de la cognoissance de la philosophie, pour apprendre à son ame de se contenter d'elle, et se passer virilement des commoditez qui lui viennent du dehors, quand le sort l'ordonne.

Il fut si curieux, d'apprendre encore à faire sa cuisine, et son poil, ses robes, ses souliers, ses bragues, pour se fonder en soy, autant qu'il pourroit, et soustraire au secours estranger. On iouyt bien plus librement, et plus gayement, des biens empruntez: quand ce n'est pas vne iouyssance obligee et contrainte par le besoing: et qu'on a, et en sa volonté, et en sa fortune, la force et les moyens

ENGLISH

moderation and exact justice. In me, nearness does not lighten faults; rather, it aggravates them.

After all, as far as I understand the science of benefit and gratitude, which is a subtle science and of great use, I see no one freer and less in debt than I am up to this hour. What I owe, I owe simply to the common and natural obligations. There is no one more cleanly quit of everything else. *Nor do I know the gifts / of the powerful.* Princes give me plenty if they take nothing from me, and do me enough good when they do me no harm: that is all I ask of them.[32]

Oh, how beholden I am to God that it has pleased him that I should receive all I have directly from his grace, and that he has kept all my debt particularly to himself! How earnestly I beg his holy mercy that I may never owe anyone a thank-you that really matters! Blessed freedom, which has brought me so far! May it see me to the end. I try to have no express need of anyone. *All my hope is in myself.* This is something everyone can do within himself, but more easily those whom God has sheltered from natural and pressing necessities. It is a very pitiful and hazardous thing to depend on another. We ourselves, who are the most rightful and the surest recourse, are not sure enough of ourselves.[33]

I have nothing of my own but myself; and even my possession of that is partly defective and borrowed. I cultivate myself both in courage, which is the strongest, and also in fortune, so as to find there enough to satisfy me should everything else abandon me. Hippias of Elis furnished himself not only with learning, so that in the lap of the Muses he could, if need be, cheerfully withdraw from all other company; nor only with knowledge of philosophy, to teach his soul to be content with itself and to do without, manfully, the comforts that come to it from outside, when fate so orders.

He was so eager as to learn also to do his own cooking and his own hair, and to make his robes, his shoes, his breeches, so as to rest on himself as far as he could and free himself from outside help. One enjoys borrowed goods much more freely and more cheerfully when the enjoyment is not bound

32 Virgil, Aeneid XII.
33 Terence, The Brothers.

FRENCH

de s'en passer. Ie me connoy bien. Mais il m'est malaisé d'imaginer nulle si pure liberalité de personne enuers moy, nulle hospitalité si franche et gratuite, qui ne me semblast disgratiée, tyrannique, et teinte de reproche, si la necessité m'y auoit encheuestré.

Comme le donner est qualité ambitieuse, et de prerogatiue, aussi est l'accepter qualité de summission. Tesmoin l'iniurieux, et querelleux refus, que Baiazet feit des presents, que Temir luy enuoyoit. Et ceux qu'on offrit de la part de l'Empereur Solyman, à l'Empereur de Calicut, le mirent en si grand despit, que non seulement il les refusa rudement: disant, que ny luy ny ses predecesseurs n'auoient accoustumé de prendre: et que c'estoit leur office de donner: mais en outre feit mettre en vn cul de fosse, les ambassadeurs enuoyez à cet effect.

Quand Thetis, dit Aristote, flatte Iuppiter: quand les Lacedemoniens flattent les Atheniens: ils ne vont pas leur rafreschissant la memoire des biens, qu'ils leur ont faits, qui est tousiours odieuse: mais la memoire des bien-faicts qu'ils ont receuz d'eux. Ceux que ie voy si familierement employer tout chacun et s'y engager: ne le feroient pas, s'ils sauouroient comme moy la douceur d'vne pure liberté: et s'ils poisoient autant que doit poiser à vn sage homme, l'engageure d'vne obligation. Elle se paye à l'aduenture quelquefois: mais elle ne se dissout iamais. Cruel garrotage, à qui ayme d'affranchir les coudees de sa liberté, en tout sens.

Mes cognoissants, et au dessus et au dessous de moy, sçauent, s'ils en ont iamais veu, de moins sollicitant, requerant, suppliant, ny moins chargeant sur autruy. Si ie le suis, au delà de tout exemple moderne, ce n'est pas grande merueille: tant de pieces de mes mœurs y contribuants. Vn peu de fierté naturelle: l'impatience du refus: contraction de mes desirs et desseins: inhabileté à toute sorte d'affaires. Et mes qualitez plus fauories, l'oysiueté, la franchise. Par tout cela, i'ay prins à haine mortelle, d'estre tenu ny à autre, ny par autre que moy. I'employe bien viuement, tout ce que ie puis, à m'en passer: auant que i'employe la beneficence d'vn autre, en quelque, ou legere ou poisante occasion ou besoing que ce soit.

ENGLISH

and constrained by need, and when one has, both in one's will and in one's fortune, the strength and the means to do without them. I know myself well. But it is hard for me to imagine any liberality toward me so pure, any hospitality so frank and free, that it would not seem to me graceless, tyrannical, and tinged with reproach if necessity had haltered me to it.

As giving is a quality of ambition and prerogative, so accepting is a quality of submission. Witness the insulting and quarrelsome refusal Bajazet made of the presents Temir sent him. And those that were offered on behalf of the Emperor Suleiman to the Emperor of Calicut put him in such a rage that he not only refused them rudely, saying that neither he nor his predecessors were in the habit of taking, and that it was their office to give, but also had the ambassadors sent for the purpose thrown into a dungeon.

When Thetis, says Aristotle, flatters Jupiter, when the Spartans flatter the Athenians, they do not go about refreshing their memory of the benefits they have done them, which is always odious, but of the benefits they have received from them. Those whom I see so freely making use of everyone and putting themselves in debt would not do so if they savored as I do the sweetness of pure freedom, and if they weighed the burden of an obligation as heavily as a wise man should. It may be paid off sometimes, but it is never dissolved. A cruel shackle for one who likes to give his freedom elbow room in every direction.[34]

Those who know me, both above and below me, know whether they have ever seen anyone less given to soliciting, requesting, entreating, or less of a burden on others. If I am so beyond any modern example, it is no great wonder, since so many parts of my character contribute to it: a little natural pride; impatience at refusal; the narrowness of my desires and plans; ineptitude for any kind of business; and my most favored qualities, idleness and independence. Through all this I have taken a mortal hatred to being beholden either to anyone else or through anyone but myself. I very vigorously use every means I can to do without, before I make use of another's beneficence, on any occasion or need whatever, light or weighty.

34 Aristotle, Nicomachean Ethics IV.

FRENCH	ENGLISH
Mes amis m'importunent estrangement, quand ils me requierent, de requerir vn tiers. Et ne me semble guere moins de coust, desengager celuy qui me doibt, vsant de luy: que m'engager enuers celuy, qui ne me doibt rien. Cette condition ostee, et cet' autre, qu'ils ne vueillent de moy chose negotieuse et soucieuse (car i'ay denoncé à tout soing guerre capitale) ie suis commodement facile et prest au besoing de chacun. Mais i'ay encore plus fuy à receuoir, que ie n'ay cherché à donner: aussi est il bien plus aysé selon Aristote. Ma fortune m'a peu permis de bien faire à autruy: et ce peu qu'elle m'en a permis, elle l'a assez maigrement logé.	My friends annoy me extraordinarily when they ask me to ask a third party. And it seems to me hardly less costly to release someone who owes me by making use of him than to put myself in debt to someone who owes me nothing. With that condition removed, and this other one, that they do not want from me anything that involves business and worry (for I have declared mortal war on all care), I am comfortably easy and ready to meet anyone's need. But I have shunned receiving even more than I have sought to give; and indeed that is much easier, according to Aristotle. My fortune has allowed me little opportunity to do good to others, and what little it has allowed, it has placed rather poorly.
Si elle m'eust faict naistre pour tenir quelque rang entre les hommes, i'eusse esté ambitieux de me faire aymer: non de me faire craindre ou admirer. L'exprimeray-ie plus insolamment? i'eusse autant regardé, au plaire, qu'au prouffiter. Cyrus tres-sagement, et par la bouche d'vn tres bon capitaine, et meilleur philosophe encores, estime sa bonté et ses biens faicts, loing au delà de sa vaillance, et belliqueuses conquestes. Et le premier Scipion, par tout où il se veut faire valoir, poise sa debonnaireté et humanité, au dessus de sa hardiesse et de ses victoires: et a tousiours en la bouche ce glorieux mot, Qu'il a laissé aux ennemys, autant à l'aymer, qu'aux amys.	If it had had me born to hold some rank among men, I would have been ambitious to make myself loved, not to make myself feared or admired. Shall I put it more insolently? I would have looked as much to pleasing as to being of use. Cyrus, very wisely, and through the mouth of a very good captain and a still better philosopher, values his kindness and his benefactions far above his valor and his warlike conquests. And the first Scipio, wherever he wants to show his worth, rates his gentleness and humanity above his boldness and his victories, and always has on his lips this glorious saying: that he had left his enemies as much reason to love him as his friends.[35]
Ie veux donc dire, que s'il faut ainsi debuoir quelque chose, ce doibt estre à plus legitime tiltre, que celuy dequoy ie parle, auquel la loy de cette miserable guerre m'engage: et non d'vn si gros debte, comme celuy de ma totale conseruation: il m'accable.	What I mean, then, is that if one must owe something in this way, it should be by a more legitimate title than the one I am speaking of, to which the law of this wretched war binds me; and not so great a debt as that of my entire preservation: it crushes me.

DANGER AT HOME

Expecting attack at night, he grows used to danger; he knows what he flees, not what he seeks.

FRENCH	ENGLISH
3.9.33 Ie me suis couché mille fois chez moy, imaginant qu'on me trahiroit et assommeroit cette nuict là: composant auec la Fortune, que ce fust sans effroy et sans langueur. Et me suis escrié apres mon patenostre, *Impius hæc tam culta noualia miles habebit?* Quel remede? c'est le lieu de ma naissance, et de la plus part de mes ancestres: ils y ont mis leur affection et leur nom. Nous nous durcissons à	A thousand times I have gone to bed in my own house imagining that I would be betrayed and murdered that very night, bargaining with Fortune that it should be without terror and without lingering. And after my Paternoster I have cried out: *Shall some godless soldier possess these well-tilled*

35 Cyrus speaks in Xenophon's Cyropaedia; the first Scipio is Scipio Africanus, victor over Hannibal.

FRENCH

tout ce que nous accoustumons. Et à vne miserable condition, comme est la nostre, ç'a esté vn tresfauorable present de Nature, que l'accoustumance, qui endort nostre sentiment à la souffrance de plusieurs maux.

Les guerres ciuiles ont cela de pire que les autres guerres, de nous mettre chacun en echauguette en sa propre maison. *Quàm miserum, porta vitam muróque tueri,*
Vixque suæ tutum viribus esse domus! C'est grande extremité, d'estre pressé iusques dans son mesnage, et repos domestique. Le lieu où ie me tiens, est tousiours le premier et le dernier, à la batterie de nos troubles: et où la paix n'a iamais son visage entier, *Tum quoque cùm pax est, trepidant formidine belli.*
Quoties pacem fortuna lacessit,
Hàc iter est bellis: melius, fortuna, dedisses
Orbe sub Eoo sedem, gelidàque sub Arcto,
Errantésque domos. Ie tire par fois, le moyen de me fermir contre ces considerations, de la nonchalance et lascheté.

Elles nous menent aussi aucunement à la resolution. Il m'aduient souuent, d'imaginer auec quelque plaisir, les dangers mortels, et les attendre. Ie me plonge la teste baissee, stupidement dans la mort, sans la considerer et recognoistre, comme dans vne profondeur muette et obscure, qui m'engloutit d'vn saut, et m'estouffe en vn instant, d'vn puissant sommeil, plein d'insipidité et indolence. Et en ces morts courtes et violentes, la consequence que i'en preuoy, me donne plus de consolation, que l'effait de crainte. Ils disent, comme la vie n'est pas la meilleure, pour estre longue, que la mort est la meilleure, pour n'estre pas longue. Ie ne m'estrange pas tant de l'estre mort, comme i'entre en confidence auec le mourir.

Ie m'enueloppe et me tapis en cet orage, qui me doit aueugler et rauir de furie, d'vne charge prompte et insensible. Encore s'il aduenoit, comme disent aucuns iardiniers, que les roses et violettes naissent plus odoriferantes pres des aulx et des oignons, d'autant qu'ils succent et tirent à eux, ce qu'il y a de mauuaise odeur en la terre: aussi que ces deprauées natures, humassent tout

ENGLISH

fields? What remedy is there? It is the place where I was born, and most of my ancestors; they have set their affection and their name on it. We harden ourselves to whatever we grow used to. And for a wretched condition such as ours, habit has been a most favorable gift of Nature, lulling our feelings into enduring many ills.[36]

Civil wars are worse than other wars in this: they put each of us on sentry duty in his own house. *How wretched to guard one's life with gate and wall, and to be scarcely safe in the strength of one's own house!* It is a great extremity to be harried right into one's household and domestic rest. The place where I live is always the first and the last to be battered in our troubles, and where peace never shows its whole face. *Even when there is peace, they tremble in fear of war.*
Whenever Fortune breaks the peace,
this is the road wars take. Better, Fortune, had you given us
a home beneath the eastern sky, or under the frozen Bear,
and wandering dwellings. I sometimes draw the means to steel myself against these thoughts from indifference and slackness.[37]

They also bring us, in some measure, to resolution. It often happens that I imagine mortal dangers with a certain pleasure, and await them. I plunge headlong, stupidly, into death, without considering or reconnoitering it, as into a silent, dark abyss that swallows me in one leap and smothers me in an instant in a powerful sleep, full of insipidity and painlessness. And in these short and violent deaths, the consequence I foresee gives me more consolation than the event gives me fear. They say that just as life is not the better for being long, death is the better for not being long. I do not keep my distance from being dead so much as I make friends with dying.

I wrap myself up and crouch down in this storm, which must blind me and carry me off in its fury with a swift, unfelt assault. Again, if it were true, as some gardeners say, that roses and violets grow more fragrant near garlic and onions because these suck up and draw into themselves whatever bad smell is in the soil—if likewise these depraved

36 Virgil, Eclogues I.
37 The first two quotations are from Ovid, Tristia; the last is from Lucan, Pharsalia I.

FRENCH

le venin de mon air et du climat, et m'en rendissent d'autant meilleur et plus pur, par leur voysinage: que ie ne perdisse pas tout.

Cela n'est pas: mais de cecy il en peut estre quelque chose, que la bonté est plus belle et plus attraiante quand elle est rare, et que la contrarieté et diuersité, roidit et resserre en soy le bien faire: et l'enflamme par la ialousie de l'opposition, et par la gloire. Les voleurs de leur grace, ne m'en veulent pas particulierement. Ne fay-ie pas moy à eux. Il m'en faudroit à trop de gents. Pareilles consciences logent sous diuerses sortes de robes. Pareille cruauté, desloyauté, volerie. Et d'autant pire, qu'elle est plus lasche, plus seure, et plus obscure, sous l'ombre des loix. Ie hay moins l'iniure professe que trahitresse; guerriere que pacifique et iuridique. Nostre fieure est suruenuë en vn corps, qu'elle n'a de guere empiré.

Le feu y estoit, la flamme s'y est prinse. Le bruit est plus grand: le mal, de peu. Ie respons ordinairement, à ceux qui me demandent raison de mes voyages: Que ie sçay bien ce que ie fuis, mais non pas ce que ie cherche. Si on me dit, que parmy les estrangers il y peut auoir aussi peu de santé, et que leurs mœurs ne sont pas mieux nettes que les nostres: ie respons premierement, qu'il est malaysé: *Tam multæ scelerum facies!* Secondement, c'est tousiours gain, de changer vn mauuais estat à vn estat incertain. Et que les maux d'autruy ne nous doiuent pas poindre comme les nostres.

ENGLISH

natures were to suck up all the venom of my air and climate, and make me that much better and purer by their proximity—then I would not lose everything.

That is not so; but there may be something in this: that goodness is more beautiful and more attractive when it is rare, and that contrariety and diversity stiffen and concentrate good conduct within itself, and inflame it by the jealousy of opposition and by glory. The robbers, thanks to their kindness, bear me no particular grudge. Nor do I them: I would have to bear one against too many people. Similar consciences lodge under different sorts of robes. Similar cruelty, disloyalty, robbery—and all the worse for being more cowardly, more secure, and more hidden, under the shadow of the laws. I hate injury less when it is open than when it is treacherous, less when warlike than when peaceful and judicial. Our fever has come upon a body that it has hardly made worse.

The fire was there; the flame has caught. The noise is greater; the harm, only a little. To those who ask me the reason for my travels, I usually answer that I know well what I am fleeing, but not what I am seeking. If I am told that among foreigners there may be just as little health, and that their ways are no cleaner than ours, I answer, first, that this is unlikely: *So many are the faces of crime!* Second, that it is always a gain to exchange a bad condition for an uncertain one. And that the ills of others should not sting us as our own do.[38]

PARIS AND THE WORLD

He loves Paris, his one bond to France, and counts all men his compatriots.

FRENCH

3.9.34 Ie ne veux pas oublier cecy, que ie ne me mutine iamais tant contre la France, que ie ne regarde Paris de bon œil. Elle a mon cœur des mon enfance. Et m'en est aduenu comme des choses excellentes: plus i'ay veu dépuis d'autres villes belles, plus la beauté de cette cy, peut, et gaigne sur mon affection. Ie l'ayme par elle mesme, et plus en son estre seul, que rechargee de pompe estrangere. Ie l'ayme tendrement, iusques à ses verrues et à ses taches.

ENGLISH

I do not want to forget this: that I am never so rebellious against France that I do not look on Paris with a kindly eye. She has had my heart since my childhood. And it has gone with me as with excellent things: the more other beautiful cities I have seen since, the more the beauty of this one gains power over my affection and wins it. I love her for herself, and more in her own being than loaded with foreign pomp. I love her tenderly, down to her warts and blemishes.

FRENCH

Ie ne suis François, que par cette grande cité: grande en peuples, grande en felicité de son assiette: mais sur tout grande, et incomparable en varieté, et diuersité de commoditez: la gloire de la France, et l'vn des plus nobles ornements du monde. Dieu en chasse loing nos diuisions: entiere et vnie, ie la trouue deffendue de toute autre violence. Ie l'aduise, que de tous les partis, le pire sera celuy qui la mettra en discorde. Et ne crains pour elle, qu'elle mesme. Et crains pour elle, autant certes, que pour autre piece de cet estat. Tant qu'elle durera, ie n'auray faute de retraicte, où rendre mes abboys: suffisante à me faire perdre le regret de tout' autre retraicte.

3.9.35 Non par ce que Socrates l'a dict, mais par ce qu'en verité c'est mon humeur, et à l'auanture non sans quelque excez, i'estime tous les hommes mes compatriotes: et embrasse vn Polonois comme vn François, postposant cette lyaison nationale, à l'vniuerselle et commune. Ie ne suis guere feru de la douceur d'vn air naturel. Les cognoissances toutes neufues, et toutes miennes, me semblent bien valoir ces autres communes et fortuites cognoissances du voisinage. Les amitiez pures de nostre acquest, emportent ordinairement, celles ausquelles la communication du climat, ou du sang, nous ioignent.

Nature nous a mis au monde libres et desliez, nous nous emprisonnons en certains destroits: comme les Roys de Perse qui s'obligeoient de ne boire iamais autre eau, que celle du fleuue de Choaspez, renonçoyent par sottise, à leur droict d'vsage en toutes les autres eaux: et assechoient pour leur regard, tout le reste du monde. Ce que Socrates feit sur sa fin, d'estimer vne sentence d'exil pire, qu'vne sentence de mort contre soy: ie ne seray, à mon aduis, iamais ny si cassé, ny si estroittement habitué en mon païs, que ie le feisse. Ces vies celestes, ont assez d'images, que i'embrasse par estimation plus que par affection.

Et en ont aussi, de si esleuees, et extraordinaires, que par estimation mesme ie ne les puis embrasser, d'autant que ie ne les puis conceuoir. Cette humeur fut bien tendre à vn homme, qui iugeoit le monde sa ville. Il est vray, qu'il dedaignoit les peregrinations, et n'auoit gueres mis le

ENGLISH

I am French only through this great city: great in population, great in the happiness of her situation, but above all great and incomparable in the variety and diversity of her amenities; the glory of France and one of the noblest ornaments of the world. May God drive our divisions far from her! Whole and united, I find her protected against any other violence. I warn her that of all the parties, the worst will be the one that sets her at odds with herself. And I fear for her only from herself. And I fear for her, truly, as much as for any other part of this state. As long as she lasts, I shall not lack a refuge where I can turn at bay, one sufficient to make me lose regret for any other refuge.

Not because Socrates said it, but because it is truly my temperament, and perhaps not without some excess, I consider all men my compatriots, and I embrace a Pole as I do a Frenchman, putting this national bond below the universal and common one. I am hardly smitten with the sweetness of my native air. Acquaintances entirely new and entirely my own seem to me well worth those other common, chance acquaintances of the neighborhood. Friendships that are purely of our own acquiring usually prevail over those to which a shared climate or blood joins us.[39]

Nature has put us into the world free and unbound; we imprison ourselves in certain narrow confines, like the kings of Persia, who bound themselves never to drink any water but that of the river Choaspes, foolishly renounced their right to use all other waters, and dried up, as far as they were concerned, the whole rest of the world. What Socrates did at the end of his life, judging a sentence of exile against himself worse than a sentence of death—I shall never, I think, be so broken down or so narrowly attached to my country as to do that. These heavenly lives offer enough images that I embrace by esteem more than by affection.[40]

And they also offer some so lofty and extraordinary that I cannot embrace them even by esteem, since I cannot conceive them. That was a very tender feeling in a man who held the world to be his city. It is true that he disdained travel and had

38 Virgil, Georgics I.
39 Plutarch reports Socrates calling himself a citizen not of Athens but of the world.
40 The Choaspes flowed past Susa, a Persian royal residence (Herodotus).

FRENCH	ENGLISH
pied hors le territoire d'Attique. Quoy, qu'il plaignoit l'argent de ses amis à desengager sa vie: et qu'il refusa de sortir de prison par l'entremise d'autruy, pour ne desobeïr aux loix en vn temps, qu'elles estoient d'ailleurs si fort corrompuës? Ces exemples sont de la premiere espece, pour moy. De la seconde, sont d'autres, que ie pourroy trouuer en ce mesme personnage.	scarcely ever set foot outside the territory of Attica. What of the fact that he begrudged his friends' money to buy back his life, and refused to leave prison through the intervention of others, so as not to disobey the laws at a time when they were otherwise so badly corrupted? These examples are of the first kind, for me. Of the second kind are others that I could find in this same person.
Plusieurs de ces rares exemples surpassent la force de mon action: mais aucuns surpassent encore la force de mon iugement.	Several of these rare examples are beyond the strength of my action; but some are beyond even the strength of my judgment.

THE PLEASURES OF TRAVEL

Travel exercises the mind with variety; he rides for hours and minds no weather.

FRENCH	ENGLISH
3.9.36 Outre ces raisons, le voyager me semble vn exercice profitable. L'ame y a vne continuelle exercitation, à remarquer des choses incogneuës et nouuelles. Et ie ne sçache point meilleure escole, comme i'ay dict souuent, à façonner la vie, que de luy proposer incessamment la diuersité de tant d'autres vies, fantasies, et vsances: et luy faire gouster vne si perpetuelle varieté de formes de nostre nature. Le corps n'y est ny oisif ny trauaillé: et cette moderee agitation le met en haleine. Ie me tien à cheual sans demonter, tout choliqueux que ie suis, et sans m'y ennuyer, huict et dix heures, *Vires vltra sortémque senectæ.* Nulle saison m'est ennemye, que le chaut aspre d'vn soleil poignant.	Besides these reasons, traveling seems to me a profitable exercise. The soul is continually exercised in noticing things unknown and new; and I know no better school, as I have often said, for shaping life than to set before it constantly the diversity of so many other lives, notions, and ways, and to give it a taste of so perpetual a variety of the forms of our nature. The body is neither idle nor overworked, and this moderate agitation keeps it in good wind. I stay on horseback without dismounting, subject to the colic though I am, and without wearying of it, for eight and ten hours, *Beyond the strength and lot of old age.* No season is my enemy except the harsh heat of a scorching sun.[41]
Car les ombrelles, dequoy dépuis les anciens Romains l'Italie se sert, chargent plus les bras, qu'ils ne deschargent la teste. Ie voudroy sçauoir quelle industrie c'estoit aux Perses, si anciennement, et en la naissance de la luxure, de se faire du vent frais, et des ombrages à leur poste, comme dict Xenophon. I'ayme les pluyes et les crotes comme les cannes. La mutation d'air et de climat ne me touche point. Tout ciel m'est vn. Ie ne suis battu que des alterations internes, que ie produicts en moy, et celles là m'arriuent moins en voyageant. Ie suis mal-aisé à esbranler: mais estant auoyé, ie vay tant qu'on veut.	For the parasols that Italy has used since the ancient Romans burden the arms more than they relieve the head. I would like to know what ingenuity the Persians had, so long ago and at the very birth of luxury, to make cool breezes and shade for themselves at will, as Xenophon says. I love rain and mud as ducks do. Change of air and climate does not affect me at all; every sky is the same to me. I am buffeted only by the internal alterations I produce in myself, and those come over me less when I travel. I am hard to get moving; but once on my way, I will go as far as you like.
I'estriue autant aux petites entreprises, qu'aux grandes: et à m'equiper pour faire vne iournée, et visiter vn voisin, que pour vn iuste voyage. I'ay apris à faire mes iournees à	I balk as much at small undertakings as at great ones, and at equipping myself for a day's ride to

41 Virgil, Aeneid VI.

FRENCH

l'Espagnole, d'vne traicte: grandes et raisonnables iournees. Et aux extremes chaleurs, les passe de nuict, du soleil couchant iusques au leuant. L'autre façon de repaistre en chemin, en tumulte et haste, pour la disnee, nommément aux cours iours, est incommode. Mes cheuaux en valent mieux. Iamais cheual ne m'a failly, qui a sceu faire auec moy la premiere iournee. Ie les abreuue par tout: et regarde seulement qu'ils ayent assez de chemin de reste, pour battre leur eau.

La paresse à me leuer, donne loisir à ceux qui me suyuent, de disner à leur aise, auant partir. Pour moy, ie ne mange iamais trop tard: l'appetit me vient en mangeant, et point autrement: ie n'ay point de faim qu'à table.

3.9.37 Aucuns se plaignent dequoy ie me suis agreé à continuer cet exercice, marié, et vieil. Ils ont tort. Il est mieux temps d'abandonner sa maison, quand on l'a mise en train de continuer sans nous: quand on y a laissé de l'ordre qui ne demente point sa forme passee. C'est bien plus d'imprudence, de s'esloingner, laissant en sa maison vne garde moins fidele, et qui ait moins de soing de pouruoir à vostre besoing.

3.9.38 La plus vtile et honnorable science et occupation à vne mere de famille, c'est la science du mesnage. I'en vois quelqu'vne auare; de mesnagere, fort peu. C'est sa maistresse qualité, et qu'on doibt chercher, auant toute autre: comme le seul douaire qui sert à ruyner ou sauuer nos maisons. Qu'on ne m'en parle pas; selon que l'experience m'en a apprins, ie requiers d'vne femme mariee, au dessus de toute autre vertu, la vertu œconomique. Ie l'en mets au propre, luy laissant par mon absence tout le gouuernement en main. Ie vois auec despit en plusieurs mesnages, monsieur reuenir maussade et tout marmiteux du tracas des affaires, enuiron midy, que madame est encore apres à se coiffer et attiffer, en son cabinet.

C'est à faire aux Roynes: encores ne sçay-ie. Il est ridicule et iniuste, que l'oysiueté de nos femmes, soit entretenuë de nostre sueur et trauail. Il n'aduiendra, que ie puisse, à personne, d'auoir l'vsage de ses biens plus liquide que moy, plus quiete et plus quitte. Si le mary fournit de

ENGLISH

visit a neighbor as for a real journey. I have learned to make my day's journeys in the Spanish manner, in one stretch: long but reasonable stages. And in extreme heat I ride them by night, from sunset to sunrise. The other way, stopping to eat on the road, in confusion and haste, for the midday meal, especially on the short days, is inconvenient. My horses are the better for it. No horse that could do the first day's stage with me has ever failed me. I water them everywhere, and only make sure they have enough road left to work off their water.

My laziness about getting up gives those who follow me time to eat their dinner at their ease before setting out. As for me, I never eat too late: my appetite comes while I am eating, and not otherwise; I am never hungry except at table.

Some complain that I have chosen to keep up this exercise though married and old. They are wrong. The better time to leave one's house is when one has set it going so that it can carry on without us, when one has left in it an order that does not belie its former shape. It is far more imprudent to go far away leaving one's house in the care of a less faithful guardian, one less concerned to provide for your needs.

The most useful and honorable science and occupation for the mother of a family is the science of household management. I see some who are stingy; good managers, very few. This is her master quality, the one that should be sought before any other, as the only dowry that serves to ruin or save our houses. Let no one argue with me about it: as experience has taught me, I require of a married woman, above every other virtue, the virtue of economy. I give her full scope for it, leaving the whole government in her hands while I am away. I see with vexation, in many households, monsieur coming home around noon, morose and all out of sorts from the bustle of business, while madame is still busy doing her hair and dressing up in her private room.

That is for queens to do—and even then I am not sure. It is ridiculous and unjust that the idleness of our wives should be maintained by our sweat and toil. It shall not happen, if I can help it, that anyone has freer use of his goods than I do, more tranquil and more clear of debt. If the husband sup-

FRENCH	ENGLISH
matiere, Nature mesme veut qu'elles fournissent de forme.	plies the matter, Nature herself wills that the wives supply the form.

MARRIAGE AND ABSENCE

Absence does not harm married love or friendship, since the imagination embraces what it lacks.

FRENCH	ENGLISH
3.9.39 Quant aux deuoirs de l'amitié maritale, qu'on pense estre interessez par cette absence: ie ne le crois pas. Au rebours, c'est vne intelligence, qui se refroidit volontiers par vne trop continuelle assistance, et que l'assiduité blesse. Toute femme estrangere nous semble honneste femme. Et chacun sent par experience, que la continuation de se voir, ne peut representer le plaisir que lon sent à se desprendre, et reprendre à secousses. Ces interruptions me remplissent d'vne amour recente enuers les miens, et me redonnent l'vsage de ma maison plus doux: la vicissitude eschaufe mon appetit, vers l'vn, puis vers l'autre party.	As for the duties of married love, which people think this absence harms: I do not believe it. On the contrary, it is a bond that readily cools with too constant attendance, and that unbroken presence wounds. Every woman who is not our own seems to us a decent woman. And everyone knows from experience that seeing each other all the time cannot match the pleasure we feel in parting and coming together again by fits and starts. These interruptions fill me with a fresh love for my family and give me back the enjoyment of my home more sweetly. The alternation sharpens my appetite, first for one side, then for the other.
Ie sçay que l'amitié a les bras assez longs, pour se tenir et se ioindre, d'vn coin de monde à l'autre: et specialement cette cy, où il y a vne continuelle communication d'offices, qui en reueillent l'obligation et la souuenance. Les Stoïciens disent bien, qu'il y a si grande colligance et relation entre les sages, que celuy qui disne en France, repaist son compagnon en Ægypte; et qui estend seulement son doigt, où que ce soit, tous les sages qui sont sur la terre habitable, en sentent ayde. La iouyssance, et la possession, appartiennent principalement à l'imagination. Elle embrasse plus chaudement et plus continuellement ce qu'elle va querir, que ce que nous touchons.	I know that friendship has arms long enough to hold on and reach from one corner of the world to the other. This is especially true of this kind, where there is a constant exchange of services that reawaken its obligation and its memory. The Stoics say, indeed, that there is so close a bond and connection among the wise that a man who dines in France feeds his companion in Egypt. If he merely stretches out his finger, wherever he may be, all the wise men on the habitable earth feel themselves helped by it. Enjoyment and possession belong chiefly to the imagination. It embraces what it goes in search of more warmly and more constantly than what we touch.
Comptez voz amusements iournaliers; vous trouuerez que vous estes lors plus absent de vostre amy, quand il vous est present. Son assistance relasche vostre attention, et donne liberté à vostre pensee, de s'absenter à toute heure, pour toute occasion. De Rome en hors, ie tiens et regente ma maison, et les commoditez que i'y ay laissé: ie voy croistre mes murailles, mes arbres, et mes rentes, et descroistre à deux doigts pres, comme quand i'y suis, *Ante oculos errat domus, errat forma locorum.* Si nous ne iouyssons que ce que nous touchons, adieu noz escus quand ils sont en noz coffres, et noz enfans s'ils sont à la chasse. Nous les voulons plus pres. Au iardin est-ce loing? A vne demy iournee?	

FRENCH

ENGLISH

Count up your daily amusements: you will find that you are most absent from your friend when he is present. His presence slackens your attention and leaves your thought free to wander off at any hour and on any pretext. From Rome I keep and govern my house and the comforts I left there. I see my walls, my trees and my income grow, and shrink, to within two fingers' breadth, just as when I am there: *Before my eyes my house hovers, and the look of the places.* If we enjoy only what we touch, farewell to our money when it is in our coffers, and to our children when they are out hunting. We want them nearer. Is the garden far? Half a day's journey?[42]

Quoy, à dix lieuës est-ce loing, ou pres? Si c'est pres: quoy onze, douze, treze? et ainsi pas à pas. Vrayment celle qui sçaura prescripre à son mary, le quantiesme pas finit le pres, et le quantiesme pas donne commencement au loing, ie suis d'aduis qu'elle l'arreste entre-deux. *Excludat iurgia finis.*
Vtor permisso, caudæque pilos vt equinæ
Paulatim vello: et demo vnum, demo etiam vnum,
Dum cadat elusus ratione ruentis acerui. Et qu'elles appellent hardiment la philosophie à leur secours.

What about ten leagues: is that far or near? If it is near, what about eleven, twelve, thirteen? And so on, step by step. Truly, if a wife can tell her husband at which step near ends and at which step far begins, I suggest she stop him halfway between. *Let a fixed limit put an end to quarrels.*
I take what is allowed, and like hairs from a horse's tail
I pluck them out little by little, taking away one, and then another,
Until he falls, foiled by the reasoning of the dwindling heap. And let them boldly call philosophy to their aid.[43]

A qui quelqu'vn pourroit reprocher, puis qu'elle ne voit ny l'un ny l'autre bout de la iointure, entre le trop et le peu, le long et le court, le leger et le poisant, le pres et le loing: puis qu'elle n'en recognoist le commencement ny la fin, qu'elle iuge bien incertainement du milieu. *Rerum natura nullam nobis dedit cognitionem finium.* Sont-elles pas encore femmes et amies des trespassez; qui ne sont pas au bout de cettuy-cy, mais en l'autre monde? Nous embrassons et ceux qui ont esté, et ceux qui ne sont point encore, non que les absens.

Though someone might reproach philosophy that, since it sees neither end of the joint between too much and too little, long and short, light and heavy, near and far, and since it knows neither the beginning nor the end, it judges the middle very uncertainly. *Nature has given us no knowledge of limits.* Are they not still the wives and friends of the dead, who are not at the far end of this world but in the other? We embrace both those who have been and those who are not yet, not just the absent.[44]

Nous n'auons pas faict marché, en nous mariant, de nous tenir continuellement accouez, l'vn à l'autre, comme ie ne sçay quels petits animaux que nous voyons, ou comme les ensorcelez de Karenty, d'vne maniere chiennine. Et ne doibt vne femme auoir les yeux si gourmandement fichez sur le deuant de son mary, qu'elle n'en puisse veoir le derriere, où besoing est. Mais ce mot de ce peintre si excellent, de leurs humeurs, seroit-il point de mise en ce lieu, pour representer la cause de leurs plaintes?

When we married, we did not strike a bargain to stay forever coupled tail to tail, like certain little animals we see, or like the bewitched folk of Karenty, in doglike fashion. And a wife ought not to keep her eyes so greedily fixed on her husband's front that she cannot see his back when need be. But might not this saying of that excellent painter

42 Ovid, Tristia.
43 Horace, Epistles; the last lines allude to the ancient paradox of the heap (the sorites).
44 Cicero, Academica.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
		of their temperaments fit here, to show the cause of their complaints?[45]
	Vxor, si cesses, aut te amare cogitat, *Aut tete amari, aut potare, aut animo obsequi,* *Et tibi bene esse soli, cùm sibi sit malè.* Ou bien seroit-ce pas, que de soy l'opposition et contradiction les entretient et nourrit: et qu'elles s'accommodent assez, pourueu qu'elles vous incommodent?	*If you are late, your wife thinks that you are making love or being loved,* *Or drinking, or following your fancy,* *And that all goes well with you alone while all goes badly with her.* Or might it rather be that opposition and contradiction in themselves keep them going and feed them, and that they are comfortable enough provided they make you uncomfortable?[46]
3.9.40	En la vraye amitié, de laquelle ie suis expert, ie me donne à mon amy, plus que ie ne le tire à moy. Ie n'ayme pas seulement mieux, luy faire bien, que s'il m'en faisoit: mais encore qu'il s'en face, qu'à moy: il m'en faict lors le plus, quand il s'en faict. Et si l'absence luy est ou plaisante ou vtile, elle m'est bien plus douce que sa presence: et ce n'est pas proprement absence, quand il y a moyen de s'entr'aduertir. I'ay tiré autrefois vsage de nostre esloingnement et commodité.	In true friendship, in which I am an expert, I give myself to my friend more than I draw him to me. I do not merely prefer doing him good to having him do good to me. I would even rather he did good to himself than to me: he does me the most good when he does it to himself. And if absence is pleasant or useful to him, it is far sweeter to me than his presence. Nor is it really absence when there is a way of keeping each other informed. In the past I drew use and benefit from our being apart.[47]
	Nous remplissions mieux, et estandions, la possession de la vie, en nous separant: il viuoit, il iouyssoit, il voyoit pour moy, et moy pour luy, autant plainement que s'il y eust esté: l'vne partie demeuroit oisiue, quand nous estions ensemble: nous nous confondions. La separation du lieu rendoit la conionction de noz volontez plus riche. Cette faim insatiable de la presence corporelle, accuse vn peu la foiblesse en la iouissance des ames.	We filled out and stretched our possession of life the better by separating. He lived, he enjoyed, he saw for me, and I for him, as fully as if he had been there himself. When we were together, one part of us lay idle: we merged into one. Separation in place made the union of our wills richer. This insatiable hunger for bodily presence betrays a certain weakness in the enjoyment of souls.

TRAVELING IN OLD AGE

He travels for the journey itself and would rather die on horseback, far from weeping friends.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
3.9.41	Quant à la vieillesse, qu'on m'allegue; au rebours: c'est à la ieunesse à s'asseruir aux opinions communes, et se contraindre pour autruy. Elle peut fournir à tous les deux, au peuple et à soy: nous n'auons que trop à faire, à nous seuls. A mesure que les commoditez naturelles nous faillent, soustenons nous par les artificielles. C'est iniustice, d'excuser la ieunesse de suyure ses plaisirs, et deffendre à la vieillesse d'en chercher. Ieune, ie couurois mes passions eniouees, de prudence: vieil, ie demesle les	As for old age, which people bring up against me: it is the reverse. It is for youth to enslave itself to common opinion and to restrain itself for the sake of others. Youth can provide for both, for the public and for itself; we have only too much to do for ourselves alone. As natural comforts fail us, let us prop ourselves up with artificial ones. It is unjust to excuse youth for following its pleasures and forbid old age to look for any. When I was young, I

45 Karenty: Karenz, a town on the Baltic island of Rügen, where, according to old chronicles, couples were bewitched into sticking together like dogs.
46 Terence, The Brothers.
47 The friend is La Boétie.

FRENCH

tristes, de débauche. Si prohibent les loix Platoniques, de peregriner auant quarante ans, ou cinquante: pour rendre la peregrination plus vtile et instructiue. Ie consentiroy plus volontiers, à cet autre second article, des mesmes loix, qui l'interdit, apres soixante.

Mais en tel aage, vous ne reuiendrez iamais d'vn si long chemin. Que m'en chaut-il? ie ne l'entreprens, ny pour en reuenir, ny pour le parfaire. I'entreprens seulement de me branler, pendant que le branle me plaist, et me proumeine pour me proumener. Ceux qui courent vn benefice, ou vn lieure, ne courent pas. Ceux là courent, qui courent aux barres, et pour exercer leur course. Mon dessein est diuisible par tout, il n'est pas fondé en grandes esperances: chasque iournee en faict le bout. Et le voyage de ma vie se conduict de mesme. I'ay veu pourtant assez de lieux esloignez, où i'eusse desiré qu'on m'eust arresté.

Pourquoy non, si Chrysippus, Cleanthes, Diogenes, Zenon, Antipater, tant d'hommes sages, de la secte plus renfroingnée, abandonnerent bien leur pays, sans aucune occasion de s'en plaindre: et seulement pour la iouissance d'vn autre air? Certes le plus grand desplaisir de mes peregrinations, c'est que ie n'y puisse apporter cette resolution, d'establir ma demeure où ie me plairoy. Et qu'il me faille tousiours proposer de reuenir, pour m'accommoder aux humeurs communes.

3.9.42 Si ie craingnois de mourir en autre lieu, que celuy de ma naissance: si ie pensois mourir moins à mon aise, esloingné des miens: à peine sortiroy-ie hors de France, ie ne sortirois pas sans effroy hors de ma parroisse. Ie sens la mort qui me pince continuellement la gorge, ou les reins. Mais ie suis autrement faict: elle m'est vne par tout. Si toutesfois i'auois à choisir: ce seroit, ce croy-ie, plustost à cheual, que dans vn lict: hors de ma maison, et loing des miens. Il y a plus de creuecœur que de consolation, à prendre congé de ses amis. I'oublie volontiers ce deuoir de nostre entregent.

Car des offices de l'amitié, celuy-là est le seul desplaisant: et oublierois ainsi volontiers à dire ce grand et eternel adieu. S'il se tire quelque commodité de cette assistance, il s'en tire cent incommoditez. I'ay veu plusieurs mourans bien piteusement, assiegez de tout ce train:

ENGLISH

hid my playful passions under prudence; now that I am old, I dispel my gloomy ones with revelry. Plato's laws, it is true, forbid travel abroad before forty or fifty, to make travel more useful and instructive. I would more readily agree to the other, second article of the same laws, which forbids it after sixty.[48]

But at that age you will never come back from so long a road. What do I care? I undertake it neither to come back from it nor to complete it. I undertake only to keep myself moving while moving pleases me, and I walk for the sake of walking. Those who run after a benefice or a hare are not really running. The ones who run are those who play prisoner's base, running for the exercise of it. My plan can be broken off anywhere; it is not founded on great hopes; each day's journey is an end in itself. And the journey of my life goes the same way. Yet I have seen plenty of faraway places where I would have liked to be kept.

Why not, if Chrysippus, Cleanthes, Diogenes, Zeno, Antipater, so many wise men of the sternest sect, left their country without any cause to complain of it, merely to enjoy another air? Certainly the greatest displeasure of my travels is that I cannot bring to them the resolve to settle wherever I please, and that I must always plan to come back, to fit in with common temperaments.[49]

If I feared dying anywhere but where I was born, if I thought I would die less at ease far from my family, I would hardly leave France; I would not step outside my parish without dread. I feel death constantly pinching my throat or my kidneys. But I am made otherwise: it is all one to me everywhere. Yet if I had to choose, it would be, I think, on horseback rather than in a bed, away from my house and far from my family. There is more heartbreak than comfort in taking leave of one's friends. I willingly neglect this duty of our social manners.

For of all the offices of friendship, this is the only unpleasant one, and so I would gladly forget to say that great and eternal farewell. If any advantage comes from having people around you, a hundred disadvantages come with it. I have seen many men

48 Plato, Laws, Book XII.

49 Stoic philosophers; this Diogenes is Diogenes of Babylon, not the Cynic.

FRENCH

cette presse les estouffe. C'est contre le deuoir, et est tesmoignage de peu d'affection, et de peu de soing, de vous laisser mourir en repos. L'vn tourmente vos yeux, l'autre vos oreilles, l'autre la bouche: il n'y a sens, ny membre, qu'on ne vous fracasse. Le cœur vous serre de pitié, d'ouïr les plaintes des amis; et de despit à l'aduanture, d'ouïr d'autres plaintes, feintes et masquées. Qui a tousiours eu le goust tendre, affoibly, il l'a encore plus.

Il luy faut en vne si grande necessité, vne main douce, et accommodée à son sentiment pour le grater iustement où il luy cuit. Ou qu'on ne le grate point du tout. Si nous auons besoing de sage femme, à nous mettre au monde: nous auons bien besoing d'vn homme encore plus sage, à nous en sortir. Tel, et amy, le faudroit-il acheter bien cherement, pour le seruice d'vne telle occasion. Ie ne suis point arriué à cette vigueur desdaigneuse, qui se fortifie en soy-mesme, que rien n'aide, ny ne trouble; ie suis d'vn poinct plus bas. Ie cherche à coniller, et à me desrober de ce passage: non par crainte, mais par art.

Ce n'est pas mon aduis, de faire en cette action, preuue ou montre de ma constance. Pour qui? Lors cessera tout le droict et l'interest, que i'ay à la reputation. Ie me contente d'vne mort recueillie en soy, quiete, et solitaire, toute mienne, conuenable à ma vie retirée et priuée. Au rebours de la superstition Romaine, où on estimoit malheureux, celuy qui mouroit sans parler: et qui n'auoit ses plus proches à luy clorre les yeux. I'ay assez affaire à me consoler, sans auoir à consoler autruy; assez de pensées en la teste, sans que les circonstances m'en apportent de nouuelles: et assez de matiere à m'entretenir, sans l'emprunter. Cette partie n'est pas du rolle de la societé: c'est l'acte à vn seul personnage.

Viuons et rions entre les nostres, allons mourir et rechigner entre les inconnuz. On trouue en payant, qui vous tourne la teste, et qui vous frotte les pieds: qui ne vous presse qu'autant que vous voulez, vous presentant vn visage indifferent, vous laissant vous gouuerner, et plaindre à vostre mode.

3.9.43 Ie me deffais tous les iours par discours, de cette humeur puerile et inhumaine, qui faict que nous desirons d'esmouuoir par nos maux, la compassion et le dueil en nos amis. Nous faisons valoir nos inconueniens outre leur mesure, pour attirer leurs larmes. Et la fermeté que nous

ENGLISH

die very pitifully, besieged by all that train: the crowd smothers them. It is against duty, and a sign of little affection and little care, to let you die in peace. One torments your eyes, another your ears, another your mouth; there is no sense or limb they do not batter. Your heart is wrung with pity at hearing your friends' laments, and perhaps with vexation at hearing other laments, feigned and masked. A man who has always had delicate sensibilities has them still more when he is weakened.

In so great a need, he wants a gentle hand, attuned to what he feels, to scratch him exactly where it itches—or else let no one scratch him at all. If we need a midwife, a "wise woman," to bring us into the world, we surely need an even wiser man to get us out of it. Such a man, and a friend besides, would be worth buying very dearly for service on such an occasion. I have not reached that disdainful vigor which fortifies itself within itself, which nothing helps or troubles; I am a notch lower. I try to go to ground and slip away from this passage, not out of fear, but by skill.

It is not my idea to make this act a proof or display of my constancy. For whom? At that point all my right and interest in reputation will cease. I am content with a death withdrawn into itself, quiet and solitary, entirely my own, befitting my retired and private life. This is the reverse of the Roman superstition, by which a man was thought unfortunate who died without speaking and without his nearest kin to close his eyes. I have enough to do consoling myself without having to console others; enough thoughts in my head without circumstances bringing me new ones; and enough matter to occupy me without borrowing any. This part does not belong to the role of society: it is a play with a single character.

Let us live and laugh among our own; let us go and die and scowl among strangers. For money you can find someone to turn your head and rub your feet, who will press you only as much as you wish, showing you an indifferent face, letting you manage yourself and complain in your own way.

Every day, by reasoning, I rid myself of that childish and inhuman temperament which makes us want our ills to stir compassion and grief in our friends. We inflate our troubles beyond their measure to draw their tears. And the firmness we

FRENCH

louons en chacun, à soustenir sa mauuaise fortune, nous l'accusons et reprochons à nos proches, quand c'est en la nostre. Nous ne nous contentons pas qu'ils se ressentent de nos maux, si encores ils ne s'en affligent. Il faut estendre la ioye, mais retrancher autant qu'on peut la tristesse. Qui se faict plaindre sans raison, est homme pour n'estre pas plaint, quand la raison y sera.

C'est pour n'estre iamais plaint, que se plaindre tousiours, faisant si souuent le piteux, qu'on ne soit pitoyable à personne. Qui se faict mort viuant, est subiect d'estre tenu pour vif mourant. I'en ay veu prendre la cheure, de ce qu'on leur trouuoit le visage frais, et le pouls posé: contraindre leur ris, par ce qu'il trahissoit leur guairison: et haïr la santé, de ce qu'elle n'estoit pas regrettable. Qui bien plus est, ce n'estoyent pas femmes. Ie represente mes maladies, pour le plus, telles qu'elles sont, et euite les paroles de mauuais prognostique, et les exclamations composées. Sinon l'allegresse, aumoins la contenance rassise des assistans, est propre, pres d'vn sage malade.

Pour se voir en vn estat contraire, il n'entre point en querelle auec la santé. Il luy plaist de la contempler en autruy, forte et entiere; et en iouyr au moins par compagnie. Pour se sentir fondre contre-bas, il ne reiecte pas du tout les pensées de la vie, ny ne fuit les entretiens communs. Ie veux estudier la maladie quand ie suis sain: quand elle y est, elle faict son impression assez réele, sans que mon imagination l'aide. Nous nous preparons auant la main, aux voyages que nous entreprenons, et y sommes resolus: l'heure qu'il nous faut monter à cheual, nous la donnons à l'assistance, et en sa faueur, l'estendons.

ENGLISH

praise in everyone else in bearing ill fortune, we blame and reproach in our family when the ill fortune is ours. We are not content that they should feel our ills unless they are also distressed by them. We should spread joy, but cut back sadness as much as we can. Whoever has himself pitied without reason is a man who will not be pitied when there is reason.

Always complaining is the way never to be pitied: by playing the pitiable so often, one becomes pitiable to no one. Whoever plays dead while alive is liable to be taken for alive while dying. I have seen some take offense because people found their complexion fresh and their pulse steady, stifle their laughter because it betrayed their recovery, and hate their health because it was not to be pitied. What is more, these were not women. I describe my illnesses, at most, as they are, and avoid words of ill omen and studied exclamations. If not cheerfulness, at least a composed bearing in those present is fitting beside a wise invalid.

Because he sees himself in the contrary state, he does not quarrel with health. He likes to contemplate it, strong and whole, in others, and to enjoy it at least by keeping it company. Because he feels himself sinking, he does not wholly reject thoughts of life, nor shun ordinary conversation. I want to study illness while I am healthy; when it is here, it makes its impression real enough without my imagination helping it. We prepare ourselves beforehand for the journeys we undertake, and have made up our minds to them; the hour when we must mount our horse we give to those around us, and for their sake we stretch it out.

THE BOOK AS A RULE OF LIFE

Publishing his ways keeps him true to them, and he hoped it might bring him a friend.

FRENCH

3.9.44 Ie sens ce proffit inesperé de la publication de mes mœurs, qu'elle me sert aucunement de regle. Il me vient par fois quelque consideration de ne trahir l'histoire de ma vie. Cette publique declaration, m'oblige de me tenir en ma route; et à ne desmentir l'image de mes conditions: communément moins desfigurées et contredictes, que ne porte la malignité, et maladie des iugemens d'auiourd'huy. L'vniformité et simplesse de mes mœurs, produict bien vn visage d'aisée interpretation, mais parce

ENGLISH

I find this unexpected profit in publishing my ways: it serves me, in some measure, as a rule. Sometimes a certain concern comes over me not to betray the story of my life. This public declaration obliges me to keep to my road and not to belie the picture of my character—which is generally less disfigured and contradicted than the malice and sickness of present-day judgments would have it. The uniformity and simplicity of my ways do produce a face that is easy to read; but because

FRENCH

que la façon en est vn peu nouuelle, et hors d'vsage, elle donne trop beau ieu à la mesdisance.

Si est-il vray, qu'à qui me veut loyallement iniurier, il me semble fournir bien suffisamment, où mordre, en mes imperfections aduoüées, et cogneuës: et dequoy s'y saouler, sans s'escarmoucher au vent. Si pour en preoccuper moy-mesme l'accusation, et la descouuerte, il luy semble que ie luy esdente sa morsure, c'est raison qu'il prenne son droict, vers l'amplification et extention. L'offence a ses droicts outre la iustice. Et que les vices dequoy ie luy montre des racines chez moy, il les grossisse en arbres. Qu'il y employe non seulement ceux qui me possedent, mais ceux aussi qui ne font que me menasser. Iniurieux vices, et en qualité, et en nombre. Qu'il me batte par là. I'embrasseroy volontiers l'exemple du philosophe Dion.

Antigonus le vouloit piquer sur le subiet de son origine. Il luy coupa broche: Ie suis, dit-il, fils d'vn serf, boucher, stigmatizé, et d'vne putain, que mon pere espousa par la bassesse de sa fortune. Tous deux furent punis pour quelque mesfaict. Vn orateur m'achetta enfant, me trouuant beau et aduenant: et m'a laissé mourant tous ses biens; lesquels ayant transporté en cette ville d'Athenes, ie me suis addonné à la philosophie. Que les historiens ne s'empeschent à chercher nouuelles de moy: ie leur en diray ce qui en est. La confession genereuse et libre, enerue le reproche, et desarme l'iniure. Tant y a que tout conté, il me semble qu'aussi souuent on me loüe, qu'on me desprise outre la raison.

Comme il me semble aussi que dés mon enfance, en rang et degré d'honneur, on m'a donné lieu, plustost au dessus, qu'au dessoubs de ce qui m'appartient. Ie me trouueroy mieux en païs, auquel ces ordres fussent ou reglez ou mesprisez. Entre les masles depuis que l'altercation de la prerogatiue au marcher ou à se seoir, passe trois repliques, elle est inciuile. Ie ne crain point de ceder ou proceder iniquement, pour fuir à vne si importune contestation. Et iamais homme n'a eu enuie de ma presseance, à qui ie ne l'aye quittée.

3.9.45 Outre ce profit, que ie tire d'escrire de moy, i'en ay esperé cet autre, que s'il aduenoit que mes humeurs pleussent, et accordassent à quelque honneste homme, auant mon

ENGLISH

its style is a little new and out of use, it gives slander too fine an opening.

Yet it is true that anyone who wants to attack me fairly will, it seems to me, find quite enough to bite on in my avowed and known imperfections, and enough to gorge himself on, without skirmishing at the wind. If, because I forestall him in accusing and exposing myself, he thinks I am drawing the teeth of his bite, it is reasonable that he should take his due by way of exaggeration and extension. Offense has its rights beyond justice. Let him swell into trees the vices whose roots I show him in me. Let him bring in not only those that possess me but also those that merely threaten me —injurious vices, both in quality and in number. Let him beat me with those. I would gladly follow the example of the philosopher Dion.[50]

Antigonus wanted to taunt him about his origins. He cut him short. "I am," he said, "the son of a slave, a butcher, a branded man, and of a prostitute whom my father married because of the lowness of his fortune. Both were punished for some misdeed. An orator bought me as a child, finding me handsome and pleasing, and on his death left me all his goods. Having brought them to this city of Athens, I took up philosophy. Let historians not trouble themselves to look for news of me: I will tell them what there is." A generous and free confession takes the sting out of reproach and disarms insult. Be that as it may, all things considered, it seems to me that I am as often praised beyond reason as disparaged beyond reason.[51]

Just as it also seems to me that since childhood I have been given a place in rank and degree of honor above rather than below what is my due. I would be better off in a country where these orders were either regulated or disregarded. Among men, once a dispute over precedence in walking or sitting goes beyond three replies, it is uncivil. I am not afraid to yield or go ahead unfairly to escape so tiresome a contest. And no man has ever wanted precedence over me without my giving it up to him.

Besides this profit I draw from writing about myself, I have hoped for another: that if my tempera-

50 Montaigne means Bion, whose reply is reported by Diogenes Laertius.
51 Antigonus II Gonatas, king of Macedonia.

FRENCH

trespas, il rechercheroit de nous ioindre. Ie luy ay donné beaucoup de païs gaigné: car tout ce qu'vne longue cognoissance et familiarité, luy pourroit auoir acquis en plusieurs années, il l'a veu en trois iours dans ce registre, et plus seurement et exactement. Plaisante fantasie: plusieurs choses, que ie ne voudroy dire au particulier, ie les dis au public.

Et sur mes plus secretes sciences ou pensées, renuoye à vne boutique de libraire, mes amis plus feaux: *Excutienda damus prœcordia.* Si à si bonnes enseignes, i'eusse sceu quelqu'vn qui m'eust esté propre, certes ie l'eusse esté trouuer bien loing. Car la douceur d'vne sortable et aggreable compagnie, ne se peut assez acheter à mon gré. Eh qu'est-ce qu'vn amy! Combien est vraye cette ancienne sentence, que l'vsage en est plus necessaire, et plus doux, que des elemens de l'eau et du feu!

ENGLISH

ment happened to please and suit some decent man before my death, he would seek to meet me. I have given him a great deal of ground already won. For all that long acquaintance and familiarity could have gained him in many years, he has seen in three days in this register, and more surely and exactly. A comic notion: many things I would not want to say to any one person, I say to the public.

And for my most secret knowledge or thoughts I send my most faithful friends to a bookseller's shop: *I give my inmost heart to be searched.* Had I learned by such clear signs of someone who suited me, I would certainly have gone a very long way to find him. For to my mind the sweetness of fitting and agreeable company cannot be bought dearly enough. Oh, what a thing a friend is! How true is that ancient saying, that the use of one is more necessary and sweeter than that of the elements of water and fire![52]

DYING AWAY FROM HOME

A long decline should not be laid on one's family; he would die quietly among strangers.

FRENCH

3.9.46 Pour reuenir à mon conte. Il n'y a donc pas beaucoup de mal de mourir loing, et à part. Si estimons nous à deuoir de nous retirer pour des actions naturelles, moins disgratiées que cette-cy, et moins hideuses. Mais encore ceux qui en viennent là, de trainer languissans vn long espace de vie, ne deuroient à l'aduanture souhaiter, d'empescher de leur misere vne grande famille. Pourtant les Indois en certaine prouince, estimoient iuste de tuer celuy, qui seroit tombé en telle necessité. En vne autre de leurs prouinces, ils l'abandonnoient seul à se sauuer, comme il pourroit. A qui ne se rendent-ils en fin ennuyeux et insupportables? les offices communs n'en vont point iusques là.

Vous apprenez la cruauté par force, à vos meilleurs amis: durcissant et femme et enfans, par long vsage, à ne sentir et plaindre plus vos maux. Les souspirs de ma cholique, n'apportent plus d'esmoy à personne. Et quand nous tirerions quelque plaisir de leur conuersation (ce qui n'aduient pas tousiours, pour la disparité des conditions, qui produict aisément mespris ou enuie, enuers qui que ce soit) n'est-ce pas trop, d'en abuser tout vn aage? Plus

ENGLISH

To return to my subject. There is not much harm, then, in dying far away and apart. After all, we think it our duty to withdraw for natural acts less unsightly than this one, and less hideous. But further, those who have come to the point of dragging out a long stretch of life in languishing should perhaps not wish to encumber a large family with their misery. That is why the Indians in a certain province thought it just to kill anyone who had fallen into such a state. In another of their provinces they left him alone to save himself as best he could. To whom do such people not become burdensome and unbearable in the end? Ordinary duties do not stretch that far.

You perforce teach cruelty to your best friends, hardening wife and children by long habit until they no longer feel and pity your ills. The groans of my colic no longer upset anyone. And even if we did draw some pleasure from their company (which does not always happen, because of the difference in conditions, which easily breeds contempt or envy toward anyone at all), is it not too

52 Persius, Satires; the ancient saying is from Cicero, On Friendship.

FRENCH

ENGLISH

ie les verrois se contraindre de bon cœur pour moy, plus ie plaindrois leur peine. Nous auons loy de nous appuyer, non pas de nous coucher si lourdement sur autruy: et nous estayer en leur ruyne.

much to abuse it for a whole lifetime? The more I saw them willingly constrain themselves for me, the more I would pity their trouble. We are allowed to lean on others, not to lie so heavily on them and prop ourselves up by their ruin.

Comme celuy qui faisoit esgorger des petits enfans, pour se seruir de leur sang, à guarir vne sienne maladie. Ou cet autre, à qui on fournissoit des ieunes tendrons, à couuer la nuict ses vieux membres: et mesler la douceur de leur haleine, à la sienne aigre et poisante. La decrepitude est qualité solitaire. Ie suis sociable iusques à l'excez. Si me semble-il raisonnable, que meshuy ie soustraye de la veuë du monde, mon importunité, et la couue moy seul. Que ie m'appile et me recueille en ma coque, comme les tortuës: i'apprenne à veoir les hommes, sans m'y tenir. Ie leur ferois outrage en vn pas si pendant. Il est temps de tourner le dos à la compagnie.

Like the man who had little children's throats cut to use their blood to cure an illness of his. Or that other man who was supplied with tender young girls to warm his old limbs at night and mingle the sweetness of their breath with his own sour, heavy breath. Decrepitude is a solitary quality. I am sociable to excess. Yet it seems reasonable to me that from now on I should withdraw my tiresomeness from the sight of the world and brood over it alone; that I should huddle up and draw into my shell like the tortoises; that I should learn to see men without clinging to them. I would be doing them an injury on so steep a slope. It is time to turn my back on the company.[53]

3.9.47 Mais en ces voyages vous serez arresté miserablement en vn caignart, où tout vous manquera. La plus-part des choses necessaires, ie les porte quant et moy. Et puis, nous ne sçaurions euiter la Fortune, si elle entreprend de nous courre sus. Il ne me faut rien d'extraordinaire, quand ie suis malade. Ce que Nature ne peut en moy, ie ne veux pas qu'vn bolus le face. Tout au commencement de mes fiéures, et des maladies qui m'atterrent; entier encores, et voisin de la santé, ie me reconcilie à Dieu, par les derniers offices Chrestiens. Et m'en trouue plus libre, et deschargé; me semblant en auoir d'autant meilleure raison de la maladie. De notaire et de conseil, il m'en faut moins que de medecins.

But on these journeys you will be stuck miserably in some hovel where you will lack everything. Most necessary things I carry with me. And besides, we cannot escape Fortune if she sets out to attack us. I need nothing out of the ordinary when I am ill. What Nature cannot do in me, I do not want a pill to do. At the very beginning of my fevers and of the illnesses that lay me low, while I am still whole and close to health, I reconcile myself with God by the last Christian offices. And I feel freer and lighter for it, and it seems to me I have all the better of the illness. I need a notary and counsel less than physicians.

Ce que ie n'auray estably de mes affaires tout sain, qu'on ne s'attende point que ie le face malade. Ce que ie veux faire pour le seruice de la mort, est tousiours faict. Ie n'oserois le dislayer d'vn seul iour. Et s'il n'y a rien de faict, c'est à dire, ou que le doubte m'en aura retardé le choix: car par fois, c'est bien choisir de ne choisir pas: ou que tout à faict, ie n'auray rien voulu faire.

Whatever I have not settled in my affairs while in good health, let no one expect me to settle when ill. What I want to do in the service of death is always done. I would not dare to put it off a single day. And if nothing has been done, it means either that doubt has delayed my choice—for sometimes not choosing is choosing well—or that I wanted to do nothing at all.

3.9.48 I'escris mon liure à peu d'hommes, et à peu d'années. Si ç'eust esté vne matiere de durée, il l'eust fallu commettre à vn langage plus ferme. Selon la variation continuelle, qui a suiuy le nostre iusques à cette heure, qui peut esperer que sa forme presente soit en vsage, d'icy à cinquante ans? Il escoule touts les iours de nos mains: et

I write my book for few men and for few years. If it had been a subject meant to last, I would have had to entrust it to a firmer language. Given the continual change our language has undergone up to now, who can hope that its present form will still be in use fifty years from now? It slips through our

53 The second example recalls King David, given the young Abishag to warm him in his old age (1 Kings 1).

FRENCH

depuis que ie vis, s'est alteré de moitié. Nous disons, qu'il est à cette heure parfaict. Autant en dict du sien, chasque siecle. Ie n'ay garde de l'en tenir là tant qu'il fuira, et s'ira difformant comme il faict. C'est aux bons et vtiles escrits, de le clouer à eux, et ira son credit, selon la fortune de nostre estat.

Pourtant ne crains-ie point d'y inserer plusieurs articles priuez, qui consument leur vsage entre les hommes qui viuent auiourd'huy: et qui touchent la particuliere science d'aucuns, qui y verront plus auant, que de la commune intelligence. Ie ne veux pas, apres tout, comme ie vois souuent agiter la memoire des trespassez, qu'on aille debattant: Il iugeoit, il viuoit ainsin: il vouloit cecy: s'il eust parlé sur sa fin il eust dict, il eust donné; ie le cognoissois mieux que tout autre. Or autant que la bienseance me le permet, ie fais icy sentir mes inclinations et affections. Mais plus librement, et plus volontiers, le faisie de bouche, à quiconque desire en estre informé.

Tant y a, qu'en ces memoires, si on y regarde, on trouuera que i'ay tout dit, ou tout designé. Ce que ie ne puis exprimer, ie le montre au doigt. *Verum animo satis hæc vestigia parua sagaci / Sunt, per quæ possis cognoscere cætera tute.* Ie ne laisse rien à desirer, et deuiner de moy. Si on doit s'en entretenir, ie veux que ce soit veritablement et iustement. Ie reuiundrois volontiers de l'autre monde, pour démentir celuy, qui me formeroit autre que ie n'estois, fust-ce pour m'honorer. Des viuans mesme, ie sens qu'on parle tousiours autrement qu'ils ne sont. Et si à toute force, ie n'eusse maintenu vn amy que i'ay perdu, on me l'eust deschiré en mille contraires visages.

3.9.49 Pour acheuer de dire mes foibles humeurs: i'aduouë, qu'en voyageant, ie n'arriue guere en logis, où il ne me passe par la fantasie, si i'y pourray estre, et malade, et mourant à mon aise. Ie veux estre logé en lieu, qui me soit bien particulier, sans bruict, non maussade, ou fumeux, ou estouffé. Ie cherche à flatter la mort, par ces friuoles circonstances. Ou pour mieux dire, à me descharger de tout autre empeschement: afin que ie n'aye qu'à m'attendre à elle, qui me poisera volontiers assez, sans autre recharge. Ie veux qu'elle ait sa part à l'aisance et commodité de ma vie. C'en est vn grand

ENGLISH

fingers every day, and in my lifetime it has changed by half. We say it is now perfect. Every century says as much of its own. I am far from holding it to be so while it keeps slipping away and changing shape as it does. It is for good and useful writings to nail it fast to themselves, and its credit will follow the fortune of our state.

That is why I am not afraid to put in many private matters whose use is confined to men living today, and which touch the particular knowledge of certain people, who will see further into them than common understanding can. After all, I do not want people to go around arguing, as I often see the memory of the dead stirred up: "He judged this way, he lived this way; he wanted this; if he had spoken at the end he would have said, he would have given; I knew him better than anyone." Now, as far as decency allows, I make my inclinations and affections felt here. But I do so more freely and more willingly by word of mouth to anyone who wishes to know them.

In any case, if you look closely at these memoirs, you will find that I have said everything, or pointed to everything. What I cannot express, I point at with my finger. *But for a keen mind these small tracks are enough, / By which you can recognize the rest for yourself.* I leave nothing about me to be wished for or guessed at. If people are to talk about me, I want it to be truly and justly. I would gladly come back from the other world to give the lie to anyone who made me out to be other than I was, even if it were to honor me. Even of the living, I find, people always speak otherwise than they are. And if I had not defended with all my strength a friend I have lost, they would have torn him apart into a thousand contrary faces.[54]

To finish telling my weaknesses: I confess that when traveling I hardly ever reach a lodging without wondering whether I could be ill there, and die there, at my ease. I want to be lodged in a place that is quite private to me, without noise, not dingy, smoky or stuffy. I try to flatter death with these trivial circumstances—or rather, to rid myself of every other encumbrance, so that I need attend to nothing but death, which will probably weigh on me enough without any further load. I

54 Lucretius, On the Nature of Things. The lost friend is La Boétie.

FRENCH

lopin, et d'importance, et espere meshuy qu'il ne dementira pas le passé.

La mort a des formes plus aisées les vnes que les autres, et prend diuerses qualitez selon la fantasie de chacun. Entre les naturelles, celle qui vient d'affoiblissement et appesantissement, me semble molle et douce. Entre les violentes, i'imagine plus mal-aisément vn precipice, qu'vne ruïne qui m'accable: et vn coup trenchant d'vne espée, qu'vne harquebusade: et eusse plustost beu le breuuage de Socrates, que de me fraper, comme Caton. Et quoy que ce soit vn, si sent mon imagination difference, comme de la mort à la vie, à me ietter dans vne fournaise ardente, ou dans le canal d'vne platte riuiere. Tant sottement nostre crainte regarde plus au moyen qu'à l'effect.

Ce n'est qu'vn instant; mais il est de tel poix, que ie donneroy volontiers plusieurs iours de ma vie, pour le passer à ma mode. Puisque la fantasie d'vn chacun trouue du plus et du moins, en son aigreur: puisque chacun a quelque choix entre les formes de mourir, essayons vn peu plus auant d'en trouuer quelqu'vne deschargée de tout desplaisir. Pourroit on pas la rendre encore voluptueuse, comme les commourans d'Antonius et de Cleopatra? Ie laisse à part les efforts que la philosophie, et la religion produisent, aspres et exemplaires. Mais entre les hommes de peu, il s'en est trouué, comme vn Petronius, et vn Tigillinus à Rome, engagez à se donner la mort, qui l'ont comme endormie par la mollesse de leurs apprests.

Ils l'ont faicte couler et glisser parmy la lascheté de leurs passetemps accoustumez. Entre des garses et bons compagnons; nul propos de consolation, nulle mention de testament, nulle affectation ambitieuse de constance, nul discours de leur condition future: parmy les ieux, les festins, facecies, entretiens communs et populaires, et la musique, et des vers amoureux. Ne sçaurions nous imiter cette resolution en plus honneste contenance? Puis qu'il y a des morts bonnes aux fols, bonnes aux sages: trouuons-en qui soient bonnes à ceux d'entre deux. Mon imagination m'en presente quelque visage facile, et, puis qu'il faut mourir, desirable. Les tyrans Romains pensoient donner la vie au criminel, à qui ils donnoient le choix de sa mort.

ENGLISH

want it to share in the ease and comfort of my life. It is a large piece of it, and an important one, and I hope from now on that it will not belie the past.

Some forms of death are easier than others, and death takes on different qualities according to each person's fancy. Among natural deaths, the one that comes from weakening and heaviness seems to me soft and gentle. Among violent ones, I find a fall from a cliff harder to imagine than a collapsing building that crushes me, and a cutting sword stroke harder than a arquebus shot. I would rather have drunk the potion of Socrates than stabbed myself like Cato. And though it is all one, my imagination feels as great a difference as between death and life between throwing myself into a blazing furnace and into the channel of a calm river. So foolishly does our fear look more to the means than to the outcome.[55]

It is only an instant; but it weighs so much that I would gladly give several days of my life to get through it in my own way. Since each man's fancy finds more or less bitterness in it, and since each has some choice among the ways of dying, let us try a little further to find one free of all unpleasantness. Could we not even make it pleasurable, like Antony and Cleopatra's companions in death? I leave aside the harsh and exemplary efforts produced by philosophy and religion. But among men of little account there have been some, like a Petronius and a Tigellinus in Rome, who, compelled to take their own lives, lulled death to sleep, as it were, by the softness of their preparations.[56]

They let it flow and glide by amid the idle ease of their usual pastimes. Among girls and boon companions: no talk of consolation, no mention of a will, no ambitious show of constancy, no reasoning about their future condition, but games, feasts, jokes, ordinary popular conversation, music and love poems. Could we not imitate this resolve with a more decent bearing? Since there are deaths good for fools and deaths good for the wise, let us find some good for those in between. My imagination shows me death with an easy face, and, since we must die, a desirable one. The Roman tyrants

55 Socrates drank hemlock in 399 BC; Cato the Younger stabbed himself at Utica in 46 BC.
56 Plutarch tells that Antony and Cleopatra formed a club of "those who will die together," given over to feasting. Petronius was forced to kill himself by Nero, Tigellinus by Otho.

FRENCH

ENGLISH

thought they were giving a criminal his life when they gave him the choice of his death.

Mais Theophraste philosophe si delicat, si modeste, si sage, a-il pas esté forcé par la raison, d'oser dire ce vers latinisé par Ciceron: *Vitam regit fortuna, non sapientia.* La fortune aide à la facilité du marché de ma vie: l'ayant logée en tel poinct, qu'elle ne faict meshuy ny besoing aux miens, ny empeschement. C'est vne condition que i'eusse acceptée en toutes les saisons de mon aage: mais en cette occasion, de trousser mes bribes, et de plier bagage, ie prens plus particulierement plaisir à ne leur apporter ny plaisir ny deplaisir, en mourant. Elle a, d'vne artiste compensation, faict, que ceux qui peuuent pretendre quelque materiel fruict de ma mort, en reçoiuent d'ailleurs, coniointement, vne materielle perte.

But was not Theophrastus, so refined, so modest, so wise a philosopher, forced by reason to dare to speak this line, which Cicero put into Latin? *Fortune, not wisdom, rules our life.* Fortune makes the bargain of my life easier, having placed it at such a point that it is now neither needed by my family nor a hindrance to them. That is a condition I would have accepted at any season of my life; but on this occasion, when I am packing up my odds and ends and folding my baggage, I take special pleasure in bringing them neither pleasure nor displeasure by my death. Fortune has, by an artful compensation, arranged that those who may expect some material gain from my death will at the same time suffer a material loss from another quarter.[57]

La mort s'appesantit souuent en nous, de ce qu'elle poise aux autres: et nous interesse de leur interest, quasi autant que du nostre: et plus et tout par fois.

Death often grows heavier for us because it weighs on others; it touches us with their interest almost as much as with our own, and sometimes more, and sometimes entirely.

3.9.50 En cette commodité de logis que ie cherche, ie n'y mesle pas la pompe et l'amplitude: ie la hay plustost: mais certaine proprieté simple, qui se rencontre plus souuent aux lieux où il y a moins d'art, et que Nature honore de quelque grace toute sienne. *Non ampliter sed munditer conuiuium. Plus salis quàm sumptus.* Et puis, c'est à faire à ceux que les affaires entrainent en plain hyuer, par les Grisons, d'estre surpris en chemin en cette extremité. Moy qui le plus souuent voyage pour mon plaisir, ne me guide pas si mal. S'il faict laid à droicte, ie prens à gauche: si ie me trouue mal propre à monter à cheual, ie m'arreste.

In the comfortable lodging I look for, I do not include pomp and size—I rather hate them—but a certain simple neatness, which is found more often in places where there is less art and which Nature honors with some grace all her own. *A meal not lavish but neat. More wit than expense.* And besides, it is for those whom business drags through the Grisons in the dead of winter to be caught on the road in such straits. I, who most often travel for pleasure, do not steer so badly. If the weather is foul on the right, I take the left; if I find myself unfit to ride, I stop.[58]

Et faisant ainsi, ie ne vois à la verité rien, qui ne soit aussi plaisant et commode que ma maison. Il est vray que ie trouue la superfluité tousiours superfluë: et remarque de l'empeschement en la delicatesse mesme et en l'abondance. Ay-ie laissé quelque chose à voir derriere moy, i'y retourne: c'est tousiours mon chemin. Ie ne trace aucune ligne certaine, ny droicte ny courbe. Ne trouue-ie point où ie vay, ce qu'on m'auoit dict? comme il aduient souuent que les iugemens d'autruy ne s'accordent pas aux miens, et les ay trouuez le plus souuent faux: ie ne

And doing this, I truly see nothing that is not as pleasant and comfortable as my own house. It is true that I always find superfluity superfluous, and I notice encumbrance even in refinement and abundance. Have I left something unseen behind me? I go back to it: it is always on my way. I trace no fixed line, straight or curved. Do I not find, where I go, what I had been told? Since others' judgments often do not agree with mine, and I have most often found them false, I do not regret

57 Cicero, Tusculan Disputations.
58 The first phrase is quoted by the Latin grammarian Nonius, the second is from Cornelius Nepos, Life of Atticus. The Grisons: the Alpine region of eastern Switzerland.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
	plains pas ma peine: i'ay apris que ce qu'on disoit n'y est point.	my trouble: I have learned that what people said was there is not.

FOREIGN WAYS

He welcomes foreign food and customs and mocks the French who cling to their own.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
3.9.51	I'ay la complexion du corps libre, et le goust commun, autant qu'homme du monde. La diuersité des façons d'vne nation à autre, ne me touche que par le plaisir de la varieté. Chaque vsage a sa raison. Soyent des assietes d'estain, de bois, de terre: bouilly ou rosty; beurre, ou huyle, de noix ou d'oliue, chaut ou froit, tout m'est vn. Et si vn, que vieillissant, i'accuse cette genereuse faculté: et auroy besoin que la delicatesse et le choix, arrestast l'indiscretion de mon appetit, et par fois soulageast mon estomach.	I have as free a constitution and as accommodating a palate as any man in the world. The difference in ways from one nation to another touches me only through the pleasure of variety. Each custom has its reason. Plates of pewter, wood or earthenware; boiled or roast; butter, or walnut or olive oil; hot or cold—it is all one to me. So much so that, as I grow old, I blame this generous capacity, and would need refinement and choice to check the indiscretion of my appetite and sometimes give my stomach some relief.
	Quand i'ay esté ailleurs qu'en France: et que, pour me faire courtoisie, on m'a demandé, si ie vouloy estre serui à la Françoise, ie m'en suis mocqué, et me suis tousiours ietté aux tables les plus espesses d'estrangers. I'ay honte de voir nos hommes, enyurez de cette sotte humeur, de s'effaroucher des formes contraires aux leurs. Il leur semble estre hors de leur element, quand ils sont hors de leur village. Où qu'ils aillent, ils se tiennent à leurs façons, et abominent les estrangeres. Retrouuent ils vn compatriote en Hongrie, ils festoient cette auanture: les voyla à se r'alier; et à se recoudre ensemble; à condamner tant de mœurs barbares qu'ils voyent. Pourquoy non barbares, puis qu'elles ne sont Françoises?	When I have been outside France and people, to be courteous, have asked me whether I wanted to be served in the French style, I have laughed at it and always thrown myself at the tables most crowded with foreigners. I am ashamed to see our countrymen drunk with that foolish temperament that makes them shy away from ways contrary to their own. They seem to be out of their element when they are out of their village. Wherever they go, they cling to their own ways and loathe foreign ones. If they come upon a compatriot in Hungary, they celebrate the event: there they are, rallying and huddling together, condemning all the barbarous customs they see. Why not barbarous, since they are not French?
	Encore sont ce les plus habilles, qui les ont recognuës, pour en mesdire. La pluspart ne prennent l'aller que pour le venir. Ils voyagent couuerts et resserrez, d'vne prudence taciturne et incommunicable, se defendans de la contagion d'vn air incogneu. Ce que ie dis de ceux là, me ramentoit en chose semblable, ce que i'ay par fois apperçeu en aucuns de noz ieunes courtisans. Ils ne tiennent qu'aux hommes de leur sorte: nous regardent comme gens de l'autre monde, auec desdain, ou pitié. Ostez leur les entretiens des mysteres de la cour, ils sont hors de leur gibier. Aussi neufs pour nous et malhabiles, comme nous sommes à eux. On dict bien vray, qu'vn honneste homme, c'est vn homme meslé.	And even these are the cleverest ones, who have at least noticed those customs, if only to speak ill of them. Most go only in order to come back. They travel muffled and closed up, with a silent, uncommunicative caution, guarding themselves against the contagion of an unknown air. What I say of them reminds me of something similar I have sometimes noticed in some of our young courtiers. They keep only to men of their own kind and look at us as people from another world, with disdain or pity. Take away their talk of the mysteries of the court, and they are off their hunting ground—as green and awkward in our eyes as we are in theirs. It is truly said that a decent man is a man of many parts.

FRENCH

Au rebours, ie peregrine tressaoul de nos façons: non pour chercher des Gascons en Sicile, i'en ay assez laissé au logis: ie cherche des Grecs plustost, et des Persans: i'accointe ceux-la, ie les considere: c'est là où ie me preste, et où ie m'employe. Et qui plus est, il me semble, que ie n'ay rencontré guere de manieres, qui ne vaillent les nostres. Ie couche de peu: car à peine ay-ie perdu mes giroüettes de veuë. Au demeurant, la plus-part des compaignies fortuites que vous rencontrez en chemin, ont plus d'incommodité que de plaisir: ie ne m'y attache point, moins asteure, que la vieillesse me particularise et sequestre aucunement, des formes communes. Vous souffrez pour autruy, ou autruy pour vous.

L'vn et l'autre inconuenient est poisant, mais le dernier me semble encore plus rude.

3.9.52 C'est vne rare fortune, mais de soulagement inestimable, d'auoir vn honneste homme, d'entendement ferme, et de mœurs conformes aux vostres, qui aime à vous suiure. I'en ay eu faute extreme, en tous mes voyages. Mais vne telle compaignie, il la faut auoir choisie et acquise dés le logis. Nul plaisir n'a saueur pour moy sans communication. Il ne me vient pas seulement vne gaillarde pensée en l'ame, qu'il ne me fasche de l'auoir produite seul, et n'ayant à qui l'offrir. *Si cum hac exceptione detur sapientia, vt illam inclusam teneam, nec enuntiem, reijciam.* L'autre l'auoit monté d'vn ton au dessus.

Si contigerit ea vita sapienti, vt omnium rerum affluentibus copijs, quamuis omnia, quæ cognitione digna sunt, summo otio secum ipse consideret, et contempletur, tamen si solitudo tanta sit, vt hominem videre non possit, excedat è vita. L'opinion d'Archytas m'agrée, qu'il feroit desplaisant au ciel mesme, et à se promener dans ces grands et diuins corps celestes, sans l'assistance d'vn compaignon. Mais il vaut mieux encore estre seul, qu'en compaignie ennuyeuse et inepte. Aristippus s'aymoit à viure estranger par tout, *Me si fata meis paterentur ducere vitam*
Auspicijs, ie choisirois à la passer le cul sur la selle: *Visere gestiens,*
Qua parte debacchentur ignes,
Qua nebulæ pluuijque rores.

ENGLISH

I, on the contrary, travel thoroughly sick of our ways. I do not go looking for Gascons in Sicily; I have left enough of them at home. I look rather for Greeks, and Persians. I get to know them, I observe them; that is where I lend myself and apply myself. And what is more, I seem to have met with hardly any manners that are not as good as ours. I am not staking much, for I have hardly lost sight of my weathervanes. For the rest, most of the chance company you meet on the road brings more trouble than pleasure. I do not attach myself to it, all the less now that old age sets me somewhat apart and cuts me off from common ways. Either you suffer for others, or others suffer for you.

Both drawbacks are heavy, but the second seems to me even harsher.

It is a rare stroke of fortune, but a relief beyond price, to have a decent man of firm understanding and ways that match your own, who likes to go along with you. I have sorely missed one on all my travels. But such company must have been chosen and won at home. No pleasure has any savor for me without someone to share it. Not even a lively thought comes into my mind without my being vexed at having produced it alone, with no one to offer it to. *If wisdom were given me on condition that I keep it shut up and not speak it, I would refuse it.* The other writer had raised this a tone higher.[59]

If the wise man were granted such a life that, with an abundance of all things, he could consider and contemplate at his leisure everything worth knowing, yet if his solitude were so great that he could never see a human being, he should depart from life. I like the opinion of Archytas, that it would be unpleasant even in heaven, and to wander among those great and divine celestial bodies, without a companion beside him. But it is still better to be alone than in tedious and foolish company. Aristippus liked to live as a stranger everywhere. *If the fates allowed me to lead my life*
As I wished, I would choose to spend it with my backside in the saddle: *Eager to go and see*
Where the fires rage and revel,
Where the mists and the rainy dews hold sway.[60]

59 Seneca, Letters to Lucilius; the other writer is Cicero.
60 Cicero, On Duties. The verses are from Virgil, Aeneid, and Horace, Odes.

IS TRAVEL VANITY?

An imagined critic says he carries his trouble with him; Montaigne admits his love of variety.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
3.9.53	Auez-vous pas des passe-temps plus aisez? dequoy auez-vous faute? Vostre maison est-elle pas en bel air et sain, suffisamment fournie, et capable plus que suffisamment? La majesté Royalle y a peu plus d'vne fois en sa pompe. Vostre famille n'en laisse-elle pas en reglement, plus au dessoubs d'elle, qu'elle n'en a au dessus, en eminence? Y a il quelque pensée locale, qui vous vlcere, extraordinaire, indigestible? *Quæ te nunc coquat et vexet sub pectore fixa?* Où cuidez-vous pouuoir estre sans empeschement et sans destourbier? *Nunquam simpliciter fortuna indulget.* Voyez donc, qu'il n'y a que vous qui vous empeschez: et vous vous suiurez par tout, et vous plaindrez par tout. Car il n'y a satisfaction ça bas, que pour les ames ou brutales ou diuines.	Have you no easier pastimes? What do you lack? Is your house not in a fine, healthy setting, well enough furnished, and more than spacious enough? Royal majesty in all its pomp has been received there more than once. Does your family not leave more families below it in good order than it has above it in eminence? Is there some local worry that ulcerates you, out of the ordinary, impossible to digest? *That now burns and torments you, lodged in your breast?* Where do you think you can be free of hindrance and disturbance? *Fortune never grants her favors unmixed.* So you see that no one hinders you but yourself; you will follow yourself everywhere, and complain everywhere. For there is no satisfaction here below except for souls that are either brutish or divine.[61]
	Qui n'a du contentement à vne si iuste occasion, où pense-il le trouuer? A combien de milliers d'hommes, arreste vne telle condition que la vostre, le but de leurs souhaits? Reformez vous seulement: car en cela vous pouuez tout: là où vous n'aurez droict que de patience, enuers la fortune. *Nulla placida quies est, nisi quam ratio composuit.*	If a man finds no contentment with so good a reason for it, where does he think to find it? For how many thousands of men does a condition like yours mark the limit of their wishes? Just reform yourself: in that you can do everything, whereas with Fortune you have no right but patience. *There is no calm repose but the one that reason has composed.*[62]
3.9.54	Ie voy la raison de cet aduertissement, et la voy tresbien. Mais on auroit plustost faict, et plus pertinemment, de me dire en vn mot: Soyez sage. Cette resolution, est outre la sagesse: c'est son ouurage, et sa production. Ainsi fait le medecin, qui va criaillant apres vn pauure malade languissant, qu'il se resiouysse: il luy conseillerait vn peu moins ineptement, s'il luy disoit: Soyez sain. Pour moy, ie ne suis qu'homme de la commune sorte. C'est vn precepte salutaire, certain, et d'aisee intelligence: Contentez vous du vostre: c'est à dire, de la raison: l'execution pourtant, n'en est non plus aux plus sages, qu'en moy. C'est vne parole populaire, mais elle a vne terrible estendue. Que ne comprend elle?	I see the reason for this advice, and see it very well. But it would have been quicker, and more to the point, to tell me in one word: Be wise. This resolution lies beyond wisdom; it is wisdom's work and its product. That is what the physician does who goes shouting at some poor languishing patient to cheer up; his advice would be a little less foolish if he told him: Be well. As for me, I am only a man of the common sort. It is a wholesome precept, certain and easy to understand: Be content with what is yours—that is, with reason. Yet carrying it out is no more within the reach of the wisest than within mine. It is a common saying, but its scope is tremendous. What does it not include?
	Toutes choses tombent en discretion et modification. Ie sçay bien qu'à le prendre à la lettre, ce plaisir de voyager, porte tesmoignage d'inquietude et d'irresolution. Aussi	Everything comes down to discretion and qualification. I know very well that, taken literally, this pleasure in traveling is a sign of restlessness and

61 Henry of Navarre stayed at Montaigne in 1584 and 1587. The verse is from Ennius, quoted by Cicero; the maxim is from Quintus Curtius.

62 Seneca, Letters to Lucilius.

FRENCH

sont ce nos maistresses qualitez, et prædominantes. Ouy; ie le confesse: ie ne vois rien seulement en songe, et par souhait, où ie me puisse tenir. La seule varieté me paye, et la possession de la diuersité: au moins si quelque chose me paye. A voyager, cela mesme me nourrit, que ie me puis arrester sans interest: et que i'ay où m'en diuertir commodément. I'ayme la vie priuee, par ce que c'est par mon choix que ie l'ayme, non par disconuenance à la vie publique: qui est à l'auanture, autant selon ma complexion.

I'en sers plus gayement mon Prince, par ce que c'est par libre eslection de mon jugement, et de ma raison, sans obligation particuliere. Et que ie n'y suis pas reiecté, ny contrainct, pour estre irreceuable à tout autre party, et mal voulu. Ainsi du reste. Ie hay les morceaux que la necessité me taille. Toute commodité me tiendroit à la gorge, de laquelle seule i'aurois à despendre: *Alter remus aquas, alter mihi radat arenas.* Vne seule corde ne m'arreste iamais assez.

ENGLISH

irresolution. And indeed those are our master qualities, our ruling ones. Yes, I confess it: I see nothing, even in dreams and wishes, on which I could take a stand. Variety alone satisfies me, and the possession of diversity—if anything satisfies me at all. In traveling, what nourishes me is precisely that I can stop without loss and that I have places where I can comfortably turn aside. I love private life because I love it by my own choice, not from unfitness for public life, which perhaps suits my constitution just as well.

I serve my prince all the more gladly because I do it by the free choice of my judgment and my reason, without particular obligation, and because I am not cast out or forced into it by being unacceptable and unwelcome to every other party. And so with the rest. I hate the portions that necessity carves for me. Any advantage on which alone I had to depend would have me by the throat: *Let one oar sweep the waters, the other the sands.* A single rope never holds me fast enough.[63]

PRECEPTS BEYOND OUR REACH

Moral rules demand more than anyone performs, and laws would hang every man ten times.

FRENCH

3.9.55 Il y a de la vanité, dites vous, en cet amusement. Mais où non? Et ces beaux preceptes, sont vanité, et vanité toute la sagesse. *Dominus nouit cogitationes sapientium, quoniam vanæ sunt.* Ces exquises subtilitez, ne sont propres qu'au presche. Ce sont discours qui nous veulent enuoyer tous bastez en l'autre monde. La vie est vn mouuement materiel et corporel: action imparfaicte de sa propre essence, et desreglée. Ie m'employe à la seruir selon elle. *Quisque suos patimur manes. Sic est faciendum, vt contra naturam vniuersam nihil contendamus: ea tamen conseruata, propriam sequamur.* A quoy faire, ces poinctes esleuées de la philosophie, sur lesquelles, aucun estre humain ne se peut rasseoir: et ces regles qui excedent nostre vsage et nostre force?

3.9.56 Ie voy souuent qu'on nous propose des images de vie, lesquelles, ny le proposant, ny les auditeurs, n'ont aucune esperance de suiure, ny qui plus est, enuie. De ce mesme papier où il vient d'escrire l'arrest de

ENGLISH

There is vanity, you say, in this amusement. But where is there not? These fine precepts are vanity, and all wisdom is vanity. *The Lord knows the thoughts of the wise, that they are vain.* These exquisite subtleties are fit only for the pulpit. They are arguments that would send us all into the other world with our pack-saddles on. Life is a material and bodily movement, an action imperfect and unruly by its very essence. I make it my business to serve it on its own terms. *Each of us suffers his own shade. We must act so as never to strive against universal nature; yet, while respecting it, let us follow our own.* What use are these lofty peaks of philosophy, on which no human being can settle, and these rules that exceed our practice and our strength?[64]

I often see people hold up to us patterns of life which neither the speaker nor the listeners have any hope of following, nor, what is more, any wish

63 Propertius, Elegies.
64 Psalm 94, quoted by Saint Paul (1 Corinthians 3); then Virgil, Aeneid, and Cicero, On Duties.

FRENCH

condemnation contre vn adultere, le iuge en desrobe vn lopin, pour en faire vn poulet à la femme de son compagnon. Celle à qui vous viendrez de vous frotter illicitement, criera plus asprement, tantost, en vostre presence mesme, à l'encontre d'vne pareille faute de sa compaigne, que ne feroit Porcie. Et tel condamne les hommes à mourir, pour des crimes, qu'il n'estime point fautes.

I'ay veu en ma ieunesse, vn galant homme, presenter d'vne main au peuple des vers excellens et en beauté et en desbordement; et de l'autre main en mesme instant, la plus quereleuse reformation theologienne, dequoy le monde se soit desieuné il y a long temps. Les hommes vont ainsin. On laisse les loix, et preceptes suiure leur voye, nous en tenons vne autre. Non par desreglement de mœurs seulement, mais par opinion souuent, et par iugement contraire. Sentez lire vn discours de philosophie: l'inuention, l'eloquence, la pertinence, frappe incontinent vostre esprit, et vous esmeut. Il n'y a rien qui chatouille ou poigne vostre conscience: ce n'est pas à elle qu'on parle. Est-il pas vray?

Si disoit Ariston, que ny vne estuue ny vne leçon, n'est d'aucun fruict si elle ne nettoye et ne decrasse. On peut s'arrester à l'escorce: mais c'est apres qu'on en a retiré la mouelle. Comme apres auoir aualé le bon vin d'vne belle coupe, nous en considerons les graueures et l'ouurage. En toutes les chambrées de la philosophie ancienne, cecy se trouuera, qu'vn mesme ouurier, y publie des regles de temperance, et publie ensemble des escrits d'amour et desbauche. Et Xenophon, au giron de Clinias, escriuit contre la vertu Aristippique. Ce n'est pas qu'il y ait vne conuersion miraculeuse, qui les agite à ondées.

Mais c'est que Solon se represente tantost soy-mesme, tantost en forme de legislateur: tantost il parle pour la presse, tantost pour soy. Et prend pour soy les regles libres et naturelles, s'asseurant d'vne santé ferme et entiere. *Curentur dubij medicis maioribus ægri.* Antisthenes permet au sage d'aimer, et faire à sa mode ce, qu'il trouue estre opportun, sans s'attendre aux loix: d'autant qu'il a meilleur aduis qu'elles, et plus de cognoissance de la vertu. Son disciple Diogenes, disoit, opposer aux perturbations, la raison: à fortune, la confidence: aux loix, nature. Pour les estomachs tendres, il faut des

ENGLISH

to. From the very paper on which he has just written the sentence condemning an adulterer, the judge tears off a scrap to write a love note to his colleague's wife. The woman you have just been rubbing against unlawfully will presently, in your very presence, cry out against a like fault in her friend more harshly than Portia would. And many a man condemns others to death for crimes he does not think are faults at all.[65]

In my youth I saw a fine gentleman offer the public with one hand verses excellent in both beauty and licentiousness, and with the other, at the same moment, the most quarrelsome theological reformation the world has breakfasted on in a long time. That is how men go. We let laws and precepts go their way; we take another. Not only out of loose morals, but often out of opinion and contrary judgment. Listen to a philosophical discourse being read: the invention, the eloquence, the aptness strike your mind at once and move you. Nothing tickles or stings your conscience; it is not your conscience that is being addressed. Is that not true?[66]

So Ariston said that neither a bath nor a lesson is of any use unless it cleans and scrubs. One may linger over the bark, but only after the pith has been drawn out—just as, after drinking the good wine from a fine cup, we look at its engravings and workmanship. In every chamber of ancient philosophy you will find the same workman publishing rules of temperance and at the same time publishing writings on love and debauchery. And Xenophon, in the lap of Clinias, wrote against Aristippean virtue. It is not that some miraculous conversion sweeps over them in gusts.[67]

It is rather that Solon presents himself now as himself, now in the guise of a lawgiver; now he speaks for the crowd, now for himself. For himself he takes free and natural rules, confident of firm and sound health. *Let those who are dangerously ill be treated by the greatest physicians.* Antisthenes allows the wise man to love and to do in his own way what he finds fitting, without regard to the laws, since he has better judgment than they and more knowledge of virtue. His disciple Diogenes

65 Portia, daughter of Cato and wife of Brutus, a model of Roman wifely virtue.
66 Probably Theodore Beza, whose youthful Latin love poems (1548) preceded his career as a leading Calvinist theologian.
67 Diogenes Laertius reports Xenophon's love for Clinias.

FRENCH

ordonnances contraintes et artificielles. Les bons estomachs se seruent simplement, des prescriptions de leur naturel appetit.

Ainsi font nos medecins, qui mangent le melon et boiuent le vin fraiz, ce pendant qu'ils tiennent leur patient obligé au sirop et à la panade. Ie ne sçay quels liures, disoit la courtisanne Lays, quelle sapience, quelle philosophie, mais ces gens-là, battent aussi souuent à ma porte, qu'aucuns autres. D'autant que nostre licence nous porte tousiours au delà de ce qui nous est loisible, et permis, on a estressy souuent outre la raison vniuerselle, les preceptes et loix de nostre vie. *Nemo satis credit tantum delinquere, quantum / Permittas.* Il seroit à desirer, qu'il y eust plus de proportion du commandement à l'obeïssance. Et semble la visée iniuste, à laquelle on ne peut atteindre.

Il n'est si homme de bien, qu'il mette à l'examen des loix toutes ses actions et pensées, qui ne soit pendable dix fois en sa vie. Voire tel, qu'il seroit tres-grand dommage, et tres-iniuste de punir et de perdre. *Ole, quid ad te, / De cute quid faciat ille, vel illa sua?* Et tel pourroit n'offencer point les loix, qui n'en meriteroit point la loüange d'homme de vertu: et que la philosophie feroit tres-iustement foiter. Tant cette relation est trouble et inegale. Nous n'auons garde d'estre gens de bien selon Dieu: nous ne le sçaurions estre selon nous. L'humaine sagesse, n'arriua iamais aux deuoirs qu'elle s'estoit elle mesme prescript.

Et si elle y estoit arriuee, elle s'en prescriroit d'autres au delà, où elle aspirast tousiours et pretendist. Tant nostre estat est ennemy de consistance. L'homme s'ordonne à soy mesme, d'estre necessairement en faute. Il n'est guere fin, de tailler son obligation, à la raison d'vn autre estre, que le sien. A qui prescript-il ce, qu'il s'attend que personne ne face? Luy est-il iniuste de ne faire point ce qu'il luy est impossible de faire? Les loix qui nous condamnent, à ne pouuoir pas, nous condamnent de ce que nous ne pouuons pas.

3.9.57 Au pis aller, cette difforme liberté, de se presenter à deux endroicts, et les actions d'vne façon, les discours de

ENGLISH

said to set reason against the passions, confidence against Fortune, nature against the laws. Delicate stomachs need strict and artificial regimens. Good stomachs simply follow what their natural appetite prescribes.[68]

So do our physicians, who eat melon and drink cool wine while they keep their patient bound to syrup and bread soup. "I do not know about books," said the courtesan Lais, "or wisdom, or philosophy; but those people knock at my door as often as anyone else." Because our license always carries us beyond what is lawful and permitted, the precepts and laws of our life have often been narrowed beyond universal reason. *Nobody thinks it enough to sin only as far / As you permit.* It would be desirable for there to be more proportion between command and obedience. A target that cannot be reached seems unjust.[69]

There is no man so good that, if he submitted all his actions and thoughts to the scrutiny of the laws, he would not deserve hanging ten times in his life—even a man whom it would be a very great loss and very unjust to punish and destroy. *Olus, what is it to you / What he or she does with their own skin?* And another man might never offend the laws who would not deserve the praise of a virtuous man, and whom philosophy would very justly have whipped. So muddled and uneven is this relationship. We are far from being good men by God's standard; we cannot even be so by our own. Human wisdom has never yet reached the duties it had prescribed for itself.[70]

And if it had reached them, it would prescribe itself others beyond them, toward which it would always aspire and strive. So hostile is our condition to constancy. Man ordains for himself that he must necessarily be at fault. It is not very clever of him to cut his obligation to the measure of a being other than his own. To whom does he prescribe what he expects no one to do? Is it unjust of him not to do what it is impossible for him to do? The laws that condemn us to be unable condemn us for what we are unable to do.

At worst, let this misshapen freedom of presenting oneself in two places, actions one way and words

68 Juvenal, Satires. The disciple is Diogenes the Cynic.
69 Juvenal, Satires. Lais was a famous Greek courtesan of Corinth.
70 Martial, Epigrams.

FRENCH

l'autre; soit loisible à ceux, qui disent les choses. Mais elle ne le peut estre à ceux, qui se disent eux mesmes, comme ie fais, Il faut que i'aille de la plume comme des pieds. La vie commune, doibt auoir conference aux autres vies. La vertu de Caton estoit vigoureuse, outre la raison de son siecle: et à vn homme qui se mesloit de gouuerner les autres, destiné au seruice commun; il se pourroit dire, que c'estoit vne iustice, sinon iniuste, au moins vaine et hors de saison.

ENGLISH

another, be allowed to those who tell of things. But it cannot be allowed to those who tell of themselves, as I do: I must go with my pen as I go on my feet. Life in common must bear some relation to other people's lives. Cato's virtue was vigorous beyond the measure of his age. For a man who took it upon himself to govern others, and who was destined for public service, it might be said that his was a justice that was, if not unjust, at least vain and out of season.

UNFIT FOR PUBLIC LIFE

His plain virtue proved useless in public affairs, which demand bending and compromise.

FRENCH

Mes mœurs mesmes, qui ne desconuiennent de celles, qui courent, à peine de la largeur d'vn poulce, me rendent pourtant aucunement farouche à mon aage, et inassociable. Ie ne sçay pas, si ie me trouue desgouté sans raison, du monde, que ie hante; mais ie sçay bien, que ce seroit sans raison, si ie me plaignoy, qu'il fust desgouté de moy, puis que ie le suis de luy. La vertu assignee aux affaires du monde, est vne vertu à plusieurs plis, encoigneures, et couddes, pour s'appliquer et ioindre à l'humaine foiblesse: meslee et artificielle; non droitte, nette, constante, ny purement innocente. Les annales reprochent iusques à cette heure à quelqu'vn de nos Roys, de s'estre trop simplement laissé aller aux consciencieuses persuasions de son confesseur.

Les affaires d'estat ont des preceptes plus hardis. *Exeat aula, / Qui vult esse pius.*

3.9.58 I'ay autresfois essayé d'employer au seruice des maniemens publiques, les opinions et regles de viure, ainsi rudes, neufues, impolies ou impollues, comme ie les ay nées chez moy, ou rapportees de mon institution et desquelles ie me sers, sinon si commodeement au moins seurement en particulier: une vertu scholastique et nouice: ie les y ay trouuees ineptes et dangereuses. Celuy qui va en la presse, il faut qu'il gauchisse, qu'il serre ses couddes, qu'il recule, ou qu'il auance, voire qu'il quitte le droict chemin, selon ce qu'il rencontre. Qu'il viue non tant selon soy, que selon autruy: non selon ce qu'il se propose, mais selon ce qu'on luy propose: selon le temps, selon les hommes, selon les affaires.

ENGLISH

Even my own ways, which differ from those now current by scarcely the breadth of a thumb, nevertheless make me somewhat aloof from my age, and unsociable. I do not know whether I am disgusted without reason with the world I frequent. But I know well that it would be without reason if I complained that it was disgusted with me, since I am disgusted with it. The virtue assigned to the affairs of the world is a virtue with many folds, corners and elbows, so that it can fit and join itself to human weakness: mixed and artificial, not straight, clean, constant, or purely innocent. The annals still reproach one of our kings to this day for having too simply let himself be led by the conscientious persuasions of his confessor.

Affairs of state have bolder precepts. *Let him leave the court / who wishes to be righteous.*[71]

I once tried to employ in the service of public dealings the opinions and rules of living that I had, just as rough, new, unpolished, or unpolluted, as they were when they were born in me or brought back from my upbringing, and which I use in private, if not so conveniently, at least safely: a schoolroom, novice virtue. I found them inept and dangerous there. Whoever goes into a crowd must swerve, keep his elbows in, step back or forward, even leave the straight road, according to what he meets. He must live not so much according to himself as according to others; not according to what he proposes to himself but ac-

71 Lucan, Pharsalia.

FRENCH

Platon dit, que qui eschappe, brayes nettes, du maniement du monde, c'est par miracle, qu'il en eschappe. Et dit aussi, que quand il ordonne son philosophe chef d'vne police, il n'entend pas le dire d'vne police corrompue, comme celle d'Athenes: et encore bien moins, comme la nostre, enuers lesquelles la sagesse mesme perdroit son Latin. Et vne bonne herbe, transplantee, en solage fort diuers à sa condition, se conforme bien plustost à iceluy, qu'elle ne le reforme à soy. Ie sens que si i'auois à me dresser tout à fait à telles occupations, il m'y faudroit beaucoup de changement et de rabillage. Quand ie pourrois cela sur moy, et pourquoy ne le pourrois ie, auec le temps et le soing? ie ne le voudrois pas.

De ce peu que ie me suis essayé en cette vacation; ie m'en suis d'autant degousté. Ie me sens fumer en l'ame par fois, aucunes tentations vers l'ambition: mais ie me bande et obstine au contraire: *At tu, Catulle, obstinatus obdura.* On ne m'y appelle gueres, et ie m'y conuie aussi peu. La liberté et l'oysiueté, qui sont mes maistresses qualitez, sont qualitez, diametralement contraires à ce mestier là. Nous ne sçauons pas distinguer les facultez des hommes. Elles ont des diuisions, et bornes, mal-aysees à choisir et delicates. De conclurre par la suffisance d'vne vie particuliere, quelque suffisance à l'vsage public, c'est mal conclud.

Tel se conduict bien, qui ne conduict pas bien les autres: et faict des Essais, qui ne sçauroit faire des effects. Tel dresse bien vn siege, qui dresseroit mal vne bataille: et discourt bien en priué, qui haranguerоit mal ou vn peuple ou vn Prince. Voire à l'auanture, est-ce plustost tesmoignage à celuy qui peut l'vn, de ne pouuoir point l'autre, qu'autrement. Ie trouue que les esprits hauts, ne sont de guere moins aptes aux choses basses, que les bas esprits aux hautes. Estoit-il à croire, que Socrates eust appresté aux Atheniens matiere de rire à ses despens, pour n'auoir onques sçeu computer les suffrages de sa tribu, et en faire rapport au conseil?

Certes la veneration, en quoy i'ay les perfections de ce personnage, merite, que sa fortune fournisse à l'excuse de mes principales imperfections, vn si magnifique

ENGLISH

cording to what is proposed to him; according to the times, the men, the business at hand.

Plato says that whoever escapes from managing the world with his breeches clean escapes by a miracle. He also says that when he appoints his philosopher head of a government, he does not mean a corrupt government like that of Athens, and still less one like ours, in the face of which wisdom itself would be at its wits' end. And a good plant transplanted into soil very different from its nature much sooner conforms itself to the soil than reforms the soil to itself. I feel that if I had to train myself entirely for such occupations, I would need a great deal of change and patching up. Even if I could do that to myself (and why could I not, with time and care?), I would not want to.

From the little I have tried myself in this occupation, I have been all the more disgusted with it. At times I feel some temptations toward ambition smoking up in my soul; but I brace myself and hold out against them: *But you, Catullus, be stubborn and hold firm.* I am hardly ever called to it, and I invite myself just as little. Freedom and idleness, which are my ruling qualities, are diametrically opposed to that trade. We do not know how to distinguish men's faculties. They have divisions and boundaries that are delicate and hard to pick out. To infer from ability in private life some ability for public use is to infer badly.[72]

One man conducts himself well who does not conduct others well, and produces Essays who could not produce results. One man lays a siege well who would draw up a battle badly, and reasons well in private who would make a bad speech to a people or a prince. Indeed, it is perhaps rather a sign, in a man who can do the one, that he cannot do the other, than the reverse. I find that lofty minds are hardly less unfit for low things than low minds are for lofty ones. Was it to be believed that Socrates gave the Athenians matter for laughter at his expense because he never managed to count the votes of his tribe and report them to the council?[73]

Certainly the veneration in which I hold that man's perfections deserves that his fortune should furnish so magnificent an example to excuse my

72 Catullus, Poems 8.
73 The story is told in Plato's Gorgias.

FRENCH

exemple. Nostre suffisance est detaillee à menues pieces. La mienne n'a point de latitude, et si est chetifue en nombre. Saturninus, à ceux qui luy auoient deferé tout commandement: Compaignons, fit-il, vous auez perdu vn bon capitaine, pour en faire vn mauvais general d'armee.

3.9.59 Qui se vante, en vn temps malade, comme cestuy-cy, d'employer au seruice du monde, vne vertu naifue et sincere: ou il ne la cognoist pas, les opinions se corrompans auec les mœurs (de vray, oyez la leur peindre, oyez la pluspart se glorifier de leurs deportemens, et former leurs regles; au lieu de peindre la vertu, ils peignent l'iniustice toute pure et le vice: et la presentent ainsi fauce à l'institution des Princes) ou s'il la cognoist, il se vante à tort: et quoy qu'il die, faict mille choses, dequoy sa conscience l'accuse. Ie croirois volontiers Seneca de l'experience qu'il en fit en pareille occasion, pourueu qu'il m'en voulust parler à cœur ouuert.

La plus honnorable marque de bonté, en vne telle necessité, c'est recognoistre librement sa faute, et celle d'autruy: appuyer et retarder de sa puissance, l'inclination vers le mal: suyure enuis cette pente, mieux esperer et mieux desirer. I'apperçois en ces desmembremens de la France, et diuisions, où nous sommes tombez, chacun se trauailler à deffendre sa cause: mais iusques aux meilleurs, auec desguisement et mensonge. Qui en escriroit rondement, en escriroit temerairement et vitieusement. Le plus iuste party, si est-ce encore le membre d'vn corps vermoulu et vereux. Mais d'vn tel corps, le membre moins malade s'appelle sain: et à bon droit, d'autant que nos qualitez n'ont tiltre qu'en la comparaison. L'innocence ciuile, se mesure selon les lieux et saisons.

I'aymerois bien à voir en Xenophon, vne telle loüange d'Agesilaus. Estant prié par vn Prince voisin, auec lequel il auoit autresfois esté en guerre, de le laisser passer en ses terres, il l'octroya: luy donnant passage à trauers le Peloponnese: et non seulement ne l'emprisonna ou empoisonna, le tenant à sa mercy: mais l'accueillit courtoisement, suyuant l'obligation de sa promesse, sans luy faire offence. A ces humeurs là, ce ne seroit rien dire. Ailleurs et en autre temps, il se fera conte de la franchise,

ENGLISH

own principal imperfections. Our ability is cut up into small pieces. Mine has no breadth, and it is paltry in number as well. Saturninus said to those who had conferred all command upon him: "Comrades, you have lost a good captain to make a bad general."[74]

Whoever boasts, in a sick time like this one, of employing a natural and sincere virtue in the world's service, either does not know what it is, since opinions grow corrupt along with morals (indeed, listen to them describe it, listen to most of them glory in their conduct and lay down their rules: instead of portraying virtue, they portray sheer injustice and vice, and present it thus falsified for the education of princes); or, if he does know it, he boasts wrongly, and whatever he may say, he does a thousand things for which his conscience accuses him. I would gladly take Seneca's word for the experience he had of it in a similar situation, provided he were willing to speak to me about it with an open heart.[75]

The most honorable mark of goodness in such a necessity is to acknowledge freely one's own fault and other people's; to resist and hold back with all one's power the slide toward evil; to follow that slope reluctantly; to hope better and desire better. In these dismemberments of France and the divisions into which we have fallen, I see everyone laboring to defend his cause, but even the best of them with disguise and lies. Whoever wrote about it frankly would write rashly and wrongly. The most just party is still, even so, a member of a worm-eaten, maggoty body. But in such a body the least diseased member is called healthy, and rightly so, since our qualities have their title only by comparison. Civic innocence is measured according to places and times.

I would very much like to see in Xenophon such praise as this of Agesilaus. Being asked by a neighboring prince, with whom he had once been at war, to let him pass through his lands, he granted it, giving him passage across the Peloponnese; and not only did he not imprison or poison him when he had him at his mercy, but he received him courteously, in keeping with the obligation of his promise, without doing him any harm. To people

74 Saturninus, a Roman officer proclaimed emperor by his troops in the 3rd century AD, as told in the Augustan History.
75 Seneca was tutor and minister to the emperor Nero.

FRENCH

et magnanimité d'vne telle action. Ces babouyns capettes s'en fussent moquez. Si peu retire l'innocence Spartaine à la Françoise. Nous ne laissons pas d'auoir des hommes vertueux: mais c'est selon nous.

Qui a ses mœurs establies en reglement au dessus de son siecle: ou qu'il torde, et émousse ses regles: ou, ce que ie luy conseille plustost, qu'il se retire à quartier, et ne se mesle point de nous. Qu'y gaigneroit-il? *Egregium sanctúmque virum si cerno, bimembri*
Hoc monstrum puero, et miranti iam sub aratro
Piscibus inuentis, et fœtæ comparo mulæ. On peut regretter les meilleurs temps: mais non pas fuyr aux presens: on peut desirer autres magistrats, mais il faut ce nonobstant, obeyr à ceux icy. Et à l'aduanture y a il plus de recommendation d'obeyr aux mauuais, qu'aux bons. Autant que l'image des loix receuës, et anciennes de cette monarchie, reluyra en quelque coin, m'y voila planté.

Si elles viennent par malheur, à se contredire, et empescher entr'elles, et produire deux parts, de chois doubteux, et difficile: mon election sera volontiers, d'eschapper, et me desrober à cette tempeste. Nature m'y pourra prester ce pendant la main: ou les hazards de la guerre. Entre Cæsar et Pompeius, ie me fusse franchement declaré. Mais entre ces trois voleurs, qui vindrent depuis, ou il eust fallu se cacher, ou suyure le vent. Ce que i'estime loisible, quand la raison ne guide plus. *Quo diuersus abis?* Cette farcisseure, est vn peu hors de mon theme. Ie m'esgare: mais plustost par licence, que par mesgarde. Mes fantasies se suyuent: mais par fois c'est de loing: et se regardent, mais d'vne veuë oblique.

ENGLISH

of that temperament this would be saying nothing. Elsewhere and in another time, the frankness and magnanimity of such an action will be made much of. Those caped baboons would have laughed at it. So little does Spartan innocence resemble French. We do not lack virtuous men; but they are virtuous by our standards.[76]

Whoever has his ways settled by a rule above his age, let him either twist and blunt his rules, or (what I would rather advise him) withdraw to one side and not meddle with us. What would he gain by it? *If I see a man outstanding and holy, I compare this prodigy*
to a two-bodied child, to fish turned up beneath the startled
plow, and to a mule in foal. One may regret better times, but not flee the present ones; one may wish for other magistrates, but one must nonetheless obey these. And perhaps there is more merit in obeying the bad than the good. As long as the image of the received and ancient laws of this monarchy shines in some corner, there I stand planted.[77]

If by misfortune they come to contradict and obstruct one another, and to produce two sides with a doubtful and difficult choice between them, my choice will readily be to escape and steal away from that storm. Nature may lend me a hand in the meantime, or the hazards of war. Between Caesar and Pompey I would have declared myself openly. But among those three robbers who came after, one would have had either to hide or to follow the wind. Which I consider permissible when reason no longer guides. *Where are you wandering off to?* This stuffing is a little off my theme. I stray, but rather by license than by inadvertence. My notions follow one another, but sometimes from far off; and they look at each other, but with a sidelong glance.[78]

76 Xenophon wrote a eulogy of Agesilaus. "Capettes" were the poor students of the Collège de Montaigu in Paris, named for their short capes.
77 Juvenal, Satires XIII.
78 The three robbers are Octavian, Antony and Lepidus, the Second Triumvirate (43 BC). The Latin is from Virgil, Aeneid V.

ON MY WANDERING STYLE

Like Plato and Plutarch he lets his matter wander; the careless reader, not he, loses the thread.

FRENCH

I'ay passé les yeux sur tel dialogue de Platon: mi party d'vne fantastique bigarrure: le deuant à l'amour, tout le bas à la rhetorique. Ils ne craignent point ces muances: et ont vne merueilleuse grace à se laisser ainsi rouller au vent: ou à le sembler. Les noms de mes chapitres n'en embrassent pas tousiours la matiere: souuent ils la denotent seulement, par quelque marque: comme ces autres l'Andrie, l'Eunuche; ou ceux cy, Sylla, Cicero, Torquatus. I'ayme l'alleure poëtique, à sauts et à gambades. C'est vn art, comme dit Platon, leger, volage, demoniacle. Il est des ouurages en Plutarque, où il oublie son theme, où le propos de son argument ne se trouue que par incident, tout estouffé en matiere estrangere.

Voyez ses alleures au Dæmon de Socrates. O Dieu, que ces gaillardes escapades, que cette variation a de beauté: et plus lors, que plus elle retire au nonchalant et fortuit! C'est l'indiligent lecteur, qui perd mon subiect; non pas moy. Il s'en trouuera tousiours en vn coing quelque mot, qui ne laisse pas d'estre bastant, quoy qu'il soit serré. Ie vois au change, indiscrettement et tumultuairement: mon stile, et mon esprit, vont vagabondant de mesmes. Il faut auoir vn peu de folie, qui ne veut auoir plus de sottise: disent, et les preceptes de nos maistres, et encores plus leurs exemples.

Mille poëtes trainent et languissent à la prosaïque, mais la meilleure prose ancienne, et ie la seme ceans indifferemment pour vers, reluit par tout, de la vigueur et hardiesse poëtique, et represente quelque air de sa fureur. Il luy faut certes quitter la maistrise, et preeminence en la parlerie. Le poëte, dit Platon, assis sur le trepied des Muses, verse de furie, tout ce qui luy vient en la bouche: comme la gargouïlle d'vne fontaine, sans le ruminer et poiser: et luy eschappe des choses, de diuerse couleur, de contraire substance, et d'vn cours rompu. Et la vieille theologie est toute poësie, disent les sçauants, et la premiere philosophie. C'est l'originel langage des Dieux. I'entends que la matiere se distingue soy-mesmes.

ENGLISH

I have glanced through a certain dialogue of Plato's, split into a fantastic motley: the front part about love, the whole lower part about rhetoric. They are not afraid of these changes, and have a marvelous grace in letting themselves be rolled along by the wind like that, or in seeming to. The titles of my chapters do not always embrace their matter; often they only indicate it by some token, like those other titles, the Andria, the Eunuch, or these: Sulla, Cicero, Torquatus. I love the poetic gait, all leaps and gambols. It is an art, as Plato says, light, flighty, daemonic. There are works in Plutarch where he forgets his theme, where the subject of his argument turns up only incidentally, all smothered in foreign matter.[79]

Look at his ways in The Daemon of Socrates. O God, what beauty there is in these lively escapades, this variation, and all the more the more careless and fortuitous it seems! It is the inattentive reader who loses my subject, not I. There will always be some word about it in a corner, which is still sufficient, though it is tightly packed. I go off on a fresh scent indiscriminately and tumultuously; my style and my mind go wandering alike. A man must have a little folly if he does not want to have more stupidity: so say the precepts of our masters, and still more their examples.[80]

A thousand poets drag along and languish in a prosaic way; but the best ancient prose (and I sow it here indiscriminately as if it were verse) shines everywhere with poetic vigor and boldness, and conveys some air of poetry's frenzy. We must certainly concede to poetry mastery and preeminence in speech. The poet, says Plato, seated on the tripod of the Muses, pours out in a frenzy whatever comes into his mouth, like the spout of a fountain, without chewing it over or weighing it; and things escape him of different colors, of contrary substance, and in a broken flow. And the old theology is all poetry, say the learned, and so was the first philosophy. It is the original language of

79 The dialogue is the Phaedrus; the Andria and the Eunuch are comedies by Terence.
80 A dialogue by Plutarch.

FRENCH

Elle montre assez où elle se change, où elle conclud, où elle commence, où elle se reprend: sans l'entrelasser de parolles, de liaison, et de couſture, introduictes pour le ſeruice des oreilles foibles, ou nonchallantes: et ſans me gloſer moy-meſme. Qui eſt celuy, qui n'ayme mieux n'eſtre pas leu, que de l'eſtre en dormant ou en fuyant? *Nihil eſt tam vtile, quod in transitu prosit.* Si prendre des liures, eſtoit les apprendre: et ſi les veoir, eſtoit les regarder: et les parcourir, les ſaiſir, i'auroy tort de me faire du tout ſi ignorant que ie dy. Puiſque ie ne puis arreſter l'attention du lecteur par le poix: *manco male*, s'il aduient que ie l'arreſte par mon embrouïlleure.

Voire mais, il ſe repentira par apres, de s'y eſtre amuſé. C'eſt mon: mais il s'y ſera touſiours amuſé. Et puis il eſt des humeurs comme cela, à qui l'intelligence porte desdain: qui m'en eſtimeront mieux de ce qu'ils ne ſçauront ce que ie dis: ils conclurront la profondeur de mon ſens, par l'obſcurité. Laquelle à parler en bon eſcient, ie hay bien fort: et l'euiterois, ſi ie me ſçauois euiter. Ariſtote ſe vante en quelque lieu, de l'affecter. Vitieuſe affectation.

Par ce que la coupure ſi frequente des chapitres, dequoy i'vſoy au commencement, m'a ſemblé rompre l'attention auant qu'elle ſoit née, et la diſſoudre: dedaignant s'y coucher pour ſi peu, et ſe recueillir: ie me ſuis mis à les faire plus longs: qui requierent de la propoſition et du loiſir aſſigné. En telle occupation, à qui on ne veut donner vne ſeule heure, on ne veut rien donner. Et ne fait on rien pour celuy, pour qui on ne fait, qu'autre choſe faiſant. Ioint, qu'à l'aduenture ay-ie quelque obligation particuliere, à ne dire qu'à demy, à dire confuſement, à dire diſcordamment. Ie veux donq mal à cette raiſon trouble-feſte.

Et ces proiects extrauagants qui trauaillent la vie, et ces opinions ſi fines, ſi elles ont de la verité; ie la trouue trop chere et trop incommode. Au rebours: ie m'employe à faire valoir la vanité meſme, et l'aſnerie, ſi elle m'apporte du plaiſir. Et me laiſſe aller apres mes inclinations naturelles ſans les contreroller de ſi pres.

ENGLISH

the gods. I intend my matter to mark its own divisions.

It shows clearly enough where it changes, where it concludes, where it begins, where it resumes, without my interlacing it with words of linkage and stitching brought in for the benefit of weak or careless ears, and without my glossing myself. Who would not rather not be read at all than be read by someone dozing or hurrying off? *Nothing is so useful that it can be of profit in passing.* If taking up books were taking them in, and seeing them were looking at them, and running through them were grasping them, I would be wrong to make myself out quite as ignorant as I say. Since I cannot hold the reader's attention by weight, *it is not so bad* if I happen to hold it by my muddle.[81]

"Yes, but he will be sorry afterward that he spent his time on it." Quite so; but he will have spent his time on it all the same. And then there are temperaments of that kind, for whom understanding brings disdain, who will think the better of me for not knowing what I am saying: they will infer the depth of my meaning from its obscurity. Obscurity, to speak in earnest, I hate very much, and I would avoid it if I knew how to avoid myself. Aristotle boasts somewhere of affecting it. A vicious affectation.

Because the very frequent cutting up of chapters that I practiced at the start seemed to me to break attention before it was born and to dissolve it, since it disdains to settle down for so little and collect itself, I have taken to making them longer, so that they require purpose and leisure set aside for them. In such an occupation, if you will not give it a single hour, you will not give it anything. And you do nothing for someone for whom you do something only while doing something else. Besides, perhaps I have some particular obligation to say things only by halves, to say them confusedly, to say them discordantly. So I bear a grudge against this killjoy reason.

And as for these extravagant projects that torment our lives, and these very subtle opinions, if they have truth in them, I find it too costly and too inconvenient. On the contrary, I make it my business to give value to vanity itself, and to asininity, if it brings me pleasure. And I let myself follow my

81 Seneca, Letters to Lucilius.

FRENCH

ENGLISH

natural inclinations without checking them so closely.

LOVE OF ANCIENT ROME

Montaigne explains his devotion to Rome and copies out the bull making him a Roman citizen.

FRENCH

ENGLISH

3.9.60 I'ay veu ailleurs des maisons ruynées, et des statues, et du ciel et de la terre: ce sont tousiours des hommes. Tout cela est vray: et si pourtant ne sçauroy reuoir si souuent le tombeau de cette ville, si grande, et si puissante, que ie ne l'admire et reuere. Le soing des morts nous est en recommandation. Or i'ay esté nourry des mon enfance, auec ceux icy. I'ay eu cognoissance des affaires de Rome, longtemps auant que ie l'ay euë de ceux de ma maison. Ie sçauois le Capitole et son plant, auant que ie sceusse le Louure: et le Tibre auant la Seine. J'ay eu plus en teste, les conditions et fortunes de Lucullus, Metellus, et Scipion, que ie n'ay d'aucuns hommes des nostres.

I have seen ruined houses elsewhere, and statues, and sky and earth: it is always just men. All that is true; and yet, however often I revisit the tomb of that city, so great and so mighty, I cannot help admiring and revering it. The care of the dead is commended to us. Now I have been brought up from childhood with these people. I knew the affairs of Rome long before I knew those of my own house. I knew the Capitol and its layout before I knew the Louvre, and the Tiber before the Seine. I have had the circumstances and fortunes of Lucullus, Metellus and Scipio more in my head than those of any men of our own time.

Ils sont tres passez. Si est bien mon pere: aussi entierement qu'eux: et s'est esloigné de moy, et de la vie, autant en dixhuict ans, que ceux-là ont faict en seize cens: duquel pourtant ie ne laisse pas d'embrasser et practiquer la memoire, l'amitié et societé, d'vne parfaicte vnion et tres-viue. Voire, de mon humeur, ie me rends plus officieux enuers les trespassez. Ils ne s'aydent plus, ils en requierent ce me semble d'autant plus mon ayde. La gratitude est là, iustement en son lustre. Le bien-faict est moins richement assigné, où il y a retrogradation, et reflexion. Arcesilaus visitant Ctesibius malade, et le trouuant en pauure estat, luy fourra tout bellement soubs le cheuet du lict, de l'argent qu'il luy donnoit.

They are long dead. So too is my father, as completely as they; and he has gone as far from me and from life in eighteen years as they have in sixteen hundred. Yet I do not cease to embrace and cultivate his memory, his friendship and his company, in a perfect and very lively union. Indeed, by temperament I make myself more serviceable to the dead. They can no longer help themselves; so, it seems to me, they need my help all the more. That is where gratitude is in its true luster. A benefit is less richly placed where it comes back and is returned. Arcesilaus, visiting Ctesibius when he was ill and finding him in a poor state, quietly slipped under his pillow the money he was giving him.[82]

Et en le luy celant, luy donnoit en outre, quittance de luy en sçauoir gré. Ceux qui ont merité de moy, de l'amitié et de la recognoissance, ne l'ont iamais perdue pour n'y estre plus: ie les ay mieux payez, et plus soigneusement, absens et ignorans. Ie parle plus affectueusement de mes amis, quand il n'y a plus de moyen qu'ils le sçachent. Or i'ay attaqué cent querelles pour la deffence de Pompeius, et pour la cause de Brutus. Cette accointance dure encore entre nous. Les choses presentes mesmes, nous ne les tenons que par la fantasie. Me trouuant inutile à ce siecle ie me reiecte à cet autre.

And by hiding it from him, he also gave him a release from having to be grateful for it. Those who have earned friendship and gratitude from me have never lost them by no longer being here: I have repaid them better and more carefully when they were absent and unaware. I speak more affectionately of my friends when there is no longer any way for them to know it. Now I have taken up a hundred quarrels in defense of Pompey and for the cause of Brutus. That acquaintance between us still lasts. Even present things we hold only by

82 Montaigne's father died in 1568.

FRENCH

Et en suis si embabouyné, que l'estat de cette vieille Rome, libre, iuste, et florissante, car ie n'en ayme, ny la naissance, ny la vieillesse, m'interesse et me passionne. Parquoy ie ne sçauroy reuoir si souuent, l'assiette de leurs rues, et de leurs maisons, et ces ruynes profondes iusques aux Antipodes, que ie ne m'y amuse. Est-ce par nature, ou par erreur de fantasie, que la veuë des places, que nous sçauons auoir esté hantées et habitées par personnes, desquelles la memoire est en recommendation, nous emeut aucunement plus, qu'ouïr le recit de leurs faicts, ou lire leurs escrits? Tanta vis admonitionis inest in locis!

Et id quidem in hac vrbe infinitum: quacumque enim ingredimur, in aliquam historiam vestigium ponimus. *Il me plaist de considerer leur visage, leur port, et leurs vestements. Ie remasche ces grands noms entre les dents, et les fais retentir à mes oreilles.* Ego illos veneror, et tantis nominibus semper assurgo. Des choses qui sont en quelque partie grandes et admirables, i'en admire les parties mesmes communes. Ie les visse volontiers deuiser, promener, et soupper. Ce seroit ingratitude, de mespriser les reliques, et images de tant d'honnestes hommes, et si valeureux lesquels i'ay veu viure et mourir: et qui nous donnent tant de bonnes instructions par leur exemple, si nous les sçauions suyure.

3.9.61 Et puis cette mesme Rome que nous voyons, merite qu'on l'ayme. Confederée de si long temps, et par tant de tiltres, à nostre couronne. Seule ville commune, et vniuerselle. Le magistrat souuerain qui y commande, est recognu pareillement ailleurs: c'est la ville metropolitaine de toutes les nations Chrestiennes. L'Espaignol et le François, chacun y est chez soy. Pour estre des Princes de cet estat, il ne faut qu'estre de Chrestienté, où qu'elle soit. Il n'est lieu çà bas, que le ciel ayt embrassé auec telle influence de faueur, et telle constance. Sa ruyne mesme est glorieuse et enflée. *Laudandis preciosior ruinis.* Encore retient elle au tombeau des marques et image d'empire.

Vt palam sit vno in loco gaudentis opus esse naturæ. Quelqu'vn se blasmeroit, et se mutineroit en soy-mesme, de se sentir chatouïller d'vn si vain plaisir. Nos humeurs

ENGLISH

imagination. Finding myself useless to this age, I throw myself back on that other one.

And I am so besotted with it that the condition of that old Rome, free, just and flourishing (for I love neither its birth nor its old age), interests me and stirs my passion. And so, however often I revisit the site of their streets and their houses, and those ruins that reach down to the Antipodes, I cannot help lingering over them. Is it by nature, or by an error of imagination, that the sight of places we know to have been frequented and inhabited by people whose memory is held in esteem moves us somewhat more than hearing the account of their deeds or reading their writings? Such is the power of association that lies in places![83]

And in this city it is infinite: wherever we walk, we set our foot on some piece of history. *I like to consider their faces, their bearing and their clothes. I chew those great names over between my teeth and make them ring in my ears.* I venerate them, and always rise to my feet at such great names. Of things that are in some part great and admirable, I admire even the common parts. I would gladly see these men converse, walk and dine. It would be ingratitude to despise the relics and images of so many decent and valiant men, whom I have seen live and die, and who give us so many good lessons by their example, if only we knew how to follow it.[84]

And then this same Rome that we see deserves to be loved: allied for so long and by so many titles to our crown; the only common and universal city. The sovereign magistrate who commands there is recognized elsewhere as well: it is the metropolitan city of all Christian nations. Spaniard and Frenchman, each is at home there. To be one of the princes of that state, one need only belong to Christendom, wherever it may be. There is no place here below that heaven has embraced with such an influence of favor and such constancy. Even its ruin is glorious and grand. *All the more precious for its praiseworthy ruins.* Even in the tomb it still keeps marks and images of empire.[85]

So that it is plain that in this one place nature has delighted in her own work. Some might blame themselves, and rebel inwardly, at feeling tickled by so

83 Cicero, On Ends V.
84 Seneca, Letters to Lucilius.
85 Sidonius Apollinaris, Poems.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
	ne sont pas trop vaines, qui sont plaisantes. Quelles qu'elles soyent qui contentent constamment vn homme capable de sens commun, ie ne sçaurois auoir le cœur de le plaindre.	vain a pleasure. Our fancies are not too vain if they give us pleasure. Whatever they may be, if they constantly satisfy a man capable of common sense, I could not have the heart to pity him.[86]
3.9.62	Ie doibs beaucoup à la Fortune, dequoy iusques à cette heure, elle n'a rien fait contre moy d'outrageux au delà de ma portée. Seroit ce pas sa façon, de laisser en paix, ceux de qui elle n'est point importunée? *Quanto quisque sibi plura negauerit,* *A Diis plura feret: nil cupientium* *Nudus castra peto: multa petentibus,* *Desunt multa.* Si elle continue, elle me r'enuoyera tres-content et satisfaict, *Nihil supra* *Deos lacesso.* Mais gare le heurt. Il en est mille qui rompent au port. Ie me console aiséement, de ce qui aduiendra icy, quand ie n'y seray plus.	I owe much to Fortune, in that up to now she has done nothing outrageous against me beyond what I can bear. Might it not be her way to leave in peace those who do not pester her? *The more a man denies himself,* *the more he will receive from the gods. Stripped bare, I seek* *the camp of those who desire nothing; those who ask for much* *lack much.* If she goes on like this, she will send me off well content and satisfied. *I importune the gods for nothing more.* But beware the crash. There are a thousand who are wrecked in port. I console myself easily for what will happen here when I am no longer here.[87]
	Les choses presentes m'embesongnent assez, *Fortunæ cætera mando.* Aussi n'ay-ie point cette forte liaison, qu'on dit attacher les hommes à l'aduenir, par les enfans qui portent leur nom, et leur honneur. Et en doibs desirer à l'auanture d'autant moins, s'ils sont si desirables. Ie ne tiens que trop au monde, et à cette vie par moy-mesme. Ie me contente d'estre en prise de la Fortune, par les circonstances proprement necessaires à mon estre, sans luy alonger par ailleurs sa iurisdiction sur moy. Et n'ay iamais estimé qu'estre sans enfans, fust vn defaut qui deust rendre la vie moins complete, et moins contente. La vacation sterile, a bien aussi ses commoditez.	Present things keep me busy enough: *The rest I leave to Fortune.* Nor do I have that strong bond that is said to attach men to the future through children who bear their name and their honor. And perhaps I should wish for them all the less if they are so desirable. I am attached only too much to the world and to this life by myself. I am content to be in Fortune's grip through the circumstances strictly necessary to my existence, without extending her jurisdiction over me in other ways. And I have never thought that being without children was a defect that should make life less complete and less contented. The sterile state has its advantages too.[88]
	Les enfans sont du nombre des choses, qui n'ont pas fort dequoy estre desirées, notamment à cette heure, qu'il seroit si difficile de les rendre bons. *Bona iam nec nasci licet, ita corrupta sunt semina.* Et si ont iustement dequoy estre regrettées, à qui les perd, apres les auoir acquises.	Children are among the things that have little to make them desirable, especially at this time, when it would be so difficult to make them good. *Nothing good can even be born now, so corrupted are the seeds.* And yet they give just cause for regret to those who lose them after having had them.[89]
3.9.63	Celuy qui me laissa ma maison en charge, prognostiquoit que ie la deusse ruyner, regardant à mon humeur, si peu casaniere. Il se trompa; me voicy comme i'y entray: sinon vn peu mieux. Sans office pourtant et sans benefice. Au demeurant, si la Fortune ne m'a faict aucune offence	The man who left my house in my charge predicted that I would ruin it, considering my temperament, so little inclined to stay at home. He was wrong: here I am as I was when I came into it,

86 Pliny the Elder, Natural History III.
87 Horace, Odes III.16 and II.18.
88 Ovid, Metamorphoses II.
89 Tertullian.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
	violente, et extraordinaire, aussi n'a-elle pas de grace. Tout ce qu'il y a de ses dons chez nous, il y est auant moy, et au delà de cent ans. Ie n'ay particulierement aucun bien essentiel, et solide, que ie doiue à sa liberalité. Elle m'a faict quelques faueurs venteuses, honnoraires, et titulaires, sans substance. Et me les a aussi à la verité, non pas accordées, mais offertes.	if not a little better off. Without office, however, and without benefice. As for the rest, if Fortune has done me no violent and extraordinary injury, neither has she done me any favor. Whatever there is of her gifts in our house was there before me, and more than a hundred years before. I have no essential and solid good of my own that I owe to her liberality. She has done me some windy favors, honorary and titular, without substance. And in truth she has not granted them to me but offered them;[90]
	Dieu sçait, à moy: qui suis tout materiel, qui ne me paye que de la realité, encores bien massiue: et qui, si ie l'osois confesser, ne trouuerois l'auarice, guere moins excusable que l'ambition: ny la douleur, moins euitable que la honte: ny la santé, moins desirable que la doctrine: ou la richesse, que la noblesse.	offered them, God knows, to me, who am entirely material, who will be paid only in reality, and pretty solid reality at that; and who, if I dared confess it, would find avarice hardly less excusable than ambition, nor pain less to be avoided than shame, nor health less desirable than learning, or wealth than nobility.
3.9.64	Parmy ses faueurs vaines, ie n'en ay point qui plaise tant à cette niaise humeur, qui s'en paist chez moy, qu'vne bulle authentique de bourgeoisie Romaine: qui me fut octroyée dernierement que i'y estois, pompeuse en seaux, et lettres dorées: et octroyée auec toute gratieuse liberalité. Et par ce qu'elles se donnent en diuers stile, plus ou moins fauorable: et qu'auant que i'en eusse veu, i'eusse esté bien aise, qu'on m'en eust montré vn formulaire: ie veux, pour satisfaire à quelqu'vn, s'il s'en trouue malade de pareille curiosité à la mienne, la transcrire icy en sa forme. *Quod Horatius Maximus, Martius Cecius, Alexander Mutus, almæ*	Among her vain favors there is none that so pleases that silly temperament in me which feeds on them as an authentic bull of Roman citizenship, which was granted me when I was last there, pompous with seals and gilt lettering, and granted with all gracious liberality. And because these are issued in different styles, more or less favorable, and because before I had seen one I would have been glad to be shown a specimen, I want, to satisfy anyone who may be sick with a curiosity like mine, to transcribe it here in its exact form. *As to the report that Horatius Maximus, Martius Cecius and Alexander Mutus, Conservators of the bountiful*[91]
3.9.65	vrbis conseruatores de Illustrissimo viro Michaèle Montano equite sancti Michaèlis, et à cubiculo Regis Christianissimi, Romana Ciuitate donando, ad Senatum retulerunt, S. P. Q. R. de ea re ita fieri censuit. CVM, veteri more et instituto, cupidè illi semper studioséque suscepti sint, qui, virtute ac nobilitate præstantes, magno Reip. nostræ vsui atque ornamento fuissent, vel esse aliquando possent: Nos, maiorum nostrorum exemplo atque auctoritate permoti, præclaram hanc consuetudinem nobis imitandam ac seruandam fore censemus. Quamobrem cum Illustrissimus Michaèl Montanus, Eques sancti Michaèlis, et a cubiculo Regis Christianissimi Romani nominis studiosissimus, et familiæ laude atque splendore et propriis virtutum meritis dignissimus sit, qui summo Senatus Populique Romani iudicio ac studio	City, made to the Senate concerning the conferring of Roman citizenship on the most illustrious Michel de Montaigne, Knight of the Order of Saint Michael and Gentleman of the Chamber of the Most Christian King, the Senate and People of Rome decreed on this matter as follows. WHEREAS, by ancient custom and practice, those who, excelling in virtue and nobility, had been or might one day be of great use and ornament to our Republic, have always been eagerly and zealously welcomed among us, We, moved by the example and authority of our ancestors, decree that this noble custom ought to be imitated and preserved by us. Therefore, since the most illustrious Michel

90 That is, his father.
91 The Latin of the bull is given here in English.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
	in Romanam Ciuitatem adsciscatur; placere Senatui P. Q. R.	de Montaigne, Knight of Saint Michael and Gentleman of the Chamber of the Most Christian King, most devoted to the Roman name, is, by the renown and splendor of his family and by the merits of his own virtues, most worthy to be admitted into Roman citizenship by the supreme judgment and favor of the Senate and People of Rome, it pleases the Senate and People of Rome
	Illustrissimum Michaèlem Montanum rebus omnibus ornatissimum, atque huic inclyto populo charissimum, ipsum posterosque in Romanam Ciuitatem adscribi, ornarique omnibus et præmiis et honoribus, quibus illi fruuntur, qui Ciues Patriciique Romani nati aut iure optimo facti sunt. In quo censere Senatum P. Q. R. se non tam illi Ius Ciuitatis largiri quàm debitum tribuere, neque magis beneficium dare quám ab ipso accipere, qui hoc Ciuitatis munere accipiendo, singulari Ciuitatem ipsam ornamento atque honore affecerit. Quam quidem S. C. auctoritatem iidem Conseruatores per Senatus P. Q. R. scribas in acta referri atque in Capitolij curia seruari, priuilegiumque huiusmodi fieri, solitoque vrbis sigillo communiri curarunt. Anno ab vrbe condita CXƆCCCXXXI, post Christum natum M. D. LXXXI. III. Idus Martij. Horatius Fuscus sacri S. P. Q. R. scriba.	that the most illustrious Michel de Montaigne, adorned with every distinction and most dear to this renowned people, be enrolled, himself and his descendants, in Roman citizenship, and be graced with all the rewards and honors enjoyed by those who were born citizens and patricians of Rome or were made so by the best of rights. In which the Senate and People of Rome consider that they are not so much bestowing the right of citizenship on him as paying what is due, nor so much conferring a favor as receiving one from him, who, by accepting this gift of citizenship, has conferred singular distinction and honor upon the City itself. The said Conservators have caused this decree of the Senate to be entered in the records by the clerks of the Senate and People of Rome and kept in the Senate house of the Capitol, and this charter to be drawn up and sealed with the customary seal of the City. In the year 2331 from the founding of the City, 1581 after the birth of Christ, on the third day before the Ides of March. Horatius Fuscus, clerk of the sacred Senate and People of Rome.[92]
	/ Vincent. Martholus sacri S. P. Q. R. scriba.	/ Vincentius Martholus, clerk of the sacred Senate and People of Rome.
3.9.66	N'estant bourgeois d'aucune ville, ie suis bien aise de l'estre de la plus noble qui fut et qui sera onques. Si les autres se regardoient attentiuement, comme ie fay, ils se trouueroient comme ie fay, pleins d'inanité et de fadaise. De m'en deffaire, ie ne puis, sans me deffaire moy-mesmes. Nous en sommes tous confits, tant les vns que les autres. Mais ceux qui le sentent, en ont vn peu meilleur compte: encore ne sçay-ie.	Not being a citizen of any city, I am very glad to be a citizen of the noblest city that ever was or ever will be. If others looked at themselves attentively, as I do, they would find themselves, as I do, full of inanity and nonsense. I cannot get rid of it without getting rid of myself. We are all steeped in it, one as much as another. But those who are aware of it are a little better off—and yet I do not know.

LOOK INTO YOURSELF

The Delphic command turns our gaze inward, where we find only emptiness and vanity.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
3.9.67	Cette opinion et vsance commune, de regarder ailleurs qu'à nous, a bien pourueu à nostre affaire. C'est vn obiect	This common opinion and practice of looking elsewhere than at ourselves has served our turn

FRENCH

plein de mescontentement. Nous n'y voyons que misere et vanité. Pour ne nous desconforter, Nature a reietté bien à propos, l'action de nostre veuë, au dehors. Nous allons en auant à vau l'eau, mais de rebrousser vers nous, nostre course, c'est vn mouuement penible: la mer se brouille et s'empesche ainsi, quand elle est repoussée à soy. Regardez, dict chacun, les branles du ciel: regardez au public: à la querelle de cestuy-là: au pouls d'vn tel: au testament de cet autre: somme regardez tousiours haut ou bas, ou à costé, ou deuant, ou derriere vous.

C'estoit vn commandement paradoxe, que nous faisoit anciennement ce Dieu à Delphes: Regardez dans vous, recognoissez vous, tenez vous à vous. Vostre esprit, et vostre volonté, qui se consomme ailleurs, ramenez la en soy: vous vous escoulez, vous vous respandez: appilez vous, soustenez vous: on vous trahit, on vous dissipe, on vous desrobe à vous. Voy tu pas, que ce monde tient toutes ses veuës contraintes au dedans, et ses yeux ouuerts à se contempler soy-mesme? C'est tousiours vanité pour toy, dedans et dehors: mais elle est moins vanité, quand elle est moins estendue. Sauf toy, ô homme, disoit ce Dieu, chasque chose s'estudie la premiere, et a selon son besoin, des limites à ses trauaux et desirs.

Il n'en est vne seule si vuide et necessiteuse que toy, qui embrasses l'vniuers. Tu és le scrutateur sans cognoissance: le magistrat sans iuridiction: et apres tout, le badin de la farce.

ENGLISH

well. We are an object full of discontent; we see in it nothing but misery and vanity. So as not to dishearten us, Nature has very aptly thrown the action of our sight outward. We go forward with the current; but to turn our course back toward ourselves is a painful movement: the sea too grows turbid and churns when it is driven back on itself. Look, says everyone, at the motions of the heavens; look at public affairs, at this man's quarrel, at that man's pulse, at that other man's will; in short, always look up or down, or to the side, or in front of you, or behind you.

It was a paradoxical command that the god at Delphi gave us long ago: Look into yourselves, know yourselves, keep to yourselves. Bring back into itself your mind and your will, which are being spent elsewhere; you are draining away, you are scattering yourselves; gather yourselves together, hold yourselves up; you are being betrayed, dispersed, stolen from yourselves. Do you not see that this world keeps its gaze all turned inward, and its eyes open to contemplate itself? It is always vanity for you, within and without; but it is less vanity when it is less extended. Except for you, O man, said that god, each thing studies itself first, and has, according to its need, limits to its labors and desires.[93]

There is not one so empty and needy as you, who embrace the universe. You are the investigator without knowledge, the magistrate without jurisdiction, and, when all is said and done, the clown in the farce.

92 That is, 13 March 1581.
93 "Know yourself" was inscribed on Apollo's temple at Delphi.

III.10 Of Husbanding Your Will

De mesnager sa volonté

Recalling his years as mayor of Bordeaux, Montaigne argues for lending yourself to public duties without giving yourself away.

FRENCH

3.10.1 AV prix du commun des hommes, peu de choses me touchent: ou pour mieux dire, me tiennent. Car c'est raison qu'elles touchent, pourueu qu'elles ne nous possedent. I'ay grand soin d'augmenter par estude, et par discours, ce priuilege d'insensibilité, qui est naturellement bien auancé en moy. I'espouse, et me passionne par consequent, de peu de choses. I'ay la veuë clere: mais ie l'attache à peu d'obiects: le sens delicat et mol: mais l'apprehension et l'application, ie l'ay dure et sourde. Ie m'engage difficilement. Autant que ie puis ie m'employe tout à moy.

Et en ce subiect mesme, ie briderois pourtant et soustiendrois volontiers, mon affection, qu'elle ne s'y plonge trop entiere: puis que c'est vn subiect, que ie possede à la mercy d'autruy, et sur lequel la Fortune a plus de droict que ie n'ay. De maniere, que iusques à la santé, que i'estime tant, il me seroit besoing, de ne la pas desirer, et m'y addonner si furieusement, que i'en trouue les maladies importables. On se doibt moderer, entre la haine de la douleur, et l'amour de la volupté. Et ordonne Platon vne moyenne route de vie entre les deux. Mais aux affections qui me distrayent de moy, et attachent ailleurs, à celles là certes m'oppose-ie de toute ma force.

Mon opinion est, qu'il se faut prester à autruy, et ne se donner qu'à soy-mesme. Si ma volonté se trouuoit aysée à s'hypothequer et à s'appliquer, ie n'y durerois pas. Ie suis trop tendre, et par nature et par vsage, *Fugax rerum, securâque in otia natus.* Les debats contestez et opiniastrez, qui donneroient en fin aduantage à mon aduersaire; l'issue qui rendroit honteuse ma chaulde poursuitte, me rongeroit à l'aduanture bien cruellement. Si ie mordois à mesme, comme font les autres; mon ame n'auroit iamais la force de porter les alarmes, et emotions, qui suyuent ceux qui embrassent tant. Elle seroit incontinent disloquée par cette agitation intestine.

ENGLISH

Compared with most men, few things touch me, or, to put it better, hold me. For it is reasonable that things should touch us, provided they do not possess us. I take great care to increase by study and reasoning this privilege of insensibility, which is naturally well advanced in me. Consequently there are few things I espouse and feel passionate about. My sight is clear, but I fix it on few objects; my feeling is delicate and tender, but my grasp and application are tough and dull. I commit myself with difficulty. As much as I can, I employ myself entirely on myself.

And even in this subject I would still gladly bridle and hold back my affection, so that it does not plunge into it too wholly, since it is a subject I possess at the mercy of others, and over which Fortune has more right than I have. So that even health, which I value so highly, I ought not to desire and give myself up to so furiously as to find illnesses unbearable. We should moderate ourselves between hatred of pain and love of pleasure; and Plato prescribes a middle course of life between the two. But the affections that distract me from myself and attach me elsewhere, those I certainly oppose with all my strength.[1]

My opinion is that we should lend ourselves to others and give ourselves only to ourselves. If my will found it easy to mortgage and commit itself, I would not last. I am too tender, both by nature and by habit: *Shunning affairs, and born for carefree leisure.* Hotly contested and stubborn disputes that ended by giving my opponent the advantage, an outcome that made my heated pursuit shameful, might perhaps gnaw at me quite cruelly. If I bit into things as deeply as others do, my soul would never have the strength to bear the alarms and

1 Plato, Laws.

FRENCH

ENGLISH

emotions that pursue those who embrace so much. It would at once be dislocated by this internal agitation.[2]

Si quelquefois on m'a poussé au maniement d'affaires estrangeres, i'ay promis de les prendre en main, non pas au poulmon et au foye; de m'en charger, non de les incorporer: de m'en soigner, ouy; de m'en passionner, nullement: i'y regarde, mais ie ne les couue point. I'ay assez affaire à disposer et ranger la presse domestique que i'ay dans mes entrailles, et dans mes veines, sans y loger, et me fouler d'vne presse estrangere. Et suis assez interessé de mes affaires essentiels, propres, et naturels, sans en conuier d'autres forains. Ceux qui sçauent combien ils se doiuent, et de combien d'offices ils sont obligez à eux, trouuent que Nature leur a donné cette commission plaine assez, et nullement oysifue.

If I have sometimes been pushed into managing other people's affairs, I have promised to take them in hand, not into my lungs and liver; to take them on, not to incorporate them; to take care of them, yes; to be passionate about them, not at all. I watch over them, but I do not brood on them. I have enough to do in arranging and ordering the domestic throng I have in my bowels and in my veins, without lodging a foreign throng there and getting crushed by it. And I am concerned enough with my own essential, proper and natural affairs without inviting others in from outside. Those who know how much they owe themselves, and by how many duties they are bound to themselves, find that Nature has given them a commission quite full enough, and by no means idle.

Tu as bien largement affaire chez toy, ne t'esloigne pas.

You have plenty to do at home; do not go far away.

3.10.2 Les hommes se donnent à louage. Leurs facultez ne sont pas pour eux; elles sont pour ceux, à qui ils s'asseruissent; leurs locataires sont chez eux, ce ne sont pas eux. Cette humeur commune ne me plaist pas. Il faut mesnager la liberté de nostre ame, et ne l'hypotequer qu'aux occasions iustes. Lesquelles sont en bien petit nombre, si nous iugeons sainement. Voyez les gens appris à se laisser emporter et saisir, ils le font par tout. Aux petites choses comme aux grandes; à ce qui ne les touche point, comme à ce qui les touche. Ils s'ingerent indifferemment où il y a de la besongne; et sont sans vie, quand ils sont sans agitation tumultuaire.

Men hire themselves out. Their faculties are not for themselves; they are for those to whom they enslave themselves; it is their tenants who are at home in them, not they. This common temperament does not please me. We must husband the freedom of our soul and mortgage it only on just occasions, which are very few in number if we judge soundly. Look at people who have learned to let themselves be carried away and seized: they do it everywhere, in small things as in great, in what does not concern them as in what does. They thrust themselves in indiscriminately wherever there is work to be done, and they are lifeless when they are without tumultuous agitation.

In negotiis sunt, negotij causa. Ils ne cherchent la besongne que pour embesongnement. Ce n'est pas, qu'ils vueillent aller, tant, comme c'est, qu'ils ne se peuuent tenir. Ne plus ne moins, qu'vne pierre esbranlée en sa cheute, qui ne s'arreste iusqu'à tant qu'elle se couche. L'occupation est à certaine maniere de gents, marque de suffisance et de dignité. Leur esprit cherche son repos au bransle, comme les enfans au berceau. Ils se peuuent dire autant seruiables à leurs amis, comme importuns à eux mesmes. Personne ne distribue son argent à autruy, chacun y distribue son temps et sa vie. Il n'est rien dequoy nous soyons si prodigues, que de ces choses là, desquelles seules l'auarice nous seroit vtile et louable.

They are busy for the sake of being busy. They seek work only to keep themselves busy. It is not so much that they want to go as that they cannot keep still: just like a stone set rolling as it falls, which does not stop until it comes to rest. For a certain kind of people, being occupied is a mark of ability and dignity. Their mind seeks its rest in motion, like children in the cradle. They may call themselves as serviceable to their friends as they are troublesome to themselves. No one gives away his money to others; everyone gives away his time and his life. There is nothing we are so prodigal

2 Ovid, Tristia III.

FRENCH

ENGLISH

with as those things in which alone avarice would be useful and praiseworthy.[3]

Ie prens vne complexion toute diuerse. Ie me tiens sur moy. Et communément desire mollement ce que ie desire, et desire peu: m'occupe et embesongne de mesme, rarement et tranquillement. Tout ce qu'ils veulent et conduisent, ils le font de toute leur volonté et vehemence. Il y a tant de mauuais pas, que pour le plus seur, il faut vn peu legerement et superficiellement couler ce monde: et le glisser, non pas l'enfoncer. La volupté mesme, est douloureuse en sa profondeur. *Incedis per ignes / Subpositos cineri doloso.*

My constitution is quite different. I keep myself to myself. And usually what I desire I desire mildly, and I desire little; I occupy and busy myself in the same way, rarely and calmly. Whatever they want and undertake, they do with all their will and vehemence. There are so many bad passes that, to be safest, we must skim over this world a little lightly and on the surface, and slide over it, not sink into it. Even pleasure is painful in its depths. *You are walking over fires / hidden beneath treacherous ash.*[4]

MAYOR OF BORDEAUX

Montaigne recounts his election and tells the citizens plainly what to expect of him.

FRENCH

ENGLISH

3.10.3 Messieurs de Bordeaux m'esleurent Maire de leur ville, estant esloigné de France; et encore plus esloigné d'vn tel pensement. Ie m'en excusay. Mais on m'apprint que i'auois tort; le commandement du Roy s'y interposant aussi. C'est vne charge, qui doit sembler d'autant plus belle, qu'elle n'a, ny loyer ny gain, autre que l'honneur de son execution. Elle dure deux ans; mais elle peut estre continuée par seconde eslection. Ce qui aduient tres rarement. Elle le fut à moy; et ne l'auoit esté que deux fois auparauant: quelques années y auoit, à Monsieur de Lansac; et fraichement à Monsieur de Biron Mareschal de France. En la place duquel ie succeday; et laissay la mienne, à Monsieur de Matignon aussi Mareschal de France.

The gentlemen of Bordeaux elected me mayor of their city while I was far from France, and still farther from any such thought. I excused myself. But I was told that I was wrong, the king's command also intervening. It is an office that should seem all the finer for having no pay or gain other than the honor of performing it. It lasts two years, but it can be extended by a second election, which happens very rarely. It happened to me, and had happened only twice before: some years earlier to Monsieur de Lansac, and recently to Monsieur de Biron, Marshal of France, whom I succeeded; and I left my place to Monsieur de Matignon, also Marshal of France.[5]

Glorieux de si noble assistance. *Vterque bonus pacis bellique minister.* La Fortune voulut part à ma promotion, par cette particuliere circonstance qu'elle y mit du sien. Non vaine du tout. Car Alexandre desdaigna les Ambassadeurs Corinthiens qui lui offroyent la bourgeoisie de leur ville; mais quand ils vindrent à luy deduire, comme Bacchus et Hercules estoyent aussi en ce registre, il les en remercia gratieusement.

Proud of such noble company. *Both good servants in peace and in war.* Fortune wanted a share in my promotion through this particular circumstance, which she contributed on her own account. Not altogether vain. For Alexander scorned the Corinthian ambassadors who offered him the citizenship of their city; but when they went on to explain to him that Bacchus and Hercules were also on that register, he thanked them graciously.[6]

3.10.4 A mon arriuée, ie me deschiffray fidelement, et conscientieusement, tout tel que ie me sens estre: sans memoire, sans vigilance, sans experience, et sans

On my arrival I deciphered myself to them faithfully and conscientiously, exactly as I feel I am: without memory, without vigilance, without ex-

3 Seneca, Letters to Lucilius.
4 Horace, Odes II.1.
5 Montaigne was elected in 1581 while traveling in Italy, reelected in 1583, and served until 1585.
6 Adapted from Virgil, Aeneid XI.

FRENCH

vigueur: sans hayne aussi, sans ambition, sans auarice, et sans violence: à ce qu'ils fussent informez et instruicts de ce qu'ils auoyent à attendre de mon seruice. Et par ce que la cognoissance de feu mon pere les auoit seule incitez à cela, et l'honneur de sa memoire: ie leur adioustay bien clairement, que ie serois tres-marry que chose quelconque fist autant d'impression en ma volonté, comme auoyent faict autrefois en la sienne, leurs affaires, et leur ville, pendant qu'il l'auoit en gouuernement, en ce lieu mesme auquel ils m'auoyent appellé.

Il me souuenoit, de l'auoir veu vieil, en mon enfance, l'ame cruellement agitée de cette tracasserie publique; oubliant le doux air de sa maison, où la foiblesse des ans l'auoit attaché long temps auant; et son mesnage, et sa santé; et mesprisant certes sa vie, qu'il y cuida perdre, engagé pour eux, à des longs et penibles voyages. Il estoit tel; et luy partoit cette humeur d'vne grande bonté de nature. Il ne fut iamais ame plus charitable et populaire. Ce train, que ie louë en autruy, ie n'ayme point à le suiure. Et ne suis pas sans excuse. Il auoit ouy dire, qu'il se falloit oublier pour le prochain; que le particulier ne venoit en aucune consideration au prix du general.

La plus part des regles et preceptes du monde prennent ce train, de nous pousser hors de nous, et chasser en la place, à l'vsage de la societé publique. Ils ont pensé faire vn bel effect, de nous destourner et distraire de nous; presupposans que nous n'y tinsions que trop, et d'vne attache trop naturelle; et n'ont espargné rien à dire pour cette fin. Car il n'est pas nouueau aux sages, de prescher les choses comme elles seruent, non comme elles sont. La verité a ses empeschements, incommoditez et incompatibilitez auec nous. Il nous faut souuent tromper, afin que nous ne nous trompions. Et siller nostre veuë, estourdir nostre entendement, pour les redresser et amender.

Imperiti enim iudicant, et qui frequenter in hoc ipsum fallendi sunt, ne errent. Quand ils nous ordonnent, d'aymer auant nous, trois, quatre, et cinquante degrez de choses; ils representent l'art des archers, qui pour arriuer au poinct, vont prenant leur visée grande espace au dessus de la

ENGLISH

perience and without vigor; also without hatred, without ambition, without avarice and without violence; so that they would be informed and instructed about what they had to expect from my service. And because it was knowledge of my late father alone that had moved them to this, and the honor of his memory, I added very clearly that I would be very sorry if anything whatever made as much impression on my will as their affairs and their city had once made on his, while he was governing it, in the very place to which they had called me.[7]

I remembered having seen him in my childhood, an old man, his soul cruelly agitated by this public turmoil, forgetting the sweet air of his home, to which the weakness of age had long since attached him, and his household, and his health; and truly despising his life, which he nearly lost through it, committed on their behalf to long and painful journeys. That is how he was; and this temperament came from a great goodness of nature. There was never a more charitable and public-spirited soul. This course, which I praise in others, I do not like to follow. And I am not without excuse. He had heard it said that one must forget oneself for one's neighbor, that the individual counted for nothing compared with the general.

Most of the world's rules and precepts take this course: they push us out of ourselves and drive us into the public square, for the use of public society. They thought they would achieve a fine effect by turning us away and distracting us from ourselves, presupposing that we cling to ourselves only too much, and with too natural a bond; and they have spared no words to that end. For it is nothing new for the wise to preach things as they serve, not as they are. Truth has its obstacles, inconveniences and incompatibilities with us. We must often be deceived so that we may not deceive ourselves, and have our sight blindfolded and our understanding stunned in order to straighten and correct them.

For it is the ignorant who judge, and they must often be deceived on this very point, so that they may not err. When they order us to love three, four and fifty grades of things before ourselves, they imitate the skill of archers who, to hit the mark, take their

7 Pierre Eyquem was mayor of Bordeaux from 1554 to 1556.

FRENCH

bute. Pour dresser vn bois courbe, on le recourbe au rebours.

3.10.5 I'estime qu'au temple de Pallas, comme nous voyons en toutes autres religions, il y auoit des mysteres apparens, pour estre montrez au peuple; et d'autres mysteres plus secrets, et plus haults, pour estre montrés seulement à ceux qui en estoyent profez. Il est vray-semblable qu'en ceux-cy, se trouue le vray poinct de l'amitié que chacun se doit. Non vne amitié faulce, qui nous faict embrasser la gloire, la science, la richesse, et telles choses, d'vne affection principalle et immoderée, comme membres de nostre estre; ny vne amitié molle et indiscrette; en laquelle il aduient ce qui se voit au lierre, qu'il corrompt et ruyne la paroy qu'il accole. Mais vne amitié salutaire et reglée; esgalement vtile et plaisante.

Qui en sçait les deuoirs, et les exerce, il est vrayement du cabinet des Muses; il a attaint le sommet de la sagesse humaine, et de nostre bon heur. Cettuy-cy, sçachant exactement ce qu'il se doit, trouue dans son rolle, qu'il doit appliquer à soy, l'vsage des autres hommes, et du monde; et pour ce faire, contribuer à la societé publique les deuoirs et offices qui le touchent. Qui ne vit aucunement à autruy, ne vit guere à soy. *Qui sibi amicus est, scito hunc amicum omnibus esse.* La principale charge que nous ayons, c'est à chacun sa conduite. Et est ce pourquoy nous sommes icy.

Comme qui oublieroit de bien et saintement viure; et penseroit estre quitte de son deuoir, en y acheminant et dressant les autres; ce seroit vn sot. Tout de mesme, qui abandonne en son propre, le sainement et gayement viure, pour en seruir autruy, prent à mon gré vn mauuais et desnaturé party.

3.10.6 Ie ne veux pas, qu'on refuse aux charges qu'on prend, l'attention, les pas, les parolles, et la sueur, et le sang au besoing: *Non ipse pro charis amicis / Aut patria timidus perire.* Mais c'est par emprunt et accidentalement; l'esprit se tenant tousiours en repos et en santé: non pas sans action, mais sans vexation, sans passion. L'agir simplement, luy couste si peu, qu'en dormant mesme il

ENGLISH

aim a great distance above the target. To straighten a crooked stick, you bend it back the other way.[8]

I believe that in the temple of Pallas, as we see in all other religions, there were outward mysteries to be shown to the people, and other mysteries, more secret and higher, to be shown only to those who were initiated into them. It is likely that in these is found the true point of the friendship that each man owes himself. Not a false friendship that makes us embrace glory, learning, riches and such things with a principal and immoderate affection, as if they were members of our being; nor a soft and indiscriminate friendship, in which there happens what we see with ivy, which corrupts and ruins the wall it clings to; but a wholesome and well-ordered friendship, equally useful and pleasant.

Whoever knows its duties and practices them truly belongs to the inner chamber of the Muses; he has reached the summit of human wisdom and of our happiness. Such a man, knowing exactly what he owes himself, finds in his part that he must apply to himself the use of other men and of the world, and to do so must contribute to public society the duties and services that fall to him. He who in no way lives for others hardly lives for himself. *Know that he who is a friend to himself is a friend to all.* The principal charge we have is, for each of us, his own conduct. And that is what we are here for.[9]

Just as anyone who forgot to live well and holily, and thought he had discharged his duty by guiding and training others to do so, would be a fool, so likewise anyone who gives up living healthily and cheerfully in his own person in order to serve others with it makes, to my mind, a bad and unnatural choice.

I do not want anyone to refuse to the charges he takes on his attention, his steps, his words, his sweat, and his blood if need be: *Not himself afraid to die / for dear friends or for his country.* But this is by way of loan and incidentally, the mind keeping itself always in repose and in health: not without action, but without vexation, without passion.

8 Quintilian, Institutes of Oratory.
9 Seneca, Letters to Lucilius.

FRENCH

agit. Mais il luy faut donner le bransle, auec discretion. Car le corps reçoit les charges qu'on luy met sus, iustement selon qu'elles sont: l'esprit les estend et les appesantit souuent à ses despens, leur donnant la mesure que bon luy semble. On faict pareilles choses auec diuers efforts, et differente contention de volonté.

L'vn va bien sans l'autre. Car combien de gens se hazardent tous les iours aux guerres, dequoy il ne leur chault: et se pressent aux dangers des battailles, desquelles la perte, ne leur troublera pas le voisin sommeil? Tel en sa maison, hors de ce danger, qu'il n'oseroit auoir regardé, est plus passionné de l'yssue de cette guerre, et en a l'ame plus trauaillée, que n'a le soldat qui y employe son sang et sa vie. I'ay peu me mesler des charges publiques, sans me despartir de moy, de la largeur d'vne ongle, et me donner à autruy sans m'oster à moy. Cette aspreté et violence de desirs, empesche plus, qu'elle ne sert à la conduitte de ce qu'on entreprend.

Nous remplit d'impatience enuers les euenemens, ou contraires, ou tardifs: et d'aigreur et de soupçon enuers ceux, auec qui nous negotions. Nous ne conduisons iamais bien la chose de laquelle nous sommes possedez et conduicts. *Malè cuncta ministrat / Impetus.* Celuy qui n'y employe que son iugement, et son addresse, il y procede plus gayement: il feint, il ploye, il differe tout à son aise, selon le besoing des occasions: il faut d'atteinte, sans tourment, et sans affliction, prest et entier pour vne nouuelle entreprise: il marche tousiours la bride à la main. En celuy qui est enyuré de cette intention violente et tyrannique, on voit par necessité beaucoup d'imprudence et d'iniustice. L'impetuosité de son desir l'emporte.

Ce sont mouuements temeraires, et, si Fortune n'y preste beaucoup, de peu de fruict. La philosophie veut qu'au chastiement des offences receuës, nous en distrayons la cholere: non afin que la vengeance en soit moindre, ains au rebours, afin qu'elle en soit d'autant mieux assenee et plus poisante. A quoy il luy semble que cette impetuosité porte empeschement. Non seulement la cholere trouble:

ENGLISH

Simply acting costs it so little that it acts even in sleep. But it must be set in motion with discretion. For the body receives the burdens laid on it exactly as they are; the mind often extends them and makes them heavier at its own expense, giving them whatever measure it pleases. We do the same things with different efforts and different strains of will.[10]

The one goes perfectly well without the other. For how many people risk themselves every day in wars that mean nothing to them, and press into the dangers of battles whose loss will not trouble their next night's sleep? Meanwhile another man at home, out of this danger, which he would not have dared to look at, is more passionate about the outcome of the war, and has his soul more tormented by it, than the soldier who spends his blood and his life in it. I have been able to take part in public offices without departing from myself by the breadth of a fingernail, and to give myself to others without taking myself away from myself. This harshness and violence of desire hinders more than it helps in carrying out what we undertake.

It fills us with impatience toward events that are adverse or slow, and with bitterness and suspicion toward those we are dealing with. We never conduct well a thing by which we are possessed and conducted. *Everything is badly handled / by impetuosity.* He who brings only his judgment and his skill to it proceeds more cheerfully: he feints, he bends, he postpones, entirely at his ease, as occasions require; he misses his stroke without torment and without affliction, ready and whole for a new undertaking; he always walks with the bridle in his hand. In the man who is drunk with this violent and tyrannical purpose, one necessarily sees much imprudence and injustice. The impetuosity of his desire carries him away.[11]

These are rash movements, and, unless Fortune contributes a great deal, of little fruit. Philosophy wants us to remove anger from the punishment of offenses we have received: not so that the vengeance should be less, but on the contrary so that it should be all the better aimed and heavier. To which, in its view, this impetuosity is an obstacle.

10 Horace, Odes IV.9.
11 Statius, Thebaid X.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
	mais de soy, elle lasse aussi les bras de ceux qui chastient. Ce feu estourdit et consomme leur force. Comme en la precipitation, *festinatio tarda est*. La hastiueté se donne elle mesme la iambe, s'entraue et s'arreste. *Ipsa se velocitas implicat.* Pour exemple. Selon ce que i'en vois par vsage ordinaire, l'auarice n'a point de plus grand destourbier que soy-mesme.	Not only does anger confuse, but of itself it also tires the arms of those who punish. This fire stuns them and consumes their strength. As in precipitation, *haste is slow*. Hastiness trips itself up, hobbles itself and brings itself to a stop. *Speed entangles itself.* For example: from what I see in ordinary experience, avarice has no greater hindrance than itself.[12]
	Plus elle est tendue et vigoureuse, moins elle en est fertile. Communement elle attrape plus promptement les richesses, masquée d'vn' image de liberalité.	The more taut and vigorous it is, the less fruitful it is. Usually it catches riches more quickly when masked with an image of liberality.
3.10.7	Vn Gentilhomme tres-homme de bien, et mon amy, cuyda brouiller la santé de sa teste, par vne trop passionnée attention et affection aux affaires d'vn Prince, son maistre. Lequel maistre, s'est ainsi peinct soy-mesmes à moy: Qu'il voit le poix des accidens, comme vn autre: mais qu'à ceux qui n'ont point de remede, il se resoult soudain à la souffrance: aux autres, apres y auoir ordonné les prouisions necessaires, ce qu'il peut faire promptement par la viuacité de son esprit, il attend en repos ce qui s'en peut ensuiure. De vray, ie l'ay veu à mesme, maintenant vne grande nonchalance et liberté d'actions et de visage, au trauers de bien grands affaires et bien espineux.	A gentleman of great worth, and a friend of mine, nearly unsettled his mind through too passionate an attention and devotion to the affairs of a prince, his master. This master once described himself to me in these terms: he sees the weight of misfortunes as well as anyone, but for those that have no remedy he resigns himself at once to enduring them. For the others, he orders the necessary measures, which he can do quickly thanks to the liveliness of his mind, and then waits calmly for whatever may follow. And indeed I have watched him at it, keeping a great unconcern and freedom in his actions and in his face through some very great and very thorny affairs.[13]
	Ie le trouue plus grand et plus capable, en vne mauuaise, qu'en vne bonne fortune. Ses pertes luy sont plus glorieuses, que ses victoires, et son deuil que son triomphe.	I find him greater and more capable in bad fortune than in good. His losses do him more honor than his victories, and his mourning more than his triumph.
3.10.8	Considerez, qu'aux actions mesmes qui sont vaines et friuoles: au ieu des eschecs, de la paulme, et semblables, cet engagement aspre et ardant d'vn desir impetueux, iette incontinent l'esprit et les membres, à l'indiscretion, et au desordre. On s'esblouit, on s'embarasse soy mesme. Celuy qui se porte plus moderément enuers le gain, et la perte, il est tousiours chez soy. Moins il se pique et passionne au ieu, il le conduit d'autant plus auantageusement et seurement.	Consider how even in actions that are idle and frivolous—at chess, at tennis and the like—this sharp and ardent engagement of an impetuous desire at once throws mind and limbs into rashness and disorder. We dazzle ourselves; we trip ourselves up. The man who takes winning and losing more moderately is always in command of himself. The less he gets nettled and worked up over the game, the more advantageously and surely he plays it.

NATURE'S NEEDS AND HABIT'S

Nature asks little; habit becomes a second nature he will not change in old age.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
3.10.9	Nous empeschons au demeurant, la prise et la serre de l'ame, à luy donner tant de choses à saisir. Les vnes, il les	For the rest, we hinder the soul's grip and hold by giving it so many things to seize. Some things need

FRENCH

luy faut seulement presenter, les autres attacher, les autres incorporer. Elle peut voir et sentir toutes choses, mais elle ne se doit paistre que de soy. Et doit estre instruicte, de ce qui la touche proprement, et qui proprement est de son auoir, et de sa substance. Les loix de Nature nous apprennent ce que iustement, il nous faut. Apres que les sages nous ont dit, que selon elle personne n'est indigent, et que chacun l'est selon l'opinion, ils distinguent ainsi subtilement, les desirs qui viennent d'elle, de ceux qui viennent du desreglement de nostre fantasie.

Ceux desquels on voit le bout, sont siens, ceux qui fuyent deuant nous, et desquels nous ne pouuons ioindre la fin, sont nostres. La pauureté des biens, est aisée à guerir; la pauureté de l'ame, impossible. *Nam si, quod satis est homini, id satis esse potesset,*
Hoc sat erat: nunc, quum hoc non est, quî credimus porro, Diuitias vllas animum m'i explere potesse? Socrates voyant porter en pompe par sa ville, grande quantité de richesse, ioyaux et meubles de prix: Combien de choses, dit-il, ie ne desire point! Metrodorus viuoit du poix de douze onces par iour, Epicurus à moins: Metroclez dormoit en hyuer auec les moutons, en esté aux cloistres des Eglises.

Sufficit ad id natura, quod poscit. Cleanthes viuoit de ses mains, et se vantoit, que Cleanthes, s'il vouloit, nourriroit encore vn autre Cleanthes.

3.10.10 Si ce que Nature exactement, et originelement nous demande, pour la conseruation de nostre estre, est trop peu (comme de vray combien ce l'est, et combien à bon comte nostre vie se peut maintenir, il ne se doit exprimer mieux que par cette consideration: Que c'est si peu, qu'il eschappe la prise et le choc de la Fortune, par sa petitesse) dispensons nous de quelque chose plus outre; appellons encore nature, l'vsage et condition de chacun de nous; taxons nous, traitons nous à cette mesure; estendons noz appartenances et noz comtes iusques là. Car iusques là, il me semble bien, que nous auons quelque excuse. L'accoustumance est vne seconde nature, et non moins puissante. Ce qui manque à ma coustume ie tiens qu'il me manque.

ENGLISH

only be presented to it, others fastened to it, others made part of it. It can see and feel all things, but it should feed only on itself. And it should be taught what properly concerns it, what is properly its own possession and its own substance. The laws of Nature teach us exactly what we need. The sages tell us that by Nature's standard no one is poor, and by opinion's standard everyone is; then they subtly distinguish the desires that come from Nature from those that come from the disorder of our fancy.

Those whose end we can see are hers; those that flee before us and whose end we can never reach are ours. Poverty of goods is easy to cure; poverty of soul, impossible. *For if what is enough for a man could be enough for him,*
that would suffice; but since it is not, how can we believe
that any riches could ever fill my soul? Socrates, seeing a great quantity of riches, jewels and precious furnishings carried in procession through his city, said: "How many things I do not desire!" Metrodorus lived on twelve ounces of food a day, Epicurus on less. Metrocles slept among the sheep in winter, and in summer in the cloisters of the churches.[14]

Nature is sufficient for what she demands. Cleanthes lived by the work of his hands, and boasted that Cleanthes, if he wished, could feed yet another Cleanthes.[15]

Suppose that what Nature strictly and originally asks of us for the preservation of our being is too little. (And indeed how little it is, and how cheaply our life can be kept going, cannot be better expressed than by this consideration: it is so little that its very smallness puts it beyond the grip and the blows of Fortune.) Then let us allow ourselves something more. Let us also call nature the habits and condition of each of us; let us rate ourselves and treat ourselves by that measure; let us stretch our belongings and our accounts that far. For that far, it seems to me, we have some excuse. Habit is a second nature, and no less powerful. Whatever my habit lacks, I consider that I lack.

12 Quintus Curtius, History of Alexander; Seneca, Letters to Lucilius.
13 The prince is generally taken to be Henry of Navarre.
14 The verses are from the Roman satirist Lucilius. Metrocles was a Cynic philosopher.
15 Seneca, Letters.

FRENCH

Et i'aymerois presque esgalement qu'on m'ostast la vie, que si on me l'essimoit et retranchoit bien loing de l'estat auquel ie l'ay vescue si long temps. Ie ne suis plus en termes d'vn grand changement, ny de me ietter à vn nouueau train et inusité; non pas mesme vers l'augmentation: il n'est plus temps de deuenir autre. Et comme ie plaindrois quelque grande aduenture, qui me tombast à cette heure entre mains, qu'elle ne seroit venuë en temps que i'en peusse iouyr, *Quo mihi fortunæ, si non conceditur vti?* Ie me plaindroy de mesme, de quelque acquest interne. Il vault quasi mieux iamais, que si tard, deuenir honneste homme. Et bien entendu à viure, lors qu'on n'a plus de vie.

Moy, qui m'en vay, resigneroy facilement à quelqu'vn, qui vinst, ce que i'apprends de prudence, pour le commerce du monde. Moustarde apres disner. Ie n'ay que faire du bien, duquel ie ne puis rien faire. A quoy la science, à qui n'a plus de teste? C'est iniure et deffaueur de Fortune, de nous offrir des presents, qui nous remplissent d'vn iuste despit de nous auoir failly en leur saison. Ne me guidez plus: ie ne puis plus aller. De tant de membres, qu'a la suffisance, la patience nous suffit. Donnez la capacité d'vn excellent dessus, au chantre qui a les poulmons pourris! Et d'eloquence à l'eremite relegué aux deserts d'Arabie. Il ne faut point d'art, à la cheute.

La fin se trouue de soy, au bout de chasque besongne. Mon monde est failly, ma forme expirée. Ie suis tout du passé. Et suis tenu de l'authorizer et d'y conformer mon issue. Ie veux dire cecy par maniere d'exemple. Que l'eclipsement nouueau des dix iours du Pape, m'ont prins si bas, que ie ne m'en puis bonnement accoustrer. Ie suis des années, ausquelles nous comtions autrement. Vn si ancien et long vsage, me vendique et rappelle à soy. Ie suis contraint d'estre vn peu heretique par là. Incapable de nouuelleté, mesme correctiue. Mon imagination en despit de mes dents se iette tousiours dix iours plus auant, ou plus arriere: et grommelle à mes oreilles. Cette regle touche ceux, qui ont à estre.

Si la santé mesme, si succrée vient à me retrouuer par boutades, c'est pour me donner regret plustost que possession de soy. Ie n'ay plus où la retirer. Le temps me

ENGLISH

And I would almost as soon have my life taken from me as have it pared down and cut back far below the state in which I have lived it for so long. I am no longer in a condition for any great change, or for throwing myself into a new and unaccustomed way of life—not even toward improvement. It is too late to become someone else. And just as I would complain of some great stroke of luck that fell into my hands now, because it had not come at a time when I could enjoy it—*What good is fortune to me, if I am not allowed to use it?*—so I would complain of any inner gain. It is almost better never to become a decent man than to become one so late, and to understand how to live when there is no more life left.[16]

I, who am on my way out, would readily hand over to someone just arriving whatever wisdom I am learning for dealing with the world. Mustard after dinner. I have no use for a good that I can do nothing with. What is knowledge to a man who no longer has a head? It is an insult and an unkindness of Fortune to offer us gifts that fill us with a just resentment for having failed us in their season. Guide me no longer: I can no longer walk. Of all the parts that make up ability, patience is enough for us. Give the voice of a superb treble to a singer whose lungs are rotten! Or eloquence to a hermit banished to the deserts of Arabia! Falling needs no skill.

The end comes of itself at the close of every task. My world is over, my form has run its course. I belong wholly to the past, and I am bound to sanction it and to make my exit conform to it. Let me say this by way of example: the recent eclipse of ten days by the Pope caught me so late in life that I cannot really adjust to it. I belong to the years when we counted otherwise. So ancient and long a usage claims me and calls me back to itself. In this I am forced to be something of a heretic, incapable of novelty, even corrective novelty. My imagination, in spite of myself, keeps leaping ten days ahead or ten days behind, and grumbles in my ears. This rule concerns those who are yet to be.[17]

If health itself, so sweet, comes back to me now and then in fits and starts, it is to give me regret for it rather than possession of it. I no longer have

16 Horace, Epistles.

17 The Gregorian reform of the calendar in 1582 removed ten days, 15 October following directly on 4 October.

FRENCH

laisse. Sans luy rien ne se possede. O que ie feroy peu d'estat de ces grandes dignitez electiues, que ie voy au monde, qui ne se donnent qu'aux hommes prests à partir: ausquelles on ne regarde pas tant, combien deuëment on les exercera, que combien peu longuement on les exercera: dés l'entrée on vise à l'issue. Somme: me voicy apres d'acheuer cet homme, non d'en refaire vn autre. Par long vsage, cette forme m'est passée en substance, et fortune en nature.

ENGLISH

anywhere to lodge it. Time is leaving me, and without time nothing is possessed. Oh, how little I would think of those great elective dignities I see in the world, which are given only to men about to depart! In them people look not so much at how properly the holder will exercise them as at how briefly; from the moment of entry they have their eye on the exit. In short: here I am, finishing off this man, not making another. By long usage this form of mine has turned into substance, and fortune into nature.[18]

3.10.11 Ie dis donc, que chacun d'entre nous foiblets, est excusable d'estimer sien, ce qui est compris soubs cette mesure. Mais aussi au delà de ces limites, ce n'est plus que confusion. C'est la plus large estandue que nous puissions octroyer à noz droicts. Plus nous amplifions nostre besoing et possession, d'autant plus nous engageons nous aux coups de la Fortune, et des aduersitez. La carriere de noz desirs doit estre circonscripte, et restraincte, à vn court limite, des commoditez les plus proches et contigues. Et doit en outre, leur course, se manier, non en ligne droicte, qui face bout ailleurs, mais en rond, duquel les deux pointes se tiennent et terminent en nous, par vn brief contour.

I say, then, that each of us feeble creatures is excusable for considering his own whatever falls within this measure. But beyond these limits there is nothing but confusion. This is the widest extent we can grant to our rights. The more we enlarge our needs and possessions, the more we expose ourselves to the blows of Fortune and adversity. The course of our desires should be circumscribed and restricted to a short limit, to the nearest and most adjoining comforts. Moreover, their course should run not in a straight line that ends somewhere else, but in a circle whose two ends hold together and terminate in ourselves after a short sweep.

Les actions qui se conduisent sans cette reflexion, s'entend voisine reflexion et essentielle, comme sont celles des auaricieux, des ambitieux, et tant d'autres, qui courent de pointe, desquels la course les emporte tousiours deuant eux, ce sont actions erronées et maladiues.

Actions carried on without this bending back—I mean a close and essential bending back upon ourselves—such as those of the avaricious, the ambitious and so many others who run straight ahead, whose course always carries them on in front of themselves, are erroneous and sickly actions.

THE MAYOR AND MONTAIGNE

We must play our part in the world without mistaking the mask for the face.

FRENCH

3.10.12 La plus part de noz vacations sont farcesques. *Mundus vniuersus exercet histrioniam.* Il faut iouer deuement nostre rolle, mais comme rolle d'vn personnage emprunté. Du masque et de l'apparence, il n'en faut pas faire vne essence réelle, ny de l'estranger le propre. Nous ne sçauons pas distinguer la peau de la chemise. C'est assés de s'enfariner le visage, sans s'enfariner la poictrine. I'en vois qui se transforment et se transsubstantient en autant de nouuelles figures, et de nouueaux estres, qu'ils entreprennent de charges: et qui se prelatent iusques au

ENGLISH

Most of our occupations are farcical. *The whole world plays a part.* We must play our part properly, but as the part of a borrowed character. We must not make the mask and the appearance into a real essence, nor what is foreign into what is our own. We cannot tell the skin from the shirt. It is enough to whiten our face with flour without whitening our breast. I see some who transform and transubstantiate themselves into as many new shapes and

18 He is thinking chiefly of the papacy, frequently conferred on elderly men.

FRENCH

foye et aux intestins: et entrainent leur office iusques en leur garderobe. Ie ne puis leur apprendre à distinguer les bonnetades, qui les regardent, de celles qui regardent leur commission, ou leur suitte, ou leur mule.

Tantum se fortunæ permittunt, etiam vt naturam dediscant. Ils enflent et grossissent leur ame, et leur discours naturel, selon la haulteur de leur siege magistral. Le Maire et Montaigne, ont tousiours esté deux, d'vne separation bien claire. Pour estre aduocat ou financier, il n'en faut pas mescognoistre la fourbe, qu'il y a en telles vacations. Vn honneste homme n'est pas comtable du vice ou sottise de son mestier; et ne doit pourtant en refuser l'exercice. C'est l'vsage de son pays, et il y a du proffit. Il faut viure du monde, et s'en preualoir, tel qu'on le trouue. Mais le iugement d'vn Empereur, doit estre au dessus de son empire; et le voir et considerer, comme accident estranger.

Et luy doit sçauoir iouyr de soy à part; et se communicquer comme Iacques et Pierre: au moins à soy-mesmes.

ENGLISH

new beings as the offices they take on; who are prelates right down to the liver and bowels, and drag their office with them even onto the privy. I cannot teach them to distinguish the bows and doffed caps meant for them from those meant for their commission, or their retinue, or their mule.[19]

They give themselves up so far to fortune that they even unlearn nature. They swell and puff up their soul and their natural reasoning to match the height of their magisterial seat. The Mayor and Montaigne have always been two, very clearly separated. If one is a lawyer or a financier, one must not ignore the trickery there is in such callings. A decent man is not accountable for the vice or folly of his trade, and need not refuse to practice it on that account. It is the custom of his country, and there is profit in it. We must live by the world and make use of it as we find it. But the judgment of an emperor should stand above his empire, and see and consider it as an external accident.[20]

And he should know how to enjoy himself apart, and to show himself as plain Jack or Peter—to himself, at least.

JUDGING ONE'S OWN PARTY

In civil war he sees the merits of opponents and the faults of his own side.

FRENCH

3.10.13 Ie ne sçay pas m'engager si profondement, et si entier. Quand ma volonté me donne à vn party, ce n'est pas d'vne si violente obligation, que mon entendement s'en infecte. Aux presens brouillis de cet estat, mon interest ne m'a faict mescognoistre, ny les qualitez louables en noz aduersaires, ny celles qui sont reprochables en ceux que i'ay suiuy. Ils adorent tout ce qui est de leur costé: moy ie n'excuse pas seulement la plus part des choses, qui sont du mien. Vn bon ouurage, ne perd pas ses graces, pour plaider contre moy. Hors le nœud du debat, ie me suis maintenu en equanimité, et pure indifference.

Neque extra necessitates belli, præcipuum odium gero. Dequoy ie me gratifie, d'autant que ie voy communément faillir au contraire. Ceux qui allongent leur cholere, et leur haine au delà des affaires, comme faict la plus part, montrent qu'elle leur part d'ailleurs, et de cause

ENGLISH

I do not know how to commit myself so deeply and so entirely. When my will gives me to a party, it is not with so violent a bond that my understanding is infected by it. In the present troubles of this state, my interest has not made me blind either to the praiseworthy qualities in our adversaries or to the blameworthy ones in those I have followed. They adore everything on their own side; I do not even excuse most of the things on mine. A good work does not lose its graces for pleading against me. Outside the heart of the dispute, I have kept myself in equanimity and pure indifference.

Nor do I bear any special hatred beyond the necessities of war. For this I congratulate myself, all the more since I commonly see people err the other way. Those who stretch their anger and hatred beyond the matters at issue, as most do, show that it

19 The Latin is attributed to Petronius.
20 Quintus Curtius, History of Alexander.

FRENCH

particuliere. Tout ainsi comme, à qui estant guary de son vlcere, la fiebure demeure encore, montre qu'elle auoit vn autre principe plus caché. C'est qu'ils n'en ont point à la cause, en commun: et entant qu'elle blesse l'interest de touts, et de l'estat. Mais luy en veulent, seulement en ce, qu'elle leur masche en priué. Voyla pourquoy, ils s'en picquent de passion particuliere, et au delà de la iustice, et de la raison publique.

Non tam omnia vniuersi, quàm ea, quæ ad quemque pertinerent, singuli carpebant. Ie veux que l'aduantage soit pour nous: mais ie ne forcene point, s'il ne l'est. Ie me prens fermement au plus sain des partis. Mais ie n'affecte pas qu'on me remarque specialement, ennemy des autres, et outre la raison generalle. I'accuse merueilleusement cette vitieuse forme d'opiner: Il est de la Ligue: car il admire la grace de Monsieur de Guyse. L'actiueté du Roy de Nauarre l'estonne: il est Huguenot. Il trouue cecy à dire aux mœurs du Roy: il est seditieux en son cœur. Et ne conceday pas au magistrat mesme, qu'il eust raison, de condamner vn liure, pour auoir logé entre les meilleurs poëtes de ce siecle, vn heretique.

N'oserions nous dire d'vn voleur, qu'il a belle greue? Faut-il, si elle est putain, qu'elle soit aussi punaise? Aux siecles plus sages, reuoqua-on le superbe tiltre de Capitolinus, qu'on auoit auparauant donné à Marcus Manlius, comme conseruateur de la religion et liberté publique? Estouffa-on la memoire de sa liberalité, et de ses faicts d'armes, et recompenses militaires ottroyées à sa vertu, par ce qu'il affecta depuis la Royauté, au preiudice des loix de son pays? S'ils ont prins en haine vn aduocat, l'endemain il leur deuient ineloquent. I'ay touché ailleurs le zele, qui poulsa des gens de bien à semblables fautes. Pour moy, ie sçay bien dire: Il faict meschamment cela, et vertueusement cecy.

De mesmes, aux prognostiques ou euenements sinistres des affaires, ils veulent, que chacun en son party soit aueugle ou hebeté: que nostre persuasion et iugement, serue non à la verité, mais au proiect de nostre desir. Ie faudroy plustost vers l'autre extremité: tant ie crains, que

ENGLISH

springs from elsewhere, from some private cause —just as when a man is cured of his ulcer and the fever still remains, it shows that the fever had another, more hidden origin. The fact is that they have nothing against the cause as a common cause, insofar as it injures the interest of all and of the state; they hold it against it only insofar as it galls them in private. That is why they are stung by it with a private passion, beyond justice and public reason.

It was not so much that they all found fault with everything as that each found fault with what concerned himself. I want the advantage to be on our side, but I do not go mad if it is not. I hold firmly to the soundest of the parties, but I do not seek to be singled out as an enemy of the others beyond what general reason requires. I strongly condemn this vicious way of judging: "He is of the League, for he admires the grace of Monsieur de Guise." "The King of Navarre's energy amazes him: he is a Huguenot." "He finds this to criticize in the King's conduct: he is seditious at heart." And I did not grant even to the magistrate that he was right to condemn a book for having placed a heretic among the best poets of this century.[21]

May we not say of a thief that he has a shapely leg? If she is a prostitute, must she also have foul breath? In wiser ages, did they revoke the proud title of Capitolinus formerly given to Marcus Manlius as preserver of religion and public liberty? Did they smother the memory of his generosity, his feats of arms and the military rewards granted to his valor, because he later aspired to kingship, to the detriment of his country's laws? If they have taken a dislike to a lawyer, by the next day he has lost his eloquence for them. I have touched elsewhere on the zeal that drove good men into similar errors. For my part, I can quite well say: "He does that wickedly, and this virtuously."[22]

Likewise, in forecasts or in ill turns of affairs, they want each man in his own party to be blind or dull-witted, and our convictions and judgment to serve not the truth but the design of our desire. I would rather err toward the other extreme, so much do I fear that my desire may suborn me. Be-

21 Livy. Henri, Duke of Guise, led the Catholic League. The book is probably the Essays themselves, faulted by the papal censors in 1581 for naming heretic poets.

22 Marcus Manlius saved the Capitol from the Gauls in 390 BC and was later executed for aiming at tyranny.

FRENCH	ENGLISH
mon desir me suborne. Ioint, que ie me deffie vn peu tendrement, des choses que ie souhaitte.	sides, I am a little tenderly distrustful of the things I wish for.
3.10.14 I'ay veu de mon temps, merueilles en l'indiscrette et prodigieuse facilité des peuples, à se laisser mener et manier la creance et l'esperance, où il a pleu et seruy à leurs chefs: par dessus cent mescomtes, les vns sur les autres: par dessus les fantosmes, et les songes. Ie ne m'estonne plus de ceux, que les singeries d'Apollonius et de Mahumed embufflerent. Leur sens et entendement, est entierement estouffé en leur passion. Leur discretion n'a plus d'autre choix, que ce qui leur rit, et qui conforte leur cause. I'auoy remarqué souuerainement cela, au premier de noz partis fiebureux. Cet autre, qui est nay depuis, en l'imitant, le surmonte. Par où ie m'aduise, que c'est vne qualité inseparable des erreurs populaires.	In my time I have seen marvels in the indiscriminate and prodigious readiness of peoples to let their belief and their hope be led and handled wherever it pleased and suited their leaders—despite a hundred disappointments one on top of another, despite phantoms and dreams. I am no longer amazed at those who were hoodwinked by the antics of Apollonius and Muhammad. Their sense and understanding are entirely smothered in their passion. Their discernment no longer has any choice but what smiles on them and comforts their cause. I had noticed this to the highest degree in the first of our feverish parties. This other one, born since, imitates it and outdoes it. From which I gather that it is a quality inseparable from popular errors.[23]
Apres la premiere qui part, les opinions s'entrepoussent, suiuant le vent, comme les flotz. On n'est pas du corps, si on s'en peut desdire: si on ne vague le train commun. Mais certes on faict tort aux partis iustes, quand on les veut secourir de fourbes. I'y ay tousiours contredict. Ce moyen ne porte qu'enuers les testes malades. Enuers les saines, il y a des voyes plus seures, et non seulement plus honnestes, à maintenir les courages, et excuser les accidents contraires.	Once the first opinion sets off, the others push one another along with the wind, like waves. You are not of the body if you can take back what you said, if you do not drift along with the common course. But surely we wrong just parties when we try to help them with frauds. I have always spoken against it. This method works only on sick heads. With healthy ones there are surer ways, and not merely more honest ones, of keeping up people's courage and explaining away setbacks.
3.10.15 Le ciel n'a point veu vn si poisant desaccord, que celuy de Cæsar, et de Pompeius; ny ne verra pour l'aduenir. Toutesfois il me semble recognoistre en ces belles ames, vne grande moderation de l'vn enuers l'autre. C'estoit vne ialousie d'honneur et de commandement, qui ne les emporta pas à hayne furieuse et indiscrette; sans malignité et sans detraction. En leurs plus aigres exploicts, ie descouure quelque demeurant de respect, et de bien-vueillance. Et iuge ainsi; que s'il leur eust esté possible, chacun d'eux eust desiré de faire son affaire sans la ruyne de son compagnon, plustost qu'auec sa ruyne. Combien autrement il en va de Marius, et de Sylla: prenez y garde.	Heaven has never seen so weighty a discord as that between Caesar and Pompey, nor ever will. Yet I seem to recognize in those fine souls a great moderation toward each other. It was a rivalry for honor and command that did not carry them away into furious and reckless hatred; it was without malice and without disparagement. In their bitterest exploits I discover some remnant of respect and goodwill. And so I judge that, had it been possible, each of them would have wished to achieve his aim without ruining his comrade rather than by ruining him. How differently it went with Marius and Sulla: take note of it.

23 The two parties are the Huguenots and the Catholic League.

STOPPING PASSIONS AT THE START

It is easier to keep out of passions and quarrels than to master them once begun.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
3.10.16	Il ne faut pas se precipiter si esperduement apres nos affections, et interestz. Comme estant ieune, ie m'opposois au progrez de l'amour, que ie sentoy trop auancer sur moy; et m'estudiois qu'il ne me fust si aggreable, qu'il vinst à me forcer en fin, et captiuer du tout à sa mercy. I'en vse de mesme à toutes autres occasions, où ma volonté se prend auec trop d'appetit. Ie me panche à l'opposite de son inclination, comme ie la voy se plonger, et enyurer de son vin. Ie fuis à nourrir son plaisir si auant, que ie ne l'en puisse plus r'auoir, sans perte sanglante. Les ames qui par stupidité ne voyent les choses qu'à demy, iouissent de cet heur, que les nuisibles les blessent moins.	We must not rush so headlong after our affections and interests. When I was young, I resisted the progress of love when I felt it gaining too much ground on me, and took pains that it should not become so pleasant to me as to overpower me in the end and hold me captive entirely at its mercy. I do the same on all other occasions where my will takes hold with too much appetite. I lean the opposite way from its inclination when I see it plunging in and getting drunk on its own wine. I avoid feeding its pleasure so far that I can no longer get it back without bloody loss. Souls that through dullness see things only by halves enjoy this good fortune: harmful things wound them less.
	C'est vne ladrerie spirituelle, qui a quelque air de santé; et telle santé, que la philosophie ne mesprise pas du tout. Mais pourtant, ce n'est pas raison de la nommer sagesse: ce que nous faisons souuent. Et de cette maniere se moqua quelqu'vn anciennement de Diogenes, qui alloit embrassant en plein hyuer tout nud, vne image de neige pour l'essay de sa patience. Celuy-là le rencontrant en cette desmarche: As tu grand froid à cette heure, luy dit-il? Du tout point, respond Diogenes. Or suiuit l'autre: Que penses-tu donc faire de difficile, et d'exemplaire à te tenir là? Pour mesurer la constance, il faut necessairement sçauoir la souffrance.	It is a spiritual leprosy that has some look of health—and such health as philosophy does not wholly despise. But even so it is not right to call it wisdom, as we often do. And in this vein someone in ancient times mocked Diogenes, who in the dead of winter went about stark naked hugging a figure of snow to test his endurance. Coming upon him in this posture, the man said: "Are you very cold right now?" "Not at all," answered Diogenes. "Then," the other went on, "what do you think you are doing that is difficult or exemplary by standing there?" To measure fortitude, one must necessarily know the suffering.
3.10.17	Mais les ames qui auront à voir les euenemens contraires, et les iniures de la Fortune, en leur profondeur et aspreté, qui auront à les poiser et gouster, selon leur aigreur naturelle, et leur charge, qu'elles emploient leur art, à se garder d'en enfiler les causes, et en destournent les aduenues. Que fit le Roy Cotys? il paya liberalement la belle et riche vaisselle qu'on lui auoit presentée: mais parce qu'elle estoit singulierement fragile, il la cassa incontinent luy-mesme; pour s'oster de bonne heure vne si aisée matiere de courroux contre ses seruiteurs.	But souls that are to see adverse events and the injuries of Fortune in all their depth and harshness, that are to weigh and taste them in their natural bitterness and weight, should use their skill to keep from getting caught up in their causes, and should block the approaches to them. What did King Cotys do? He paid generously for the beautiful and rich tableware that had been presented to him; but because it was exceptionally fragile, he broke it all himself at once, to rid himself in good time of so ready an occasion for anger against his servants.[24]
	Pareillement, i'ay volontiers euité de n'auoir mes affaires confus: et n'ay cherché, que mes biens fussent contigus à	In the same way I have gladly avoided having my affairs entangled, and have not sought to have my

24 Cotys, a king of Thrace; the story is in Plutarch.

FRENCH

mes proches: et ceux à qui i'ay à me ioindre d'vne estroitte amitié: d'où naissent ordinairement matieres d'alienation et dissociation. I'aymois autresfois les ieux hazardeux des cartes et detz; ie m'en suis deffaict, il y a long temps; pour cela seulement, que quelque bonne mine que ie fisse en ma perte, ie ne laissois pas d'en auoir au dedans de la picqueure. Vn homme d'honneur, qui doit sentir vn desmenti, et vne offence iusques au cœur, qui n'est pour prendre vne mauuaise excuse en payement et consolation, qu'il euite le progrez des altercations contentieuses. Ie fuis les complexions tristes, et les hommes hargneux, comme les empestez.

Et aux propos que ie ne puis traicter sans interest, et sans emotion, ie ne m'y mesle, si le deuoir ne m'y force. *Melius non incipient, quàm desinent*. La plus seure façon est donc, se preparer auant les occasions.

3.10.18 Ie sçay bien, qu'aucuns sages ont pris autre voye; et n'ont pas crainct de se harper et engager iusques au vif, à plusieurs obiects. Ces gens là s'asseurent de leur force, soubs laquelle ils se mettent à couuert en toute sorte de succez ennemis, faisant lucter les maux, par la vigueur de la patience: *Velut rupes vastum quæ prodit in æquor,*
Obuia ventorum furiis, expostâque ponto
Vim cunctam atque minas perfert cælique marisque,
Ipsa immota manens.

3.10.19 N'attaquons pas ces exemples; nous n'y arriuerions point. Ils s'obstinent à voir resoluement, et sans se troubler, la ruyne de leur pays, qui possedoit et commandoit toute leur volonté. Pour noz ames communes, il y a trop d'effort, et trop de rudesse à cela. Caton en abandonna la plus noble vie, qui fut onques. A nous autres petis, il faut fuyr l'orage de plus loing: il faut pouruoir au sentiment, non à la patience; et escheuer aux coups que nous ne sçaurions parer. Zenon voyant approcher Chremonidez ieune homme qu'il aymoit, pour se seoir au pres de luy: se leua soudain. Et Cleanthes, luy en demandant la raison: I'entendz, dit-il, que les medecins ordonnent le repos principalement, et deffendent l'emotion à toutes tumeurs.

ENGLISH

property adjoin that of my relatives and of those with whom I must be joined in close friendship; that is where occasions for estrangement and separation usually arise. I used to love games of chance with cards and dice. I gave them up long ago, for this reason alone: however good a face I put on my losses, I still felt the sting of them inside. A man of honor, who is bound to feel being given the lie or an insult to the quick, and who is not one to accept a poor excuse as payment and consolation, should keep contentious arguments from going any further. I flee gloomy temperaments and surly men as I would the plague-stricken.

And in discussions that I cannot handle without personal interest and emotion, I do not get involved unless duty forces me. *They will do better not to begin than to have to stop*. The safest way, then, is to prepare oneself before the occasions arise.[25]

I know well that some sages have taken another path, and have not been afraid to grapple and engage themselves to the quick with many objects. These men are sure of their strength, under which they take cover against every kind of hostile outcome, making their ills wrestle with the vigor of their endurance: *Like a cliff that juts out into the vast sea,*
facing the fury of the winds and exposed to the waves,
it bears all the violence and threats of sky and sea,
itself remaining unmoved.[26]

Let us not take on these examples; we would never reach them. They persist in watching, resolutely and unperturbed, the ruin of their country, which possessed and commanded their whole will. For our common souls there is too much effort and too much harshness in that. Cato gave up for it the noblest life that ever was. We little folk must flee the storm from further off; we must take measures against feeling, not rely on endurance, and dodge the blows we could not parry. Zeno, seeing Chremonides, a young man he loved, approaching to sit beside him, rose at once. And when Cleanthes asked him the reason, he said: "I understand

25 Seneca, Letters.
26 Virgil, Aeneid.

FRENCH

ENGLISH

that physicians prescribe rest above all and forbid agitation for all swellings."

Socrates ne dit point: Ne vous rendez pas aux attraicts de la beauté; soustenez la, efforcez vous au contraire. Fuyez la, faict-il, courez hors de sa veuë et de son rencontre, comme d'vne poison puissante qui s'eslance et frappe de loing. Et son bon disciple feignant ou recitant; mais, à mon aduis, recitant plustost que feignant, les rares perfections de ce grand Cyrus, le fait deffiant de ses forces à porter les attraicts de la diuine beauté de cette illustre Panthée sa captiue, et en commettant la visite et garde à vn autre, qui eust moins de liberté que luy. Et le Sainct Esprit de mesme, *ne nos inducas in tentationem*.

Socrates does not say: "Do not yield to the attractions of beauty; stand up to it, strive against it." "Flee it," he says, "run out of its sight and out of its way, as from a powerful poison that darts out and strikes from afar." And his good disciple, inventing or recounting—but in my opinion recounting rather than inventing—the rare perfections of the great Cyrus, shows him distrusting his strength to withstand the attractions of the divine beauty of the illustrious Panthea, his captive, and entrusting the visiting and guarding of her to another who had less freedom than he. And the Holy Spirit likewise: *lead us not into temptation*.[27]

Nous ne prions pas que nostre raison ne soit combatue et surmontée par la concupiscence, mais qu'elle n'en soit pas seulement essayée: que nous ne soyons conduits en estat où nous ayons seulement à souffrir les approches, solicitations, et tentations du peché: et supplions nostre Seigneur de maintenir nostre conscience tranquille, plainement et parfaictement deliurée du commerce du mal.

We do not pray that our reason may not be fought and overcome by concupiscence, but that it may not even be tested by it; that we may not be led into a state where we have even to suffer the approaches, solicitations and temptations of sin; and we beseech our Lord to keep our conscience tranquil, fully and perfectly delivered from all dealings with evil.

3.10.20 Ceux qui disent auoir raison de leur passion vindicatiue, ou de quelqu'autre espece de passion penible: disent souuent vray: comme les choses sont, mais non pas comme elles furent. Ils parlent à nous, lors que les causes de leur erreur sont nourries et auancées par eux mesmes. Mais reculez plus arriere, r'appelez ces causes à leur principe: là, vous les prendrez sans vert. Veulent ils que leur faute soit moindre, pour estre plus vieille: et que d'vn iniuste commencement la suitte soit iuste? Qui desirera du bien à son païs comme moy, sans s'en vlcerer ou maigrir, il sera desplaisant, mais non pas transi, de le voir menassant, ou sa ruine, ou vne durée non moins ruineuse.

Those who say they are in the right in their vindictive passion, or in some other kind of painful passion, often speak the truth—as things are, but not as they were. They speak to us when the causes of their error have been fed and advanced by themselves. But go further back, trace these causes to their origin: there you will catch them off guard. Do they want their fault to be the smaller for being older, and the sequel of an unjust beginning to be just? Whoever wishes his country well, as I do, without getting ulcers or growing thin over it, will be grieved, but not paralyzed, to see it threatened either with ruin or with a survival no less ruinous.

Pauure vaisseau, que les flots, les vents, et le pilote, tirassent à si contraires desseins! *In tam diuersa, magister, / Ventus et vnda trahunt.* Qui ne bee point apres la faueur des Princes, comme apres chose dequoy il ne se sçauroit passer; ne se picque pas beaucoup de la froideur de leur recueil, et de leur visage, ny de l'inconstance de leur volonté. Qui ne couue point ses enfans, ou ses honneurs, d'vne propension esclaue, ne laisse pas de viure commodément apres leur perte. Qui fait bien principalement pour sa propre satisfaction, ne s'altere

Poor ship, which waves, winds and pilot pull toward such contrary aims! *So differently do the helmsman, / the wind and the wave pull.* Whoever does not gape after the favor of princes as after something he could not do without is not much stung by the coldness of their welcome and their looks, nor by the inconstancy of their will. Whoever does not brood over his children or his honors with a slavish attachment does not cease to

27 The disciple is Xenophon; Panthea was the captive wife of the king Abradatas.

FRENCH

guere pour voir les hommes iuger de ses actions contre son merite. Vn quart d'once de patience, prouuoit à tels inconuenients.

Ie me trouue bien de cette recepte; me racheptant des commencemens, au meilleur compte que ie puis. Et me sens auoir eschappé par son moyen beaucoup de trauail et de difficultez. Auec bien peu d'effort, i'arreste ce premier bransle de mes esmotions. Et abandonne le subject, qui me commence à poiser, et auant qu'il m'emporte. Qui n'arreste le partir, n'a garde d'arrester la course. Qui ne sçait leur fermer la porte, ne les chassera pas entrées. Qui ne peut venir à bout du commencement, ne viendra pas à bout de la fin. Ny n'en soustiendra la cheute, qui n'en a peu soustenir l'esbranslement.

Etenim ipsæ se impellunt, vbi semel à ratione discessum est: ipsáque sibi imbecillitas indulget, in altùmque prouehitur imprudens, nec reperit locum consistendi. Ie sens à temps, les petits vents qui me viennent taster et bruire au dedans, auant-coureurs de la tempeste: *Ceu flamina prima*
Cùm deprensa fremunt syluis, et cæca volutant
Murmura, venturos nautis prodentia ventos.

3.10.21 A combien de fois me suis-ie faict vne bien euidente iniustice, pour fuyr le hazard de la receuoir encore pire des iuges, apres vn siecle d'ennuys, et d'ordes et viles practiques, plus ennemies de mon naturel, que n'est la gehenne et le feu? *Conuenit à litibus quantum licet, et nescio an paulo plus etiam quàm licet, abhorrentem esse: Est enim non modo liberale, paululum nonnunquam de suo iure decedere, sed interdum etiam fructuosum.* Si nous estions bien sages, nous nous deurions resiouir et venter, ainsi que i'ouy vn iour bien naïuement, vn enfant de grande maison, faire feste à chacun, dequoy sa mere venoit de perdre son procés: comme sa toux, sa fiebure, ou autre chose d'importune garde.

Les faueurs mesmes, que la Fortune pouuoit m'auoir donné, parentez, et accointances, enuers ceux, qui ont souueraine authorité en ces choses là: i'ay beaucoup faict selon ma conscience, de fuyr instamment de les employer au preiudice d'autruy, et de ne monter par dessus leur droicte valeur, mes droicts. En fin i'ay tant fait par mes iournées, à la bonne heure le puisse-ie dire, que me voicy

ENGLISH

live comfortably after losing them. Whoever does good chiefly for his own satisfaction is hardly upset to see men judge his actions contrary to his merit. A quarter of an ounce of patience takes care of such inconveniences.

I do well with this recipe, buying myself off at the beginnings as cheaply as I can; and I feel that by this means I have escaped a great deal of trouble and difficulty. With very little effort I stop this first stirring of my emotions, and I drop the subject that is beginning to weigh on me, before it carries me away. He who does not stop the start will hardly stop the race. He who cannot shut the door on them will not drive them out once they are in. He who cannot master the beginning will not master the end. Nor will he withstand the fall who could not withstand the first shock.

For they drive themselves on once reason has been left behind; weakness indulges itself, is carried unawares out into the deep, and finds no place to stand. I feel in time the little winds that come to probe me and murmur within me, forerunners of the storm: *As when the first gusts,*
caught in the woods, roar and roll their blind
murmurs, betraying to sailors the coming winds.[28]

How many times have I done myself a quite evident injustice to avoid the risk of receiving a worse one from the judges, after an age of vexations and of filthy, base practices more hostile to my nature than torture and fire? *It is fitting to shrink from lawsuits as much as one may, and perhaps even a little more than one may; for it is not only generous but sometimes even profitable to give up a little of one's rights now and then.* If we were really wise, we should rejoice and boast, as I once heard a child of a great house, quite artlessly, celebrating to everyone that his mother had just lost her lawsuit—as if she had lost her cough, her fever, or something else troublesome to keep.[29]

Even the favors Fortune may have given me—kinship and acquaintance with those who have sovereign authority in such matters—I have done my utmost, in conscience, to avoid using to the prejudice of others, and I have not raised my rights above their true value. In short, I have managed so

28 Cicero, Tusculan Disputations; the verses are from Virgil's Aeneid.
29 Cicero, On Duties.

FRENCH

encore vierge de procés, qui n'ont pas laissé de se conuier plusieurs fois à mon seruice, par bien iuste tiltre, s'il m'eust pleu d'y entendre. Et vierge de querelles. I'ay sans offence de poix, passiue ou actiue, escoulé tantost vne longue vie: et sans auoir ouy pis que mon nom. Rare grace du ciel.

3.10.22 Noz plus grandes agitations, ont des ressorts et causes ridicules. Combien encourut de ruyne nostre dernier Duc de Bourgongne, pour la querelle d'vne charretée de peaux de mouton! Et l'engraueure d'vn cachet, fust-ce pas la premiere et maistresse cause, du plus horrible croullement, que cette machine aye onques souffert? Car Pompeius et Cæsar, ce ne sont que les reiectons et la suitte, des deux autres. Et i'ay veu de mon temps, les plus sages testes de ce royaume, assemblées auec grande ceremonie, et publique despence, pour des traictez et accords, desquels la vraye decision, despendoit ce pendant en toute souueraineté, des deuis du cabinet des dames, et inclination de quelque femmelette.

Les poëtes ont bien entendu cela, qui ont mis, pour vne pomme, la Grece et l'Asie à feu et à sang. Regardez pourquoy celuy-là s'en va courre fortune de son honneur et de sa vie, à tout son espée et son poignart; qu'il vous die d'où vient la source de ce debat, il ne le peut faire sans rougir; tant l'occasion en est vaine, et friuole.

3.10.23 A l'enfourner, il n'y va que d'vn peu d'auisement, mais depuis que vous estes embarqué, toutes les cordes tirent. Il y faict besoing de grandes prouisions, bien plus difficiles et importantes. De combien est il plus aisé, de n'y entrer pas que d'en sortir? Or il faut proceder au rebours du roseau, qui produict vne longue tige et droicte, de la premiere venue; mais apres, comme s'il s'estoit allanguy et mis hors d'haleine, il vient à faire des nœuds frequens et espais, comme des pauses; qui montrent qu'il n'a plus cette premiere vigueur et constance. Il faut plustost commencer bellement et froidement; et garder son haleine et ses vigoureux eslans, au fort et perfection de la besongne.

Nous guidons les affaires en leurs commencemens, et les tenons à nostre mercy: mais par apres, quand ils sont

ENGLISH

well in my day—may I say it without tempting fate—that here I am still a virgin of lawsuits, though they have more than once offered themselves to my service on very good grounds, had I cared to listen. And a virgin of quarrels. I have now spent a long life without any serious offense, suffered or given, and without having been called anything worse than my own name. A rare grace of heaven.

Our greatest agitations have ridiculous springs and causes. How much ruin our last Duke of Burgundy brought on himself over a quarrel about a cartload of sheepskins! And the engraving of a seal—was that not the first and principal cause of the most horrible collapse this machine has ever suffered? For Pompey and Caesar are only the offshoots and sequel of those other two. And in my time I have seen the wisest heads of this kingdom assembled with great ceremony and at public expense for treaties and agreements whose real decision meanwhile depended, in complete sovereignty, on the chatter of the ladies' chamber and the inclination of some little woman.[30]

The poets understood this well, who put Greece and Asia to fire and sword for an apple. Look at why that man is off to risk his honor and his life with his sword and dagger; let him tell you the source of the dispute—he cannot do it without blushing, so idle and frivolous is the occasion.[31]

Getting into it takes only a little forethought; but once you are embarked, all the ropes pull. Great provisions are needed then, much more difficult and important. How much easier it is not to go in than to get out! Now we must do the opposite of the reed, which at first shoots up a long, straight stem; but afterward, as if it had grown languid and out of breath, it starts making frequent thick knots, like pauses, which show that it no longer has its first vigor and steadiness. We should rather begin gently and coolly, and save our breath and our vigorous bursts for the thick of the task and its completion.

We guide affairs in their beginnings and hold them at our mercy; but afterward, once they are

30 Charles the Bold's fatal war with the Swiss arose from a dispute over sheepskins; the seal is the one on which Sulla had Jugurtha's surrender engraved, which inflamed his quarrel with Marius.
31 The golden apple awarded by Paris, which led to the Trojan War.

FRENCH

esbranlez, ce sont eux qui nous guident et emportent, et auons à les suyure.

3.10.24 Pourtant n'est-ce pas à dire, que ce conseil m'aye deschargé de toute difficulté; et que ie n'aye eu affaire souuent à gourmer et brider mes passions. Elles ne se gouuernent pas tousiours selon la mesure des occasions: et ont leurs entrées mesmes, souuent aspres et violentes. Tant y a, qu'il s'en tire vne belle espargne, et du fruict. Sauf pour ceux, qui au bien faire, ne se contentent de nul fruict, si la reputation en est à dire. Car à la verité, vn tel effect, n'est en comte qu'à chacun en soy. Vous en estes plus content; mais non plus estimé: vous estant reformé, auant que d'estre en danse, et que la matiere fust en veuë.

Toutesfois aussi, non en cecy seulement, mais en tous autres deuoirs de la vie, la route de ceux qui visent à l'honneur, est bien diuerse à celle que tiennent ceux qui se proposent l'ordre et la raison. I'en trouue, qui se mettent inconsiderément et furieusement en lice, et s'alentissent en la course. Comme Plutarque dit, que ceux qui par le vice de la mauuaise honte, sont mols et faciles, à accorder quoy qu'on leur demande, sont faciles apres à faillir de parole, et à se desdire. Pareillement qui entre legerement en querelle, est subiect d'en sortir aussi legerement. Cette mesme difficulté, qui me garde de l'entamer, m'inciteroit d'y tenir ferme, quand ie serois esbranlé et eschauffé. C'est une mauuaise façon.

Depuis qu'on y est, il faut aller ou creuer. Entreprenez froidement, disoit Bias, mais poursuiuez ardamment. De faute de prudence, on retombe en faute de cœur; qui est encore moins supportable.

3.10.25 La plus part des accords de noz querelles du iourd'hui, sont honteux et menteurs. Nous ne cherchons qu'à sauuer les apparences et trahissons cependant, et desaduouons noz vrayes intentions. Nous plastrons le faict. Nous sçauons comment nous l'auons dict, et en quel sens, et les assistans le sçauent, et noz amis à qui nous auons voulu faire sentir nostre aduantage. C'est aux despens de nostre franchise, et de l'honneur de nostre courage, que nous desaduouons nostre pensée, et cherchons des conillieres en la fauceté, pour nous accorder. Nous nous desmentons nous mesmes, pour sauuer vn desmentir que nous auons donné à vn autre.

Il ne faut pas regarder si vostre action ou vostre parole, peut auoir autre interpretation, c'est vostre vraye et sincere interpretation, qu'il faut mes-huy maintenir;

ENGLISH

set in motion, it is they that guide us and carry us away, and we have to follow them.

This is not to say that this counsel has relieved me of all difficulty, or that I have not often had to curb and bridle my passions. They do not always govern themselves by the measure of the occasions, and even their onsets are often harsh and violent. Still, a fine saving and profit come of it—except for those who in doing good are content with no profit if reputation is missing. For in truth such an outcome counts only for each man within himself. You are more content, but not more esteemed, having reformed yourself before you joined the dance and before the matter came into view.

And yet, not in this alone but in all the other duties of life, the path of those who aim at honor is very different from the one taken by those who set themselves order and reason as their goal. I find some who rush into the lists recklessly and furiously, and slow down in the race. Plutarch says that those who through the vice of false shame are soft and easy in granting whatever is asked of them are easy afterward in breaking their word and going back on it; in the same way, whoever enters lightly into a quarrel is apt to leave it just as lightly. That same difficulty which keeps me from starting one would spur me to hold firm once I was stirred and heated. That is a bad way to go about it.

Once you are in, you must go on or burst. "Undertake coolly," said Bias, "but pursue ardently." From want of prudence we fall into want of courage, which is still less bearable.

Most of the settlements of our quarrels nowadays are shameful and lying. We seek only to save appearances, and meanwhile we betray and disavow our true intentions. We plaster over the fact. We know how we said it and in what sense; the bystanders know it, and so do our friends, to whom we wanted to make our advantage felt. It is at the expense of our frankness and of the honor of our courage that we disavow our thought and look for rabbit holes in falsehood in order to come to terms. We give ourselves the lie to save a lie we have given another.

You must not look to see whether your act or your word can bear another interpretation; it is your true and sincere interpretation that you must up-

FRENCH

quoy qu'il vous couste. On parle à vostre vertu, et à vostre conscience: ce ne sont parties à mettre en masque. Laissons ces vils moyens, et ces expediens, à la chicane du palais. Les excuses et reparations, que ie voy faire tous les iours, pour purger l'indiscretion, me semblent plus laides que l'indiscretion mesme. Il vaudroit mieux l'offencer encore vn coup, que de s'offencer soy mesme, en faisant telle amende à son aduersaire.

Vous l'auez braué esmeu de cholere, et vous l'allez rappaiser et flatter en vostre froid et meilleur sens: ainsi vous vous soubsmettez plus, que vous ne vous estiez aduancé. Ie ne trouue aucun dire si vicieux à vn Gentilhomme, comme le desdire me semble luy estre honteux: quand c'est vn desdire, qu'on luy arrache par authorité. D'autant que l'opiniastreté, luy est plus excusable, que la pusillanimité. Les passions, me sont autant aisées à euiter, comme elles me sont difficiles à moderer. *Excinduntur facilius animo, quàm temperantur*. Qui ne peut atteindre à cette noble impassibilité Stoique, qu'il se sauue au giron de cette mienne stupidité populaire. Ce que ceux-là faisoyent par vertu, ie me duits à le faire par complexion.

La moyenne region loge les tempestes; les deux extremes, des hommes philosophes, et des hommes ruraux, concurrent en tranquillité et en bon heur; *Felix qui potuit rerum cognoscere causas,*
Atque metus omnes et inexorabile fatum
Subiecit pedibus, strepitúmque Acherontis auari!
Fortunatus et ille, Deos qui nouit agrestes,
Panáque, Syluanúmque senem, Nymphásque sorores!

3.10.26 De toutes choses les naissances sont foibles et tendres. Pourtant faut-il auoir les yeux ouuerts aux commencements. Car comme lors en sa petitesse, on n'en descouure pas le danger, quand il est accreu, on n'en descouure plus le remede. I'eusse rencontré vn million de trauerses, tous les iours, plus mal aisées à digerer, au cours de l'ambition, qu'il ne m'a esté mal-aysé d'arrester l'inclination naturelle qui m'y portoit. *Iure perhorrui / Latè conspicuum tollere verticem.*

ENGLISH

hold from now on, whatever it costs you. It is your virtue and your conscience that are being addressed; these are not parts to be put behind a mask. Let us leave these base means and expedients to the chicanery of the law courts. The excuses and reparations I see made every day to purge an indiscretion seem to me uglier than the indiscretion itself. It would be better to offend your adversary once more than to offend yourself by making him such amends.

You defied him when moved by anger, and now you go and appease and flatter him in your cool and better sense: thus you abase yourself further than you had advanced. I find no saying so wrong in a gentleman as unsaying seems to me shameful for him—when it is an unsaying wrung from him by authority; for obstinacy is more excusable in him than faintheartedness. The passions are as easy for me to avoid as they are hard for me to moderate. *They are more easily cut out of the soul than tempered.* Whoever cannot attain that noble Stoic impassibility, let him take refuge in the lap of this common dullness of mine. What those men did by virtue, I train myself to do by temperament.

The middle region houses the storms; the two extremes, philosophers and country folk, meet in tranquility and happiness. *Happy the man who has been able to know the causes of things,*
and has trampled underfoot all fears and inexorable fate
and the roar of greedy Acheron!
Fortunate too is he who knows the gods of the countryside,
Pan, and old Silvanus, and the sister Nymphs![32]

The births of all things are weak and tender. Therefore we must keep our eyes open at the beginnings; for just as at that stage, in its smallness, we do not discover the danger, so once it has grown we no longer discover the remedy. In the course of ambition I would have met a million obstacles every day, harder to digest than it has been hard for me to check the natural inclination that drew me toward it. *Rightly have I dreaded / to raise my head to be seen far and wide.*

32 Virgil, Georgics.

HIS RECORD AS MAYOR

Critics say his term left no trace; he answers that keeping the peace was the task.

FRENCH

ENGLISH

3.10.27 Toutes actions publiques sont subiectes à incertaines, et diuerses interpretations: car trop de testes en iugent. Aucuns disent, de cette mienne occupation de ville (et ie suis content d'en parler vn mot: non qu'elle le vaille, mais pour seruir de montre de mes mœurs en telles choses) que ie m'y suis porté en homme qui s'esmeut trop laschement, et d'vne affection languissante: et ils ne sont pas du tout esloignez d'apparence. I'essaye à tenir mon ame et mes pensées en repos. *Cùm semper natura, tum etiam ætate iam quietus.* Et si elles se desbauchent par fois, à quelque impression rude et penetrante, c'est à la verité sans mon conseil.

All public actions are subject to uncertain and varied interpretations, for too many heads judge them. Some say of this municipal office of mine (and I am glad to say a word about it—not that it is worth it, but to serve as a sample of my ways in such things) that I conducted myself in it like a man too sluggish to be stirred, with a languid zeal; and they are not altogether wide of the appearances. I try to keep my soul and my thoughts at rest. *Always quiet by nature, and now also by age.* And if they sometimes break loose under some rough and piercing impression, it is, in truth, without my consent.[33]

De cette langueur naturelle, on ne doibt pourtant tirer aucune preuue d'impuissance: car faute de soing, et faute de sens, ce sont deux choses: et moins de mes-cognoissance et d'ingratitude enuers ce peuple, qui employa tous les plus extremes moyens qu'il eust en ses mains, à me gratifier: et auant m'auoir cogneu, et apres. Et fit bien plus pour moy, en me redonnant ma charge, qu'en me la donnant premierement. Ie luy veux tout le bien qui se peut. Et certes si l'occasion y eust esté, il n'est rien que i'eusse espargné pour son seruice. Ie me suis esbranlé pour luy, comme ie fais pour moy.

From this natural languor, however, one should not draw any proof of incapacity—for want of care and want of sense are two different things—and still less of unawareness or ingratitude toward this people, who used all the most extreme means in their power to gratify me, both before they knew me and after, and did far more for me in giving me my office again than in giving it to me the first time. I wish them every possible good. And certainly, had the occasion arisen, there is nothing I would have spared in their service. I bestirred myself for them as I do for myself.

C'est vn bon peuple, guerrier et genereux: capable pourtant d'obeyssance et discipline, et de seruir à quelque bon vsage, s'il y est bien guidé. Ils disent aussi, cette mienne vacation s'estre passée sans marque et sans trace. Il est bon. On accuse ma cessation, en vn temps, où quasi tout le monde estoit conuaincu de trop faire. I'ay vn agir trepignant où la volonté me charrie. Mais cette pointe est ennemye de perseuerance. Qui se voudra seruir de moy, selon moy, qu'il me donne des affaires où il face besoing de vigueur, et de liberté: qui ayent vne conduitte droicte, et courte: et encores hazardeuse: i'y pourray quelque chose. S'il la faut longue, subtile, laborieuse, artificielle, et tortue, il fera mieux de s'addresser à quelqu'autre.

They are a good people, warlike and generous, yet capable of obedience and discipline and of serving some good purpose if well led. They also say that this term of mine passed without mark or trace. Very well. They accuse me of inaction at a time when almost everybody was guilty of doing too much. I have an impatient, foot-stamping way of acting where my will carries me along. But that keenness is hostile to perseverance. Whoever wants to make use of me in accordance with myself, let him give me affairs that call for vigor and freedom, that have a straight and short course, and even a risky one: there I may be able to do something. If the course must be long, subtle, laborious, artful and tortuous, he would do better to turn to someone else.

Toutes charges importantes ne sont pas difficiles. I'estois preparé à m'embesongner plus rudement vn peu, s'il en

Not all important offices are difficult. I was prepared to set to work a little more roughly if there

33 Quintus Cicero, Handbook of Electioneering.

FRENCH

eust esté grand besoing. Car il est en mon pouuoir, de faire quelque chose plus que ie ne fais, et que ie n'ayme à faire. Ie ne laissay que ie sçache, aucun mouuement, que le deuoir requist en bon escient de moy. I'ay facilement oublié ceux, que l'ambition mesle au deuoir, et couure de son tiltre. Ce sont ceux, qui le plus souuent remplissent les yeux et les oreilles, et contentent les hommes. Non pas la chose, mais l'apparence les paye. S'ils n'oyent du bruict, il leur semble qu'on dorme. Mes humeurs sont contradictoires aux humeurs bruyantes.

I'arresterois bien vn trouble, sans me troubler, et chastierois vn desordre sans alteration. Ay-ie besoing de cholere, et d'inflammation? ie l'emprunte, et m'en masque. Mes mœurs sont mousses, plustost fades, qu'aspres. Ie n'accuse pas vn magistrat qui dorme, pourueu que ceux qui sont soubs sa main, dorment quand et luy. Les loix dorment de mesme. Pour moy, ie louë vne vie glissante, sombre et muette. *Neque submissam et abiectam, neque se efferentem.* Ma fortune le veut ainsi. Ie suis nay d'vne famille, qui a coulé sans esclat, et sans tumulte: et de longue memoire, particulierement ambitieuse de preud'hommie. Nos hommes sont si formez à l'agitation et ostentation, que la bonté, la moderation, l'equabilité, la constance, et telles qualitez quietes et obscures, ne se sentent plus.

Les corps raboteux se sentent, les polis se manient imperceptiblement. La maladie se sent, la santé, peu ou point: ny les choses qui nous oignent, au prix de celles qui nous poignent. C'est agir pour sa reputation, et proffit particulier, non pour le bien, de remettre à faire en la place, ce qu'on peut faire en la chambre du conseil: et en plain midy, ce qu'on eust faict la nuict precedente: et d'estre ialoux de faire soy-mesme, ce que son compaignon faict aussi bien. Ainsi faisoyent aucuns chirurgiens de Grece, les operations de leur art, sur des eschaffaux à la veuë des passans, pour en acquerir plus de practique, et de chalandise.

Ils iugent, que les bons reglemens ne se peuuent entendre, qu'au son de la trompette. L'ambition n'est pas vn vice de petis compaignons, et de tels efforts que les nostres. On disoit à Alexandre: Vostre pere vous lairra vne grande domination, aysée, et pacifique: ce garçon estoit enuieux des victoires de son pere, et de la iustice de son gouuernement. Il n'eust pas voulu iouyr l'empire du monde, mollement et paisiblement. Alcibiades en Platon, ayme mieux mourir, ieune, beau, riche, noble, sçauant,

ENGLISH

had been great need. For it is in my power to do somewhat more than I do, and than I like to do. I did not omit, so far as I know, any action that duty seriously required of me. I easily forgot those that ambition mixes with duty and covers with its title. It is these that most often fill people's eyes and ears and satisfy them. Not the thing but the appearance pays them. If they hear no noise, it seems to them that we are asleep. My temperament is the opposite of noisy temperaments.

I could well stop a disturbance without being disturbed, and punish a disorder without losing my composure. Do I need anger and fire? I borrow them and wear them as a mask. My manners are blunt, insipid rather than harsh. I do not blame a magistrate who sleeps, provided those under his hand sleep along with him: the laws sleep likewise. For my part, I commend a life that glides along, obscure and silent, *neither abject and groveling nor self-exalting.* My fortune wills it so. I was born of a family that has flowed along without brilliance and without tumult, and within long memory particularly ambitious of integrity. Our men are so shaped to agitation and ostentation that goodness, moderation, evenness, constancy and such quiet and obscure qualities are no longer felt.

Rough bodies are felt; smooth ones are handled imperceptibly. Sickness is felt; health little or not at all—nor are the things that salve us felt, compared with those that stab us. It is acting for one's reputation and private profit, not for the common good, to put off doing in the public square what can be done in the council chamber, and at broad noon what could have been done the night before, and to insist jealously on doing oneself what one's colleague does just as well. That is how some surgeons in Greece performed the operations of their art on platforms in view of passers-by, to gain more practice and custom.

They judge that good regulations cannot be appreciated except to the sound of the trumpet. Ambition is not a vice for petty fellows and for efforts like ours. People said to Alexander: "Your father will leave you a great dominion, easy and peaceful." This boy was envious of his father's victories and of the justice of his government; he would not have wanted to enjoy the empire of the world softly and peacefully. Alcibiades, in Plato, would

FRENCH

tout cela par excellence, que de s'arrester en l'estat de cette condition. Cette maladie est à l'auanture excusable, en vne ame si forte et si plaine.

Quand ces ametes naines, et chetiues, s'en vont embabouynant: et pensent espandre leur nom, pour auoir iugé à droict vn affaire, ou continué l'ordre des gardes d'vne porte de ville: ils en montrent d'autant plus le cul, qu'ils esperent en hausser la teste. Ce menu bien faire, n'a ne corps ne vie. Il va s'esuanouyssant en la premiere bouche: et ne se promeine que d'vn carrefour de ruë à l'autre. Entretenez en hardiment vostre fils et vostre valet. Comme cet ancien, qui n'ayant autre auditeur de ses loüanges, et consent de sa valeur, se brauoit auec sa chambriere, en s'escriant: O Perrete, le galant et suffisant homme de maistre que tu as! Entretenez vous en vous-mesme, au pis aller.

Comme vn conseiller de ma cognoissance, ayant desgorgé vne battelée de paragraphes, d'vne extreme contention, et pareille ineptie: s'estant retiré de la chambre du conseil, au pissoir du palais: fut ouy marmotant entre les dents tout conscientieusement: *Non nobis, Domine, non nobis, sed nomini tuo da gloriam.* Qui ne peut d'ailleurs, si se paye de sa bourse.

3.10.28 La renommée ne se prostitue pas à si vil comte. Les actions rares et exemplaires, à qui elle est deuë ne souffriroient pas la compagnie de cette foule innumerable de petites actions iournalieres. Le marbre esleuera vos titres tant qu'il vous plaira, pour auoir faict repetasser vn pan de mur, ou descroter vn ruisseau public: mais non pas les hommes, qui ont du sens. Le bruit ne suit pas toute bonté, si la difficulté et estrangeté n'y est ioincte. Voyre ny la simple estimation, n'est deuë à toute action, qui n'ait de la vertu, selon les Stoïciens. Et ne veulent, qu'on sçache seulement gré, à celuy qui par temperance, s'abstient d'vne vieille chassieuse.

Ceux qui ont cognu les admirables qualitez de Scipion l'Africain, refusent la gloire, que Panætius luy attribue d'auoir esté abstinent de dons: comme gloire non tant sienne comme de son siecle. Nous auons les voluptez sortables à nostre fortune: n'vsurpons pas celles de la

ENGLISH

rather die young, handsome, rich, noble, learned —all of it to the highest degree—than stop at the state he had reached. This sickness is perhaps excusable in a soul so strong and so full.[34]

When these dwarfish, puny little souls go about making monkeys of themselves, and think they will spread their name for having judged a case rightly or kept up the rota of the guards at a city gate, the more they hope to raise their head, the more they show their backside. This petty well-doing has neither body nor life. It vanishes in the first mouth that tells it, and travels only from one street corner to the next. By all means talk about it to your son and your valet. Like that man of old who, having no other audience for his praises and no other witness to his worth, swaggered before his chambermaid, crying: "O Perrette, what a gallant and able man of a master you have!" At worst, talk about it to yourself.

Like a councilor I know who, having disgorged a boatload of paragraphs with extreme effort and equal ineptitude, and having withdrawn from the council chamber to the urinal of the Palace of Justice, was heard muttering most conscientiously between his teeth: *Not to us, Lord, not to us, but to your name give glory.* Whoever cannot get paid elsewhere pays himself out of his own purse.[35]

Fame does not prostitute herself at so cheap a rate. The rare and exemplary actions to which it is due would not put up with the company of that countless crowd of petty everyday actions. Marble will raise your titles as high as you please for having had a stretch of wall patched or a public gutter cleaned out; but men of sense will not. Renown does not follow every good deed unless difficulty and strangeness are joined to it. Indeed, according to the Stoics, not even simple esteem is due to every action that has no virtue in it. And they will not have us even feel grateful to the man who, out of temperance, abstains from a bleary-eyed old woman.

Those who knew the admirable qualities of Scipio Africanus deny him the glory that Panaetius attributes to him of having refused gifts, as a glory not so much his as his age's. We have the pleasures

34 Plato, First Alcibiades.
35 Psalm 115 (113 in the Vulgate).

FRENCH

grandeur. Les nostres sont plus naturelles. Et d'autant plus solides et seures, qu'elles sont plus basses. Puis que ce n'est par conscience, aumoins par ambition refusons l'ambition. Desdaignons cette faim de renommée et d'honneur, basse et belistresse, qui nous le faict coquiner de toute sorte de gens: *Quæ est ista laus quæ possit è macello peti?* par moyens abiects, et à quelque vil prix que ce soit. C'est deshonneur d'estre ainsin honnoré.

Apprenons à n'estre non plus auides, que nous sommes capables de gloire. De s'enfler de toute action vtile et innocente, c'est à faire à gens à qui elle est extraordinaire et rare. Ils la veulent mettre, pour le prix qu'elle leur couste. A mesure, qu'vn bon effect est plus esclatant: ie rabats de sa bonté, le soupçon en quoy i'entre, qu'il soit produict, plus pour estre esclatant, que pour estre bon. Estalé, il est à demy vendu. Ces actions là, ont bien plus de grace, qui eschappent de la main de l'ouurier, nonchalamment et sans bruict: et que quelque honneste homme, choisit apres, et releue de l'ombre, pour les pousser en lumiere: à cause d'elles mesmes.

Mihi quidem laudabiliora videntur omnia, quæ sine venditatione, et sine populo teste fiunt: dit le plus glorieux homme du monde. Ie n'auois qu'à conseruer et durer, qui sont effects sourds et insensibles. L'innouation est de grand lustre. Mais elle est interdicte en ce temps, où nous sommes pressez, et n'auons à nous deffendre que des nouuelletez. L'abstinence de faire, est souuent aussi genereuse, que le faire: mais elle est moins au iour. Et ce peu, que ie vaux, est quasi tout de cette espece. En somme les occasions en cette charge ont suiuy ma complexion: dequoy ie leur sçay tresbon gré. Est-il quelqu'vn qui desire estre malade, pour voir son medecin en besongne?

Et faudroit-il pas fouëter le medecin, qui nous desireroit la peste, pour mettre son art en practique? Ie n'ay point eu cett'humeur inique et assez commune, de desirer que le trouble et maladie des affaires de cette cité, rehaussast et honnorast mon gouuernement. I'ay presté de bon cœur, l'espaule à leur aysance et facilité. Qui ne me voudra sçauoir gré de l'ordre, de la douce et muette

ENGLISH

that suit our fortune; let us not usurp those of greatness. Ours are more natural, and all the more solid and secure for being lower. Since it is not out of conscience, let us at least out of ambition refuse ambition. Let us disdain this hunger for fame and honor, base and beggarly, which makes us go begging for it from all sorts of people—*What sort of praise is this, that can be sought in the market?*—by abject means and at whatever vile price. It is dishonor to be honored in this way.[36]

Let us learn to be no greedier for glory than we are capable of it. Puffing oneself up over every useful and innocent action is for people to whom such action is extraordinary and rare: they want to value it at the price it cost them. The more dazzling a good deed is, the more I deduct from its goodness, because of the suspicion I come to have that it was done more to dazzle than to be good. Put on display, it is half sold. Far more graceful are those actions that slip from the workman's hand carelessly and without noise, and that some decent man later picks out and raises from the shadows to push them into the light—for their own sake.

To me, indeed, all things seem more praiseworthy that are done without ostentation and without the people as witness, says the most vainglorious man in the world. I had only to preserve and endure, which are quiet, imperceptible achievements. Innovation has great luster; but it is forbidden in these times, when we are hard pressed and have nothing to defend ourselves against but novelties. Refraining from doing is often as noble as doing, but it is less in the open; and what little I am worth is almost all of this kind. In short, the occasions in this office have suited my constitution, for which I am most grateful to them. Is there anyone who wishes to be ill so as to see his physician at work?[37]

And should we not whip the physician who wished the plague on us so as to put his skill into practice? I have never had that unjust and rather common temper of wishing that the disorder and sickness of this city's affairs would exalt and honor my administration. I have gladly put my shoulder to making them easy and smooth. Who-

36 This is Scipio Aemilianus (Africanus the Younger), Panaetius' friend. The Latin is Cicero, On Ends II.15.
37 The Latin is Cicero, Tusculan Disputations II.26.

FRENCH

tranquillité, qui a accompaigné ma conduitte: aumoins ne peut-il me priuer de la part qui m'en appartient, par le tiltre de ma bonne fortune. Et ie suis ainsi faict: que i'ayme autant estre heureux que sage: et deuoir mes succez, purement à la grace de Dieu, qu'à l'entremise de mon operation.

I'auois assez disertement publié au monde mon insuffisance, en tels maniemens publiques. I'ay encore pis, que l'insuffisance: c'est qu'elle ne me desplaist guere: et que ie ne cherche guere à la guarir, veu le train de vie que i'ay desseigné. Ie ne me suis en cette entremise, non plus satisfaict à moy-mesme. Mais à peu pres, i'en suis arriué à ce que ie m'en estois promis: et si ay de beaucoup surmonté, ce que i'en auois promis à ceux, à qui i'auois à faire. Car ie promets volontiers vn peu moins de ce que ie puis, et de ce que i'espere tenir. Ie m'asseure, n'y auoir laissé ny offence ny haine.

D'y laisser regret et desir de moy: ie sçay à tout le moins bien cela, que ie ne l'ay pas fort affecté: *Méne huic confidere monstro!*
Méne salis placidi vultum, fluctúsque quietos
Ignorare!

ENGLISH

ever will not give me credit for the order, the gentle and silent tranquility that accompanied my conduct of office, cannot at least deprive me of the share of it that belongs to me by right of my good fortune. And I am so made that I like being lucky as much as being wise, and owing my successes purely to the grace of God as much as to the agency of my own work.

I had proclaimed to the world eloquently enough my incompetence in such public dealings. I have something still worse than incompetence: it hardly displeases me, and I hardly try to cure it, given the course of life I have planned for myself. Nor did I satisfy myself in this undertaking. But I have arrived at roughly what I had promised myself, and I have far surpassed what I had promised those I had to deal with; for I readily promise a little less than I can do and than I hope to deliver. I am sure I left behind neither offense nor hatred.

As for leaving behind regret and a desire for me, I know at least this much: that I did not much aim at it. *I, trust this monster?*
I, not know the look of the calm salt sea and the quiet waves
For what they are?[38]

38 Virgil, Aeneid V.849–51: the helmsman Palinurus refusing to trust a calm sea.

III.11 Of the Lame

Des boyteux

Starting from the calendar reform, Montaigne mocks credulity about witches and miracles and urges suspended judgment.

FRENCH

ENGLISH

3.11.1 IL y a deux ou trois ans, qu'on accoursit l'an de dix iours en France. Combien de changemens doiuent suyure cette reformation! Ce fut proprement remuer le ciel et la terre à la fois. Ce neantmoins, il n'est rien qui bouge de sa place. Mes voisins trouuent l'heure de leurs semences, de leur recolte, l'opportunité de leurs negoces, les iours nuisibles et propices, au mesme poinct iustement, où ils les auoyent assignez de tout temps. Ny l'erreur ne se sentoit en nostre vsage, ny l'amendement ne s'y sent. Tant il y a d'incertitude par tout: tant nostre apperceuance est grossiere, obscure et obtuse.

Two or three years ago the year was shortened by ten days in France. How many changes ought to follow from this reform! It was literally moving heaven and earth at once. And yet nothing has budged from its place. My neighbors find the time for their sowing and their harvest, the right moment for their business, the unlucky and lucky days, at exactly the same point where they had always placed them. Neither was the error felt in our practice, nor is the correction felt now. So much uncertainty is there everywhere; so coarse, dim and dull is our perception.[1]

On dit, que ce reglement se pouuoit conduire d'vne façon moins incommode: soustraiant à l'exemple d'Auguste, pour quelques années, le iour du bissexte: qui ainsi comme ainsin, est vn iour d'empeschement et de trouble: iusques à ce qu'on fust arriué à satisfaire exactement ce debte. Ce que mesme on n'a pas faict, par cette correction: et demeurons encores en arrerages de quelques iours. Et si par mesme moyen, on pouuoit prouuoir à l'aduenir, ordonnant qu'apres la reuolution de tel ou tel nombre d'années, ce iour extraordinaire seroit tousiours eclipsé: si que nostre mesconte ne pourroit d'ores-enauant exceder vingt et quatre heures. Nous n'auons autre comte du temps, que les ans.

They say this adjustment could have been carried out less inconveniently, by omitting the leap day for a few years, following the example of Augustus —a day that, one way or another, is a day of hindrance and confusion—until the debt had been exactly paid off. Which in fact has not even been done by this correction: we are still a few days in arrears. And by the same means provision could have been made for the future, by ordering that after the cycle of such-and-such a number of years this extra day would always be dropped, so that our miscount could never thereafter exceed twenty-four hours. We have no other reckoning of time than years.[2]

Il y a tant de siecles que le monde s'en sert: et si c'est vne mesure que nous n'auons encore acheué d'arrester. Et telle, que nous doubtons tous les iours, quelle forme les autres nations luy ont diuersement donné: et quel en estoit l'vsage. Quoy ce que disent aucuns, que les cieux se compriment vers nous en vieillissant, et nous iettent en incertitude des heures mesme et des iours? Et des moys, ce que dit Plutarque: qu'encore de son temps l'astrologie n'auoit sçeu borner le mouuement de la lune? Nous voyla bien accommodez, pour tenir registre des choses passées.

The world has used them for so many centuries, and yet it is a measure we have not yet finished fixing—so much so that every day we wonder what different forms other nations have given it and how they used it. And what of the claim some make, that the heavens are contracting toward us as they grow old, and throwing us into uncertainty even about hours and days? And about months, what Plutarch says: that even in his time astronomy had not managed to determine the mo-

1 France adopted the reformed calendar in December 1582.

2 Augustus suspended leap years for a period to correct errors made in applying Julius Caesar's calendar.

FRENCH

ENGLISH

tion of the moon? A fine position we are in for keeping records of things past!

3.11.2 Ie resuassois presentement, comme ie fais souuent, sur ce, combien l'humaine raison est vn instrument libre et vague. Ie vois ordinairement, que les hommes, aux faicts qu'on leur propose, s'amusent plus volontiers à en chercher la raison, qu'à en chercher la verité. Ils passent par dessus les presuppositions, mais ils examinent curieusement les consequences. Ils laissent les choses, et courent aux causes. Plaisans causeurs. La cognoissance des causes touche seulement celuy, qui a la conduitte des choses: non à nous, qui n'en auons que la souffrance. Et qui en auons l'vsage parfaictement plein et accompli, selon nostre besoing, sans en penetrer l'origine et l'essence. Ny le vin n'en est plus plaisant à celuy qui en sçait les facultez premieres.

I was musing just now, as I often do, on what a free and vague instrument human reason is. I commonly see that men, when facts are put before them, would rather amuse themselves by looking for the reason for them than by looking for the truth of them. They pass over the premises, but examine the consequences with great care. They leave the things and run to the causes. Fine talkers about causes they are! Knowledge of causes concerns only the one who has the direction of things, not us, who only undergo them, and who have the full and complete use of them, according to our need, without penetrating their origin and essence. Nor is wine any more pleasant to the man who knows its primary properties.

Au contraire: et le corps et l'ame, interrompent et alterent le droit qu'ils ont de l'vsage du monde, et de soy-mesmes, y meslant l'opinion de science. Les effectz nous touchent, mais les moyens, nullement. Le determiner et le distribuer, appartient à la maistrise, et à la regence: comme à la subiection et apprentissage, l'accepter. Reprenons nostre coustume. Ils commencent ordinairement ainsi: Comment est-ce que cela se fait? mais, se fait-il? faudroit il dire. Nostre discours est capable d'estoffer cent autres mondes, et d'en trouuer les principes et la contexture. Il ne luy faut ny matiere ny baze.

On the contrary: both body and soul disturb and impair the right they have to the use of the world and of themselves by mixing into it the conceit of knowledge. Effects concern us, but the means not at all. Determining and distributing belong to mastery and rule, just as accepting belongs to subjection and apprenticeship. To return to our habit: they usually begin like this: "How does this happen?" What they should say is: "But does it happen?" Our reasoning is capable of furnishing a hundred other worlds and finding their principles and structure. It needs neither matter nor foundation.

Laissez le courre: il bastit aussi bien sur le vuide que sur le plain, et de l'inanité que de matiere, *Dare pondus idonea fumo.* Ie trouue quasi par tout, qu'il faudroit dire: Il n'en est rien. Et employerois souuent cette responce: mais ie n'ose: car ils crient, que c'est vne deffaicte produicte de foiblesse d'esprit et d'ignorance. Et me faut ordinairement basteler par compaignie, à traicter des subiects, et contes friuoles, que ie mescrois entierement. Ioinct qu'à la verité, il est vn peu rude et quereleux, de nier tout sec, vne proposition de faict. Et peu de gens faillent: notamment aux choses malaysées à persuader, d'affermer qu'ils l'ont veu: ou d'alleguer des tesmoins, desquels l'authorité arreste notre contradiction.

Let it run: it builds as well on the empty as on the full, and out of nothingness as out of matter, *fit to give weight to smoke.* I find almost everywhere that we ought to say: "There is nothing to it." And I would often use this answer, but I dare not, for they cry that it is an evasion born of weakness of mind and ignorance. So I usually have to play the clown for company's sake, discussing subjects and frivolous tales that I entirely disbelieve. Besides, to tell the truth, it is a bit rude and quarrelsome to flatly deny a statement of fact. And few people fail —especially in things hard to make others believe —to assert that they have seen it, or to cite witnesses whose authority stops our contradiction.[3]

Suyuant cet vsage, nous sçauons les fondemens, et les moyens, de mille choses qui ne furent onques. Et

Following this practice, we know the foundations and the means of a thousand things that never ex-

3 Persius, Satires V.20.

FRENCH

s'escarmouche le monde, en mille questions, desquelles, et le pour et le contre, est faux. *Ita finitima sunt falsa veris, vt in præcipitem locum non debeat se sapiens committere.* La verité et le mensonge ont leurs visages conformes, le port, le goust, et les alleures pareilles: nous les regardons de mesme œil. Ie trouue que nous ne sommes pas seulement lasches à nous defendre de la piperie: mais que nous cherchons, et conuions à nous y enferrer. Nous aymons à nous embrouïller en la vanité, comme conforme à nostre estre.

ENGLISH

isted. And the world skirmishes over a thousand questions in which both the pro and the con are false. *The false is so close to the true that the wise man should not venture onto such a precipitous slope.* Truth and falsehood have matching faces; their bearing, taste and gait are alike; we look at them with the same eye. I find that we are not only slack in defending ourselves against deception, but that we seek it out and invite it to run us through. We love to entangle ourselves in vanity, as something in keeping with our being.[4]

HOW MIRACLES ARE BORN

Rumor grows from small beginnings as each teller adds something of his own.

FRENCH

3.11.3 I'ay veu la naissance de plusieurs miracles de mon temps. Encore qu'ils s'estouffent en naissant, nous ne laissons pas de preuoir le train qu'ils eussent pris, s'ils eussent vescu leur aage. Car il n'est que de trouuer le bout du fil, on en desuide tant qu'on veut. Et y a plus loing, de rien, à la plus petite chose du monde, qu'il n'y a de celle là, iusques à la plus grande. Or les premiers qui sont abbreuuez de ce commencement d'estrangeté, venans à semer leur histoire, sentent par les oppositions qu'on leur fait, où loge la difficulté de la persuasion, et vont calfeutrant cet endroict de quelque piece fauce.

Outre ce que, *insita hominibus libidine alendi de industria rumores*, nous faisons naturellement conscience, de rendre ce qu'on nous a presté, sans quelque vsure, et accession de nostre creu. L'erreur particuliere, fait premierement l'erreur publique: et à son tour apres, l'erreur publique fait l'erreur particuliere. Ainsi va tout ce bastiment, s'estoffant et formant, de main en main: de maniere que le plus eslongné tesmoin, en est mieux instruict que le plus voisin: et le dernier informé, mieux persuadé que le premier. C'est vn progrez naturel. Car quiconque croit quelque chose, estime que c'est ouurage de charité, de la persuader à vn autre.

Et pour ce faire, ne craint point d'adiouster de son inuention, autant qu'il voit estre necessaire en son compte, pour suppleer à la resistance et au deffaut qu'il pense estre en la conception d'autruy. Moy-mesme, qui

ENGLISH

I have seen the birth of several miracles in my time. Even though they are smothered at birth, we can still foresee the course they would have taken if they had lived out their span. For you need only find the end of the thread, and you can unwind as much as you like. And there is a greater distance from nothing to the smallest thing in the world than from that to the greatest. Now the first people who have drunk in this beginning of strangeness, when they come to spread their story, sense from the objections raised against them where the difficulty of persuading lies, and go about caulking that spot with some false patch.

Besides which, *through men's innate desire to feed rumors deliberately*, we naturally feel it a matter of conscience not to return what has been lent us without some interest and some addition of our own growing. Private error first creates public error; and afterward, in its turn, public error creates private error. So this whole edifice goes on filling out and taking shape from hand to hand, so that the remotest witness is better informed about it than the nearest, and the last to be told more convinced than the first. It is a natural progression. For whoever believes something thinks it a work of charity to persuade another of it.[5]

And to do so he is not afraid to add of his own invention as much as he sees is needed in his account to make up for the resistance and the deficiency he thinks he finds in the other person's un-

4 Cicero, Academica II.21.
5 Livy XXVIII.24.

FRENCH

fais singuliere conscience de mentir: et qui ne me soucie guere de donner creance et authorité à ce que ie dis, m'apperçoy toutesfois, aux propos que i'ay en main, qu'estant eschauffé ou par la resistance d'vn autre, ou par la propre chaleur de ma narration, ie grossis et enfle mon subiect, par voix, mouuemens, vigueur et force de parolles: et encore par extention et amplification: non sans interest de la verité nayfue.

Mais ie le fais en condition pourtant, qu'au premier qui me rameine, et qui me demande la verité nuë et cruë: ie quitte soudain mon effort, et la luy donne, sans exaggeration, sans emphase, et remplissage. La parole viue et bruyante, comme est la mienne ordinaire, s'emporte volontiers à l'hyperbole. Il n'est rien à quoy communement les hommes soyent plus tendus, qu'à donner voye à leurs opinions. Où le moyen ordinaire nous faut, nous y adioustons, le commandement, la force, le fer, et le feu. Il y a du mal'heur, d'en estre là, que la meilleure touche de la verité, ce soit la multitude des croyans, en vne presse où les fols surpassent de tant, les sages, en nombre.

Quasi verò quidquam sit tam valdè, quàm nil sapere vulgare. Sanitatis patrocinium est, insanientium turba. C'est chose difficile de resouldre son iugement contre les opinions communes. La premiere persuasion prinse du subiect mesme, saisit les simples: de là elle s'espand aux habiles, soubs l'authorité du nombre et ancienneté des tesmoignages. Pour moy, de ce que ie n'en croirois pas vn, ie n'en croirois pas cent vns. Et ne iuge pas les opinions, par les ans.

Il y a peu de temps, que l'vn de nos Princes, en qui la goute auoit perdu vn beau naturel, et vne allegre composition: se laissa si fort persuader, au rapport qu'on faisoit des merueilleuses operations d'vn prestre, qui par la voye des parolles et des gestes, guerissoit toutes maladies: qu'il fit vn long voyage pour l'aller trouuer: et par la force de son apprehension, persuada, et endormit ses iambes pour quelques heures, si qu'il en tira du seruice, qu'elles auoyent desapris luy faire, il y auoit long temps. Si la Fortune eust laissé emmonceler cinq ou six telles aduantures, elles estoient capables de mettre ce miracle en nature.

On trouua depuis, tant de simplesse, et si peu d'art, en l'architecte de tels ouurages, qu'on le iugea indigne

ENGLISH

derstanding. I myself, who make a particular point of conscience about lying, and who hardly care about giving credence and authority to what I say, nevertheless notice, in the matters I have in hand, that when I am heated either by someone else's resistance or by the very warmth of my telling, I swell and inflate my subject by voice, gestures, vigor and force of words, and also by extension and amplification—not without harm to the plain truth.

But I do it on this condition, however: that for the first person who brings me back and asks me for the naked, raw truth, I immediately drop my effort and give it to him, without exaggeration, without emphasis or padding. Lively, loud speech, such as mine usually is, readily runs away into hyperbole. There is nothing men are commonly more bent on than making way for their opinions. Where the ordinary means fail us, we add command, force, steel and fire. It is a misfortune to have come to this: that the best touchstone of truth should be the number of believers, in a crowd where fools so far outnumber the wise.

As if anything were as common as lack of wisdom! A crowd of madmen is the advocate of sanity. It is a hard thing to settle one's judgment against common opinions. The first persuasion, drawn from the subject itself, seizes the simple; from there it spreads to the clever, under the authority of the number and age of the testimonies. For my part, what I would not believe from one, I would not believe from a hundred and one. And I do not judge opinions by their years.[6]

Not long ago one of our princes, in whom gout had spoiled a fine nature and a cheerful disposition, let himself be so thoroughly persuaded by the reports of the marvelous cures of a priest who healed every disease by means of words and gestures that he made a long journey to find him. And by the force of his imagination he persuaded his legs and numbed them for a few hours, so that he got out of them a service they had long since forgotten how to give him. If Fortune had let five or six such incidents pile up, they could have made this miracle part of nature.

Afterward so much simplicity and so little skill were found in the architect of these works that he

6 Cicero, On Divination II.39, and Augustine, The City of God VI.10.

FRENCH

d'aucun chastiement. Comme si feroit on, de la plus part de telles choses, qui les recognoistroit en leur giste. *Miramur ex interuallo fallentia.* Nostre veuë represente ainsi souuent de loing, des images estranges, qui s'esuanouyssent en s'approchant. *Nunquam ad liquidum fama perducitur.*

3.11.4 C'est merueille, de combien vains commencemens, et friuoles causes, naissent ordinairement si fameuses impressions. Cela mesmes en empesche l'information. Car pendant qu'on cherche des causes, et des fins fortes, et poisantes, et dignes d'vn si grand nom, on pert les vrayes. Elles eschapent de nostre veuë par leur petitesse. Et à la verité, il est requis vn bien prudent, attentif, et subtil inquisiteur, en telles recherches: indifferent, et non preoccupé. Iusques à cette heure, tous ces miracles, et euenemens estranges, se cachent deuant moy. Ie n'ay veu monstre et miracle au monde, plus expres, que moy-mesme. On s'appriuoise à toute estrangeté par l'vsage et le temps: mais plus ie me hante et me cognois, plus ma difformité m'estonne: moins ie m'entens en moy.

Le principal droict d'auancer et produire tels accidens, est reserué à la Fortune. Passant auant hier dans vn village, à deux lieuës de ma maison, ie trouuay la place encore toute chaude, d'vn miracle qui venoit d'y faillir: par lequel le voisinage auoit esté amusé plusieurs mois, et commençoient les prouinces voisines, de s'en esmouuoir, et y accourir à grosses troupes, de toutes qualitez.

Vn ieune homme du lieu, s'estoit ioüé à contrefaire vne nuict en sa maison, la voix d'vn esprit, sans penser à autre finesse, qu'à ioüir d'vn badinage present: cela luy ayant vn peu mieux succedé qu'il n'esperoit, pour estendre sa farce à plus de ressorts, il y associa vne fille de village, du tout stupide, et niaise: et furent trois en fin, de mesme aage et pareille suffisance: et de presches domestiques en firent des presches publics, se cachans soubs l'autel de l'Église, ne parlans que de nuict, et deffendans d'y apporter aucune lumiere.

De paroles, qui tendoient à la conuersion du monde, et menace du iour du iugement (car ce sont subiects soubs l'authorité et reuerence desquels, l'imposture se tapit

ENGLISH

was judged unworthy of any punishment. As would be done with most such things, if one tracked them down in their lair. *We marvel at things that deceive us from a distance.* In the same way our sight often presents strange images from afar that vanish as we draw near. *Rumor is never brought to clarity.*[7]

It is a marvel from what empty beginnings and frivolous causes such famous impressions usually arise. That very fact hinders the investigation of them; for while we look for strong, weighty causes and ends, worthy of so great a name, we lose the true ones. They escape our sight by their smallness. And truly, such inquiries require a very prudent, attentive and subtle investigator, impartial and unprejudiced. Up to now all these miracles and strange events hide from me. I have seen no more manifest monster or miracle in the world than myself. We grow used to any strangeness through habit and time; but the more I frequent myself and know myself, the more my deformity stuns me, and the less I understand myself.

The chief right to bring forward and produce such incidents is reserved to Fortune. Passing through a village two leagues from my house the day before yesterday, I found the place still quite warm from a miracle that had just come to nothing there. It had kept the neighborhood busy for several months, and the neighboring provinces were beginning to be stirred by it and to flock there in large bands of every rank.

A young man of the place had amused himself one night by imitating the voice of a spirit in his house, with no further trick in mind than enjoying a joke on the spot. This having worked a little better than he hoped, he took on as partner, to give his farce more machinery, a village girl, utterly dull and simple; and in the end there were three of them, of the same age and similar wits. And from sermons at home they went on to public sermons, hiding under the altar of the church, speaking only at night, and forbidding anyone to bring any light there.

From words aimed at the conversion of the world and threats of the Day of Judgment (for these are subjects under whose authority and reverence im-

7 Seneca, Letters 118; Quintus Curtius IX.2.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
	plus aisément) ils vindrent à quelques visions et mouuements, si niais, et si ridicules: qu'à peine y a-il rien si grossier au ieu des petits enfans. Si toutesfois la Fortune y eust voulu prester vn peu de faueur, qui sçait, iusques où se fust accreu ce battelage? Ces pauures diables sont à cette heure en prison; et porteront volontiers la peine de la sottise commune: et ne sçay si quelque iuge se vengera sur eux, de la sienne.	posture most easily lurks), they went on to certain visions and movements so silly and ridiculous that there is hardly anything so crude in little children's games. Yet if Fortune had been willing to lend them a little favor, who knows how far this juggling act might have grown? These poor devils are now in prison, and will probably pay the penalty for the common folly; and I do not know whether some judge will take revenge on them for his own.
	On voit clair en cette-cy, qui est descouuerte: mais en plusieurs choses de pareille qualité, surpassant nostre cognoissance: ie suis d'aduis, que nous soustenions nostre iugement, aussi bien à reieter, qu'à receuoir.	We see clearly in this case, which has been exposed; but in many things of the same kind that are beyond our knowledge, I am of the opinion that we should hold back our judgment, as much from rejecting as from accepting.

PROFESSING IGNORANCE

Words like "perhaps" and "it seems" are wiser than confident assertions.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
3.11.5	Il s'engendre beaucoup d'abus au monde: ou pour dire plus hardiment, tous les abus du monde s'engendrent, de ce, qu'on nous apprend à craindre de faire profession de nostre ignorance; et sommes tenus d'accepter, tout ce que nous ne pouuons refuter. Nous parlons de toutes choses par preceptes et resolution. Le stile à Rome portoit, que cela mesme, qu'vn tesmoin deposoit, pour l'auoir veu de ses yeux, et ce qu'vn iuge ordonnoit de sa plus certaine science, estoit conceu en cette forme de parler: Il me semble. On me faict haïr les choses vray-semblables, quand on me les plante pour infaillibles. I'aime ces mots, qui amollissent et moderent la temerité de nos propositions: à l'auanture, aucunement, quelque, on dit, ie pense, et semblables.	Many abuses are bred in the world—or, to put it more boldly, all the abuses in the world are bred—from our being taught to be afraid of professing our ignorance, and being obliged to accept whatever we cannot refute. We speak about everything by precept and decision. The usage at Rome required that even what a witness deposed as having seen with his own eyes, and what a judge decreed from his most certain knowledge, be couched in this form of words: "It seems to me." People make me hate probable things when they plant them on me as infallible. I love those words that soften and moderate the rashness of our propositions: "perhaps," "to some extent," "some," "they say," "I think," and the like.
	Et si i'eusse eu à dresser des enfans, ie leur eusse tant mis en la bouche, cette façon de respondre: enquestente, non resolutiue: Qu'est-ce à dire? ie ne l'entens pas; il pourroit estre: est-il vray? qu'ils eussent plustost gardé la forme d'apprentis à soixante ans, que de representer les docteurs à dix ans: comme ils font. Qui veut guerir de l'ignorance, il faut la confesser.	And if I had had children to bring up, I would have put this way of answering into their mouths so often—inquiring, not decisive: "What does that mean? I do not understand it. It might be so. Is it true?"—that they would sooner have kept the manner of apprentices at sixty than play the learned doctors at ten, as they do. Whoever would be cured of ignorance must confess it.
3.11.6	Iris est fille de Thaumantis. L'admiration est fondement de toute philosophie: l'inquisition, le progrez: l'ignorance, le bout. Voire dea, il y a quelque ignorance forte et genereuse, qui ne doit rien en honneur et en	Iris is the daughter of Thaumas. Wonder is the foundation of all philosophy, inquiry its progress, ignorance its end. Yes indeed, there is a strong and noble ignorance that owes nothing in honor and courage to knowledge—an ignorance that takes no

FRENCH

courage à la science, ignorance pour laquelle conceuoir, il n'y a pas moins de science, qu'à conceuoir la science.

Ie vy en mon enfance, vn procez que Corras conseiller de Thoulouze fit imprimer, d'vn accident estrange; de deux hommes, qui se presentoient l'vn pour l'autre: il me souuient, et ne me souuient aussi d'autre chose, qu'il me sembla auoir rendu l'imposture de celuy qu'il iugea coulpable, si merueilleuse et excedant de si loing nostre cognoissance, et la sienne, qui estoit iuge, que ie trouuay beaucoup de hardiesse en l'arrest qui l'auoit condamné à estre pendu. Receuons quelque forme d'arrest qui die: La Cour n'y entend rien; plus librement et ingenuëment, que ne firent les Areopagites: lesquels se trouuans pressez d'vne cause, qu'ils ne pouuoient desuelopper, ordonnerent que les parties en viendroient à cent ans.

ENGLISH

less knowledge to conceive than it takes to conceive knowledge.[8]

In my childhood I saw the account of a trial that Coras, a councilor of Toulouse, had printed, about a strange case of two men who each passed himself off as the other. I remember (and I remember nothing else) that he seemed to me to have made the imposture of the man he judged guilty so marvelous, and so far beyond our knowledge and his own, who was the judge, that I found great boldness in the sentence that had condemned the man to be hanged. Let us adopt some form of sentence that says: "The court does not understand the matter at all"—more freely and candidly than the Areopagites did, who, finding themselves pressed by a case they could not unravel, ordered the parties to come back in a hundred years.[9]

WITCHES

Montaigne refuses to see people burned on charges that lie beyond human proof.

FRENCH

Les sorcieres de mon voisinage, courent hazard de leur vie, sur l'aduis de chasque nouuel autheur, qui vient donner corps à leurs songes. Pour accommoder les exemples que la diuine parolle nous offre de telles choses; tres-certains et irrefragables exemples; et les attacher à nos euenemens modernes: puisque nous n'en voyons, ny les causes, ny les moyens: il y faut autre engin que le nostre. Il appartient à l'auanture, à ce seul tres-puissant tesmoignage, de nous dire: Cettuy-cy en est, et celle-là: et non cet autre. Dieu en doit estre creu: c'est vrayement bien raison.

Mais non pourtant vn d'entre nous, qui s'estonne de sa propre narration (et necessairement il s'en estonne, s'il n'est hors du sens) soit qu'il l'employe au faict d'autruy: soit qu'il l'employe contre soy-mesme.

3.11.7 Ie suis lourd, et me tiens vn peu au massif, et au vrayssemblable: euitant les reproches anciens. *Maiorem fidem homines adhibent ijs quæ non intelligunt. Cupidine humani ingenij libentius obscura creduntur.* Ie vois bien qu'on se courrouce: et me deffend-on d'en doubter, sur peine d'iniures execrables. Nouuelle façon de persuader. Pour

ENGLISH

The witches in my neighborhood risk their lives on the opinion of each new author who comes along to give body to their dreams. To adapt the examples that the divine Word offers us of such things—most certain and irrefutable examples—and to attach them to our modern events, since we see neither their causes nor their means, requires another kind of wit than ours. It belongs perhaps to that sole and most powerful testimony to tell us: "This man is one of them, and that woman, but not this other." God must be believed in this; that is indeed entirely right.

But not, for all that, one of us, who is astonished at his own story (and he must necessarily be astonished at it, if he is not out of his mind), whether he applies it to someone else's doings or against himself.

I am heavy-minded, and keep somewhat to the solid and the probable, avoiding the ancient reproaches: *Men put more faith in what they do not understand. Through a craving of the human mind, obscure things are more readily believed.* I see plainly that people get angry, and forbid me to doubt it on

8 Plato, Theaetetus 155d: Iris, messenger of the gods, is the daughter of Thaumas, whose name evokes wonder (thauma).
9 Jean de Coras published (1561) his account of the Martin Guerre case; the impostor Arnaud du Tilh was hanged in 1560.

FRENCH

ENGLISH

Dieu mercy. Ma creance ne se manie pas à coups de poing. Qu'ils gourmandent ceux qui accusent de fauceté leur opinion: ie ne l'accuse que de difficulté et de hardiesse. Et condamne l'affirmation opposite, egallement auec eux: sinon si imperieusement. Qui establit son discours par brauerie et commandement, montre que la raison y est foible. Pour vne altercation verbale et scholastique, qu'ils ayent autant d'apparence que leurs contradicteurs.

pain of execrable insults. A new way of persuading! Thank God, my belief is not handled with fists. Let them berate those who accuse their opinion of falsehood; I accuse it only of being difficult and bold. And I condemn the opposite assertion just as they do, though not so imperiously. Whoever establishes his reasoning by bravado and command shows that reason is weak in it. In a verbal, scholastic dispute, let them have as much plausibility as their opponents.[10]

Videantur sanè, non affirmentur modo. Mais en la consequence effectuelle qu'ils en tirent, ceux-cy ont bien de l'auantage.

By all means let them be put forward as seeming true, but not affirmed. But in the practical consequence they draw from it, these people have much the advantage.[11]

3.11.8 A tuer les gens: il faut vne clairté lumineuse et nette. Et est nostre vie trop réelle et essentielle, pour garantir ces accidens, supernaturels et fantastiques. Quant aux drogues et poisons, ie les mets hors de mon conte: ce sont homicides, et de la pire espece. Toutesfois en cela mesme, on dit qu'il ne faut pas tousiours s'arrester à la propre confession de ces gens icy. Car on leur a veu par fois s'accuser d'auoir tué des personnes, qu'on trouuoit saines et viuantes. En ces autres accusations extrauagantes, ie dirois volontiers; que c'est bien assez; qu'vn homme, quelque recommendation qu'il aye, soit creu de ce qui est humain.

To kill people, there must be a bright, clear light. And our life is too real and substantial to stand surety for these supernatural and fantastic incidents. As for drugs and poisons, I leave them out of my account: those are homicides, and of the worst kind. Yet even there, they say, one must not always rely on these people's own confession; for they have sometimes been seen to accuse themselves of having killed people who were found healthy and alive. As for these other extravagant accusations, I would readily say that it is quite enough for a man, whatever recommendation he may have, to be believed about what is human.

De ce qui est hors de sa conception, et d'vn effect supernaturel: il en doit estre creu, lors seulement, qu'vne approbation supernaturelle l'a authorisé. Ce priuilege qu'il a pleu à Dieu, donner à aucuns de nos tesmoignages, ne doit pas estre auily, et communiqué legerement. I'ay les oreilles battuës de mille tels contes. Trois le virent vn tel iour, en leuant: trois le virent lendemain, en occident: à telle heure, tel lieu, ainsi vestu: certes ie ne m'en croirois pas moy-mesme. Combien trouué-ie plus naturel, et plus vray-semblable, que deux hommes mentent: que ie ne fay qu'vn homme en douze heures, passe, quant et les vents, d'orient en occident?

As for what is beyond his comprehension and has a supernatural effect, he should be believed only when a supernatural approval has authorized him. This privilege that it has pleased God to give to some of our testimonies must not be cheapened and passed around lightly. My ears are battered with a thousand such tales: "Three people saw him on such a day in the east; three saw him the next day in the west, at such an hour, in such a place, dressed thus." Truly, I would not believe it of myself. How much more natural and likely I find it that two men are lying than that one man should pass with the winds from east to west in twelve hours!

Combien plus naturel que nostre entendement soit emporté de sa place, par la volubilité de notre esprit detraqué; que cela, qu'vn de nous soit enuolé sur vn balay, au long du tuiau de sa cheminée, en chair et en os, par vn esprit estranger? Ne cherchons pas des illusions

How much more natural that our understanding should be carried off its base by the whirling of our unhinged minds than that one of us should be flown up his chimney flue on a broomstick, in

10 The second Latin sentence is Tacitus, Histories I.22.
11 Cicero, Academica II.27.

FRENCH

du dehors, et incogneuës: nous qui sommes perpetuellement agitez d'illusions domestiques et nostres. Il me semble qu'on est pardonnable, de mescroire vne merueille, autant au moins qu'on peut en destourner et elider la verification, par voye non merueilleuse. Et suis l'aduis de S. Augustin: qu'il vaut mieux pancher vers le doute, que vers l'asseurance, és choses de difficile preuue, et dangereuse creance.

3.11.9 Il y a quelques années, que ie passay par les terres d'vn Prince souuerain: lequel en ma faueur, et pour rabattre mon incredulité, me fit cette grace, de me faire voir en sa presence, en lieu particulier, dix ou douze prisonniers de ce genre; et vne vieille entre autres, vrayment bien sorciere en laideur et deformité, tres-fameuse de longue main en cette profession. Ie vis et preuues, et libres confessions, et ie ne sçay quelle marque insensible sur cette miserable vieille: et m'enquis, et parlay tout mon saoul, y apportant la plus saine attention que ie peusse: et ne suis pas homme qui me laisse guere garroter le iugement par preoccupation.

En fin et en conscience, ie leur eusse plustost ordonné de l'ellebore que de la ciguë. *Captisque res magis mentibus, quàm consceleratis similis visa.* La iustice a ses propres corrections pour telles maladies. Quant aux oppositions et arguments, que des honnestes hommes m'ont faict, et là, et souuent ailleurs: ie n'en ay point senty, qui m'attachent: et qui ne souffrent solution tousiours plus vray-semblable, que leurs conclusions. Bien est vray que les preuues et raisons qui se fondent sur l'experience et sur le faict: celles-là, ie ne les desnouë point; aussi n'ont elles point de bout: ie les tranche souuent, comme Alexandre son nœud. Apres tout c'est mettre ses coniectures à bien haut prix, que d'en faire cuire vn homme tout vif.

3.11.10 On recite par diuers exemples (et Prestantius de son pere) qu'assoupy et endormy bien plus lourdement, que d'vn parfaict sommeil: il fantasia estre iument, et seruir de sommier à des soldats: et, ce qu'il fantasioit, il l'estoit. Si les sorciers songent ainsi materiellement: si les songes par fois se peuuent ainsin incorporer en effects: encore ne croy-ie pas, que nostre volonté en fust tenuë à la iustice. Ce que ie dis, comme celuy qui n'est pas iuge ny conseiller des Roys; ny s'en estime de bien loing digne:

ENGLISH

flesh and blood, by some alien spirit! Let us not look for illusions from outside and unknown, we who are perpetually shaken by illusions that are domestic and our own. It seems to me pardonable to disbelieve a marvel, at least as far as one can divert and evade its verification by non-marvelous means. And I follow the opinion of Saint Augustine, that it is better to lean toward doubt than toward certainty in things difficult to prove and dangerous to believe.

Some years ago I passed through the lands of a sovereign prince, who, as a favor to me and to beat down my incredulity, did me the kindness of showing me, in his presence and in a private place, ten or twelve prisoners of this kind. Among them was an old woman, truly a witch in ugliness and deformity, long very famous in that profession. I saw proofs and free confessions, and some mark or other on that wretched old woman that could feel nothing; and I questioned and talked to my heart's content, bringing to it the soundest attention I could. And I am not a man who lets his judgment be much tied up by prejudice.

In the end, and in all conscience, I would rather have prescribed them hellebore than hemlock. *Their case seemed more like madness than crime.* Justice has its own remedies for such illnesses. As for the objections and arguments that decent men have put to me, both there and often elsewhere, I have felt none that held me fast, or that did not admit a solution always more plausible than their conclusions. It is true that the proofs and reasons founded on experience and fact—those I do not untie; besides, they have no end to them. I often cut them, as Alexander did his knot. After all, it is putting a very high price on one's conjectures to have a man roasted alive for them.[12]

It is told in various examples (and Praestantius tells it of his father) that, drowsy and asleep much more heavily than in a proper sleep, he imagined he was a mare and was serving as a packhorse for soldiers; and what he imagined, he was. If sorcerers dream so materially, if dreams can sometimes take bodily form in deeds like this, still I do not believe our will should be held accountable for it to justice. I say this as one who is neither a judge nor

12 Hellebore was the classic remedy for madness, hemlock a deadly poison. The Latin is Livy VIII.18.

FRENCH

ENGLISH

ains homme du commun: nay et voüé à l'obeïssance de la raison publique, et en ses faicts, et en ses dicts.

a counselor of kings, nor thinks himself remotely worthy of being one, but a man of the common sort, born and vowed to obedience to public reason, in both his deeds and his words.[13]

Qui mettroit mes resueries en conte, au preiudice de la plus chetiue loy de son village, ou opinion, ou coustume, il se feroit grand tort, et encores autant à moy. Car en ce que ie dy, ie ne pleuuis autre certitude, sinon que c'est ce, que lors i'en auoy en la pensée. Pensée tumultuaire et vacillante. C'est par maniere de deuis, que ie parle de tout, et de rien par maniere d'aduis. *Nec me pudet, vt istos, fateri nescire quod nesciam.* Ie ne serois pas si hardy à parler, s'il m'appartenoit d'en estre creu. Et fut, ce que ie respondis à vn grand, qui se plaignoit de l'aspreté et contention de mes enhortemens.

Anyone who took my musings into account to the prejudice of the paltriest law, opinion or custom of his village would do himself a great wrong, and me just as much. For in what I say I guarantee no other certainty than that it is what I had in mind at the time—a tumultuous, wavering mind. I speak of everything by way of conversation, and of nothing by way of advice. *Nor am I ashamed, as they are, to confess that I do not know what I do not know.* I would not be so bold in speaking if I had any right to be believed. And that is what I answered a great man who complained of the harshness and vehemence of my exhortations:[14]

Vous sentant bandé et preparé d'vne part, ie vous propose l'autre, de tout le soing que ie puis: pour esclarcir vostre iugement, non pour l'obliger. Dieu tient vos courages, et vous fournira de choix. Ie ne suis pas si presomptueux, de desirer seulement, que mes opinions donnassent pente, à chose de telle importance. Ma fortune, ne les a pas dressées à si puissantes et si esleuées conclusions. Certes, i'ay non seulement des complexions en grand nombre: mais aussi des opinions assez, desquelles ie dégouterois volontiers mon fils, si i'en auois. Quoy? si les plus vrayes ne sont pas tousiours les plus commodes à l'homme; tant il est de sauuage composition.

"Feeling you braced and prepared on one side, I set the other before you with all the care I can, to clarify your judgment, not to bind it. God holds your hearts and will provide you with a choice. I am not so presumptuous as even to wish that my opinions should tip the balance in a matter of such importance; my fortune has not trained them for such powerful and lofty conclusions." Indeed, I have not only a great many traits of temperament but also a fair number of opinions that I would gladly put my son off, if I had one. What if the truest are not always the most suitable for man, so wild is his makeup?

THE LAME

An Italian proverb about lame women shows how readily reason invents causes for anything.

FRENCH

ENGLISH

3.11.11 A propos, ou hors de propos, il n'importe. On dit en Italie en commun prouerbe, que celuy-là ne cognoist pas Venus en sa parfaicte douceur, qui n'a couché auec la boiteuse. La fortune, ou quelque particulier accident, ont mis il y a long temps ce mot en la bouche du peuple; et se dict des masles comme des femelles. Car la Royne des Amazones, respondit au Scythe qui la conuioit à l'amour, αριστα χωλος οιφει, le boiteux le faict le mieux. En cette republique feminine, pour fuir la domination des masles, elles les stropioient dés l'enfance, bras, iambes, et autres membres qui leur donnoient auantage sur elles, et se

Apropos or not, it does not matter. They say in Italy, as a common proverb, that he does not know Venus in her perfect sweetness who has not lain with a lame woman. Fortune, or some particular incident, put this saying into the people's mouths long ago; and it is said of males as well as females. For the queen of the Amazons answered the Scythian who invited her to love: *The lame man does it best.* In that female republic, to escape the domination of males, they maimed them from childhood—arms, legs and other limbs that gave

13 Augustine tells the story of Praestantius in The City of God XVIII.18.
14 Cicero, Tusculan Disputations I.25.

FRENCH

seruoient d'eux, à ce seulement, à quoy nous nous seruons d'elles par deçà.

I'eusse dit, que le mouuement detraqué de la boiteuse, apportast quelque nouueau plaisir à la besoigne, et quelque poincte de douceur, à ceux qui l'essayent: mais ie viens d'apprendre, que mesme la philosophie ancienne en a decidé. Elle dict, que les iambes et cuisses des boiteuses, ne receuans à cause de leur imperfection, l'aliment qui leur est deu, il en aduient que les parties genitales, qui sont au dessus, sont plus plaines, plus nourries, et vigoureuses. Ou bien que ce defaut empeschant l'exercice, ceux qui en sont entachez, dissipent moins leurs forces, et en viennent plus entiers aux ieux de Venus.

Qui est aussi la raison, pourquoy les Grecs descrioient les tisserandes, d'estre plus chaudes, que les autres femmes: à cause du mestier sedentaire qu'elles font, sans grand exercice du corps. Dequoy ne pouuons nous raisonner à ce prix-là? De celles icy, ie pourrois aussi dire; que ce tremoussement que leur ouurage leur donne ainsin assises, les esueille et sollicite: comme faict les dames, le croulement et tremblement de leurs coches.

3.11.12 Ces exemples, seruent-ils pas à ce que ie disois au commencement: Que nos raisons anticipent souuent l'effect, et ont l'estenduë de leur iurisdiction si infinie, qu'elles iugent et s'exercent en l'inanité mesme, et au non estre? Outre la flexibilité de nostre inuention, à forger des raisons à toutes sortes de songes; nostre imagination se trouue pareillement facile, à receuoir des impressions de la fauceté, par bien friuoles apparences. Car par la seule authorité de l'vsage ancien, et publique de ce mot: ie me suis autresfois faict accroire, auoir receu plus de plaisir d'vne femme, de ce qu'elle n'estoit pas droicte, et mis cela au compte de ses graces.

3.11.13 Torquato Tasso, en la comparaison qu'il faict de la France à l'Italie; dit auoir remarqué cela, que nous auons les iambes plus gresles, que les Gentils-hommes Italiens; et en attribue la cause, à ce que nous sommes continuellement à cheual. Qui est celle-mêmes de laquelle Suetone tire vne toute contraire conclusion. Car il dit au rebours, que Germanicus auoit grossi les siennes, par continuation de ce mesme exercice. Il n'est rien si soupple et erratique, que nostre entendement. C'est le soulier de Theramenez, bon à tous pieds. Et il est double et diuers, et les matieres doubles, et diuerses. Donne moy vne dragme d'argent, disoit vn philosophe Cynique à

ENGLISH

them an advantage over the women—and used them only for what we use women for over here.

I would have said that the irregular movement of a lame woman brought some new pleasure to the business, and some spice of sweetness to those who try it; but I have just learned that even ancient philosophy has settled the question. It says that since the legs and thighs of lame women do not receive, because of their imperfection, the nourishment due to them, the result is that the genital parts, which are just above, are fuller, better nourished and more vigorous. Or else that, since this defect hinders exercise, those who have it dissipate their strength less and come more whole to the games of Venus.

Which is also the reason why the Greeks decried women weavers as being hotter than other women: because of the sedentary trade they practice, without much bodily exercise. What can we not reason about at that rate? Of these women I could also say that the jiggling their work gives them, sitting like that, arouses and stirs them, as the jolting and shaking of their coaches does the ladies.

Do not these examples serve what I was saying at the beginning: that our reasons often run ahead of the fact, and have so infinite an extent of jurisdiction that they judge and operate even in emptiness and non-being? Besides the flexibility of our invention in forging reasons for all sorts of dreams, our imagination is likewise found to be easy in receiving impressions of falsehood from very frivolous appearances. For on the sole authority of the ancient and public use of this saying, I once made myself believe that I had received more pleasure from a woman because she was not straight, and counted that among her charms.

Torquato Tasso, in the comparison he makes between France and Italy, says he has noticed that we have thinner legs than Italian gentlemen, and attributes the cause to our being continually on horseback. That is the very cause from which Suetonius draws an entirely opposite conclusion: for he says, on the contrary, that Germanicus had made his legs thicker by persistent practice of this same exercise. There is nothing so supple and erratic as our understanding. It is the shoe of Theramenes, good for any foot. And it is double and diverse, and so are its materials. "Give me a

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
	Antigonus. Ce n'est pas present de Roy, respondit-il. Donne moy donc vn talent.	drachma of silver," said a Cynic philosopher to Antigonus. "That is not a king's gift," he replied. "Then give me a talent."[15]
3.11.14	Ce n'est pas present pour Cynique. *Seu plures calor ille vias, et cæca relaxat* *Spiramenta, nouas veniat qua succus in herbas:* *Seu durat magis, et venas astringit hiantes,* *Ne tenues pluuiæ, rapidiue potentia solis* *Acrior, aut Boreæ penetrabile frigus adurat.*	"That is not a gift for a Cynic." *Whether that heat loosens more channels and hidden* *Pores, through which the sap may reach the new plants,* *Or rather hardens the soil and binds its gaping veins,* *So that neither fine rains nor the scorching sun's fiercer* *Power nor the North Wind's piercing cold may sear it.*[16]
3.11.15	*Ogni medaglia ha il suo riuerso.* Voila pourquoy Clitomachus disoit anciennement, que Carneades auoit surmonté les labeurs d'Hercules; pour auoir arraché des hommes le consentement: c'est à dire, l'opinion, et la temerité de iuger. Cette fantasie de Carneades, si vigoureuse, nasquit à mon aduis anciennement, de l'impudence de ceux qui font profession de sçauoir, et de leur outre-cuidance desmesurée.	*Every medal has its reverse.* That is why Clitomachus said long ago that Carneades had surpassed the labors of Hercules, for having torn assent from men—that is, opinion and rashness in judging. This idea of Carneades, so vigorous, was born long ago, in my view, from the impudence of those who profess to know, and from their boundless arrogance.
	On mit Æsope en vente, auec deux autres esclaues: l'acheteur s'enquit du premier ce qu'il sçauoit faire, celuy-la pour se faire valoir, respondit monts et merueilles, qu'il sçauoit et cecy et cela: le deuxiesme en respondit de soy autant ou plus: quand ce fut à Æsope, et qu'on luy eust aussi demandé ce qu'il sçauoit faire: Rien, dit-il, car ceux cy ont tout preoccupé: ils sçauent tout. Ainsin est-il aduenu en l'escole de la philosophie. La fierté, de ceux qui attribuoient à l'esprit humain la capacité de toutes choses, causa en d'autres, par despit et par emulation, cette opinion, qu'il n'est capable d'aucune chose. Les vns tiennent en l'ignorance, cette mesme extremité, que les autres tiennent en la science.	Aesop was put up for sale with two other slaves. The buyer asked the first what he could do; to make himself valued, that one promised wonders —he knew this and he knew that. The second said as much of himself, or more. When it came to Aesop's turn, and he too was asked what he could do: "Nothing," he said, "for these two have taken everything already: they know everything." So it has happened in the school of philosophy. The pride of those who attributed to the human mind the capacity for all things produced in others, out of spite and rivalry, the opinion that it is capable of nothing. Some hold the same extreme in ignorance that others hold in knowledge.
	Afin qu'on ne puisse nier, que l'homme ne soit immoderé par tout: et qu'il n'a point d'arrest, que celuy de la necessité, et impuissance d'aller outre.	So that no one can deny that man is immoderate everywhere, and that he has no stopping point but that of necessity and the inability to go further.

15 Theramenes, Athenian politician of the late 5th century BC, was nicknamed "the buskin," a boot that fits either foot. The Cynic and Antigonus anecdote is from Seneca, On Benefits II.17.
16 Virgil, Georgics I.89–93, giving opposite explanations of why burning stubble benefits a field.

III.12 Of Physiognomy

De la Physionomie

Montaigne praises Socrates' natural simplicity, recounts the civil wars and plague, and asks whether a good face shows a good soul.

FRENCH

3.12.1 QVASI toutes les opinions que nous auons, sont prinses par authorité et à credit. Il n'y a point de mal. Nous ne sçaurions pirement choisir, que par nous, en vn siecle si foible. Cette image des discours de Socrates, que ses amis nous ont laissée, nous ne l'approuuons, que pour la reuerence de l'approbation publique. Ce n'est pas par nostre cognoissance: ils ne sont pas selon nostre vsage. S'il naissoit à cette heure, quelque chose de pareil, il est peu d'hommes qui le prisassent. Nous n'apperceuons les graces que pointues, bouffies, et enflées d'artifice. Celles qui coulent soubs la naïfueté, et la simplicité, eschappent aisément à vne veuë grossiere comme est la nostre.

Elles ont vne beauté delicate et cachée: il faut la veuë nette et bien purgée, pour descouurir cette secrette lumiere. Est pas, la naïfueté, selon nous, germaine à la sottise, et qualité de reproche? Socrates faict mouuoir son ame, d'vn mouuement naturel et commun. Ainsi dict vn païsan, ainsi dict vne femme. Il n'a iamais en la bouche, que cochers, menuisiers, sauetiers et maisons. Ce sont inductions et similitudes, tirées des plus vulgaires et cogneuës actions des hommes: chacun l'entend. Sous vne si vile forme, nous n'eussions iamais choisi la noblesse et splendeur de ses conceptions admirables: nous qui estimons plates et basses, toutes celles que la doctrine ne releue; qui n'apperceuons la richesse qu'en montre et en pompe. Nostre monde n'est formé qu'à l'ostentation.

Les hommes ne s'enflent que de vent: et se manient à bonds, comme les balons. Cettuy-cy ne se propose point des vaines fantasies. Sa fin fut, nous fournir de choses et de preceptes, qui reellement et plus ioinctement seruent à la vie: *Seruare modum, finémque tenere, / Naturámque sequi.* Il fut aussi tousiours vn et pareil. Et se monta, non par boutades, mais par complexion, au dernier poinct de vigueur. Ou pour mieux dire: il ne monta rien, mais rauala plustost et ramena à son poinct, originel et

ENGLISH

Almost all the opinions we hold are taken on authority and on credit. There is no harm in that: we could not choose worse than by ourselves, in so feeble an age. That image of Socrates' discourses which his friends have left us, we approve only out of reverence for public approval. It is not from our own knowledge: they are not in keeping with our usage. If something like them were born now, few men would prize it. We perceive graces only when they are pointed, puffed up and swollen with artifice. Those that flow beneath naturalness and simplicity easily escape a coarse sight like ours.[1]

They have a delicate and hidden beauty; it takes a clear, well-purged sight to discover that secret light. Is not naturalness, in our view, akin to foolishness, and a quality to be reproached? Socrates makes his soul move with a natural and common motion. So says a peasant, so says a woman. He never has anything in his mouth but coachmen, joiners, cobblers and houses. These are inductions and similes drawn from the commonest and most familiar actions of men; everyone understands him. Under so humble a form we would never have picked out the nobility and splendor of his admirable conceptions—we who consider flat and low all those that learning does not elevate, who perceive richness only in display and pomp. Our world is formed only for ostentation.

Men puff themselves up with nothing but wind, and move by leaps and bounds, like inflated balls. This man does not set himself vain fancies. His aim was to provide us with things and precepts that really and more directly serve life: *To keep the mean, to hold to the limit, / And to follow nature.* He was also always one and the same. And he rose to the highest point of vigor not by fits and starts but

1 Socrates' friends who left accounts of his talk are chiefly Plato and Xenophon.

FRENCH

naturel, et luy soubmit la vigueur, les aspretez et les difficultez. Car en Caton, on void bien à clair, que c'est vne alleure tenduë bien loing au dessus des communes.

Aux braues exploits de sa vie, et en sa mort, on le sent tousiours monté sur ses grands cheuaux. Cettuy-cy ralle à terre: et d'vn pas mol et ordinaire, traicte les plus vtiles discours, et se conduict et à la mort et aux plus espineuses trauerses, qui se puissent presenter au train de la vie humaine. Il est bien aduenu, que le plus digne homme d'estre cogneu, et d'estre presenté au monde pour exemple, ce soit celuy duquel nous ayons plus certaine cognoissance. Il a esté esclairé par les plus clair-voyans hommes, qui furent onques. Les tesmoins que nous auons de luy, sont admirables en fidelité et en suffisance.

C'est grand cas, d'auoir peu donner tel ordre, aux pures imaginations d'vn enfant, que sans les alterer ou estirer, il en ait produict les plus beaux effects de nostre ame. Il ne la represente ny esleuée ni riche: il ne la represente que saine: mais certes d'vne bien allegre et nette santé. Par ces vulguaires ressorts et naturels: par ces fantasies ordinaires et communes: sans s'esmouuoir et sans se piquer, il dressa non seulement les plus reglées, mais les plus hautes et vigoureuses creances, actions et mœurs, qui furent onques. C'est luy, qui ramena du ciel, où elle perdoit son temps, la sagesse humaine, pour la rendre à l'homme: où est sa plus iuste et plus laborieuse besoigne.

Voyez-le plaider deuant ses iuges: voyez par quelles raisons, il esueille son courage aux hazards de la guerre, quels argumens fortifient sa patience, contre la calomnie, la tyrannie, la mort, et contre la teste de sa femme: il n'y a rien d'emprunté de l'art, et des sciences. Les plus simples y recognoissent leurs moyens et leur force: il n'est possible d'aller plus arriere et plus bas. Il a faict grand faueur à l'humaine nature, de montrer combien elle peut d'elle mesme.

ENGLISH

by temperament. Or rather, he raised nothing, but instead brought down and led back to his own original and natural level, and subjected to it, vigor, harshness and difficulties. For in Cato one sees quite clearly that it is a pace strained far above the common.[2]

In the brave exploits of his life, and in his death, one feels him always mounted on his high horses. This man keeps to the ground, and at a gentle, ordinary pace treats the most useful subjects, and bears himself both toward death and toward the thorniest hardships that can arise in the course of human life. It has turned out well that the man most worthy to be known and to be held up to the world as an example should be the one of whom we have the most certain knowledge. He has been illuminated by the most clear-sighted men who ever lived. The witnesses we have of him are admirable in fidelity and in ability.

It is a great thing to have been able to give such order to the pure imaginings of a child that, without altering or stretching them, he produced from them the finest effects of our soul. He represents it neither as elevated nor as rich; he represents it only as healthy, but certainly with a very lively and clean health. By these common and natural springs, by these ordinary and familiar notions, without getting agitated or worked up, he set up not only the most orderly but the loftiest and most vigorous beliefs, actions and morals that ever were. It is he who brought human wisdom back down from heaven, where it was wasting its time, to restore it to man, where its most proper and most laborious work lies.

See him plead before his judges; see by what reasons he rouses his courage to the hazards of war, what arguments fortify his patience against calumny, tyranny, death, and against his wife's temper: there is nothing borrowed from art and the sciences. The simplest people recognize in it their own means and strength; it is impossible to go further back or lower. He has done human nature a great favor by showing how much it can do by itself.

2 Lucan, Pharsalia II.381–82, describing Cato the Younger.

RICHER THAN WE THINK

Natural wisdom is enough to live by; learning burdens us more than it helps.

FRENCH

3.12.2 Nous sommes chacun plus riche, que nous ne pensons: mais on nous dresse à l'emprunt, et à la queste: on nous duict à nous seruir plus de l'autruy, que du nostre. En aucune chose l'homme ne sçait s'arrester au poinct de son besoing. De volupté, de richesse, de puissance, il en embrasse plus qu'il n'en peut estreindre. Son auidité est incapable de moderation. Ie trouue qu'en curiosité de sçauoir, il en est de mesme: il se taille de la besoigne bien plus qu'il n'en peut faire, et bien plus qu'il n'en a affaire. Estendant l'vtilité du sçauoir, autant qu'est sa matiere.

Vt omnium rerum, sic litterarum quoque, intemperantia laboramus. Et Tacitus a raison, de louer la mere d'Agricola, d'auoir bridé en son fils, vn appetit trop bouillant de science.

3.12.3 C'est vn bien, à le regarder d'yeux fermes, qui a, comme les autres biens des hommes, beaucoup de vanité, et foiblesse propre et naturelle: et d'vn cher coust. L'acquisition en est bien plus hazardeuse, que de toute autre viande ou boisson. Car ailleurs, ce que nous auons achetté, nous l'emportons au logis, en quelque vaisseau, et là nous auons loy d'en examiner la valeur: combien, et à quelle heure, nous en prendrons. Mais les sciences, nous ne les pouuons d'arriuee mettre en autre vaisseau, qu'en nostre ame: nous les auallons en les achettans, et sortons du marché ou infects desia, ou amendez.

Il y en a, qui ne font que nous empescher et charger, au lieu de nourrir: et telles encore, qui sous tiltre de nous guarir, nous empoisonnent. I'ay pris plaisir de voir en quelque lieu, des hommes par deuotion, faire vœu d'ignorance, comme de chasteté, de pauureté, de pœnitence. C'est aussi chastrer nos appetits desordonnez, d'esmousser cette cupidité qui nous espoinçonne à l'estude des liures: et priuer l'ame de cette complaisance voluptueuse, qui nous chatouille par l'opinion de science. Et est richement accomplir le vœu de pauureté, d'y ioindre encore celle de l'esprit. Il ne nous faut guere de doctrine, pour viure à nostre aise. Et Socrates nous apprend qu'elle est en nous, et la maniere de l'y trouuer, et de s'en ayder.

Toute cette nostre suffisance, qui est au delà de la naturelle, est à peu pres vaine et superflue. C'est

ENGLISH

Each of us is richer than we think; but we are trained to borrow and to beg; we are taught to use what belongs to others more than our own. In nothing does man know how to stop at the point of his need. Of pleasure, wealth, power, he takes up more than he can hold. His greed is incapable of moderation. I find it is the same with curiosity for knowledge: he cuts out for himself far more work than he can do, and far more than he has any use for, extending the utility of knowledge as far as its subject matter goes.

As in all things, so in letters too, we suffer from intemperance. And Tacitus is right to praise Agricola's mother for having curbed in her son an overheated appetite for learning.[3]

Looked at with a steady eye, it is a good that, like the other goods of men, has much vanity and weakness inherent in its nature; and it comes at a high cost. Acquiring it is far more hazardous than acquiring any other food or drink. For with anything else, what we have bought we carry home in some vessel, and there we are free to examine its worth: how much of it we will take, and when. But branches of knowledge we cannot, from the start, put into any vessel but our soul. We swallow them as we buy them, and we leave the market already either infected or improved.

Some of them only hinder and burden us instead of nourishing us; and some, under the pretext of curing us, poison us. I have been pleased to see, somewhere, men who out of devotion took a vow of ignorance, as others do of chastity, poverty and penitence. It is also a way of gelding our unruly appetites to blunt this craving that goads us on to the study of books, and to deprive the soul of that voluptuous self-satisfaction which tickles us with the belief that we know something. And it is a rich fulfillment of the vow of poverty to add poverty of mind to it as well. We need little learning to live at our ease. And Socrates teaches us that it is in us, and how to find it there and make use of it.

All this ability of ours that goes beyond the natural kind is more or less vain and superfluous. We

FRENCH

beaucoup si elle ne nous charge et trouble plus qu'elle ne nous sert. *Paucis opus est litteris ad mentem bonam.* Ce sont des excez fieureux de nostre esprit: instrument brouillon et inquiete. Recueillez vous, vous trouuerez en vous, les argumens de la Nature, contre la mort, vrais, et les plus propres à vous seruir à la necessité. Ce sont ceux qui font mourir vn paysan et des peuples entiers, aussi constamment qu'vn philosophe. Fusse ie mort moins allegrement auant qu'auoir veu les Tusculanes? I'estime que non. Et quand ie me trouue au propre, ie sens, que ma langue s'est enrichie, mon courage de peu.

Il est comme Nature me le forgea. Et se targue pour le conflict, non que d'vne marche naturelle et commune. Les liures m'ont serui non tant d'instruction que d'exercitation. Quoy, si la science, essayant de nous armer de nouuelles deffences, contre les inconueniens naturels, nous a plus imprimé en la fantasie, leur grandeur et leur poix, qu'elle n'a ses raisons et subtilitez, à nous en couurir? Ce sont voirement subtilitez: par où elle nous esueille souuent bien vainement. Les autheurs mesmes plus serrez et plus sages, voyez autour d'vn bon argument, combien ils en sement d'autres legers, et, qui y regarde de pres, incorporels. Ce ne sont qu'arguties verbales, qui nous trompent.

Mais d'autant que ce peut estre vtilement, ie ne les veux pas autrement esplucher. Il y en a ceans assez de cette condition, en diuers lieux: ou par emprunt, ou par imitation. Si se faut il prendre vn peu garde, de n'appeller pas force, ce qui n'est que gentilesse: et ce, qui n'est qu'aigu, solide: ou bon, ce qui n'est que beau: *quæ magis gustata quàm potata delectant.* Tout ce qui plaist, ne paist pas, *vbi non ingenij sed animi negotium agitur*.

A veoir les efforts que Seneque se donne pour se preparer contre la mort, à le voir suer d'ahan, pour se roider et pour s'asseurer, et se debattre si long temps en cette perche, i'eusse esbranlé sa reputation, s'il ne l'eust en mourant, tresuaillamment maintenuë. Son agitation si ardante, si frequente, montre qu'il estoit chaud et impetueux luy mesme. *Magnus animus remissius loquitur, et securius. Non est alius ingenio, alius animo color.* Il le faut

ENGLISH

are doing well if it does not burden and trouble us more than it serves us. *Little learning is needed for a sound mind.* These are feverish excesses of our mind, a meddlesome and restless instrument. Collect yourself: you will find in yourself Nature's arguments against death—true ones, and the best suited to serve you in your need. They are what make a peasant, and whole peoples, die as steadfastly as a philosopher. Would I have died less cheerfully before I had read the Tusculans? I think not. And when I come down to the point, I feel that my tongue has been enriched, my courage hardly at all.[4]

My courage is just as Nature forged it for me, and for the fight it shields itself only in the natural, common way. Books have served me not so much for instruction as for exercise. What if learning, in trying to arm us with new defenses against natural ills, has imprinted their magnitude and weight on our imagination more deeply than it has its arguments and subtleties to shield us from them? Subtleties they are indeed, and with them it often rouses us quite pointlessly. Even in the tightest and wisest authors, see how many other flimsy arguments they scatter around one good one—arguments which, if you look closely, have no body to them. They are mere verbal quibbles that deceive us.

But since this may be done to some purpose, I do not want to pick them apart any further. There are enough of that sort in here, in various places, either borrowed or imitated. Still, we must take a little care not to call strength what is only elegance, or solid what is only sharp, or good what is only beautiful: *things that delight more when sipped than when drunk down.* Not everything that pleases nourishes, *where the business at hand concerns not the wit but the soul.*[5]

Seeing the efforts Seneca makes to prepare himself against death, seeing him sweat and strain to stiffen and reassure himself, and struggle so long on that perch, I would have shaken his reputation if he had not upheld it most valiantly in dying. His agitation, so ardent and so frequent, shows that he himself was hot-tempered and impetuous. *A great*

3 Seneca, Letters 106; Tacitus' praise is in his Agricola, chapter 4.
4 Cicero's Tusculan Disputations, whose first book deals with the contempt of death.
5 Cicero, Tusculan Disputations; then Seneca.

FRENCH

conuaincre à ses despens. Et montre aucunement qu'il estoit pressé de son aduersaire. La façon de Plutarque, d'autant qu'elle est plus desdaigneuse, et plus destendue, elle est selon moy, d'autant plus virile et persuasiue. Ie croirois aysément, que son ame auoit les mouuemens plus asseurez, et plus reglez.

L'vn plus aigu, nous pique et nous eslance en sursaut: touche plus l'esprit. L'autre plus solide, nous informe, establit et conforte constamment: touche plus l'entendement. Celuy là rauit nostre iugement: cestuy-ci le gaigne. I'ay veu pareillement d'autres escrits, encore plus reuerez, qui en la peinture du combat qu'ils soustiennent contre les aiguillons de la chair, les representent si cuisants, si puissants et inuincibles, que nous mesmes, qui sommes de la voirie du peuple, auons autant à admirer l'estrangeté et vigueur incognuë de leur tentation, que leur resistance. A quoy faire nous allons gendarmant par ces efforts de la science?

ENGLISH

soul speaks more calmly and more securely. The wit has not one color and the soul another. He must be convicted at his own expense. And it shows to some extent that he was hard pressed by his adversary. Plutarch's way, being more disdainful and more relaxed, is in my view all the more manly and persuasive. I would readily believe that his soul had more assured and more orderly movements.

The one, sharper, pricks us and makes us leap with a start; it touches the mind more. The other, more solid, informs us, settles us and comforts us steadily; it touches the understanding more. The former ravishes our judgment; the latter wins it. I have likewise seen other writings, even more revered, which, in depicting the struggle they put up against the goads of the flesh, represent those goads as so burning, so powerful and invincible, that we ourselves, who belong to the common refuse of the people, have as much cause to marvel at the strangeness and unheard-of vigor of their temptation as at their resistance. What is the point of our getting up in arms like this with these exertions of learning?

PEASANTS AND DEATH

Unlearned country people bear poverty, illness and death more steadily than philosophers.

FRENCH

Regardons à terre, les pauures gens que nous y voyons espandus, la teste panchante apres leur besongne: qui ne sçauent ny Aristote ny Caton, ny exemple ny precepte. De ceux-là, tire Nature tous les iours, des effects de constance et de patience, plus purs et plus roides, que ne sont ceux que nous estudions si curieusement en l'escole. Combien en vois ie ordinairement, qui mescognoissent la pauureté: combien qui desirent la mort, ou qui la passent sans alarme et sans affliction? Celui là qui fouït mon iardin, il a ce matin enterré son pere ou son fils. Les noms mesme, dequoy ils appellent les maladies, en addoucissent et amollissent l'aspreté.

La phthysie, c'est la toux pour eux: la dysenterie, deuoyement d'estomach: vn pleuresis, c'est vn morfondement: et selon qu'ils les nomment doucement, ils les supportent aussi. Elles sont bien griefues, quand elles rompent leur trauail ordinaire: ils ne s'allitent que pour mourir. *Simplex illa et aperta virtus in obscuram et solertem scientiam versa est.*

ENGLISH

Let us look down at the poor people we see scattered over the ground, heads bent over their work, who know neither Aristotle nor Cato, neither example nor precept. From them Nature draws every day deeds of constancy and patience purer and sterner than those we study so carefully in the schools. How many do I commonly see who take no notice of poverty? How many who long for death, or go through it without alarm or distress? The man who is digging my garden buried his father or his son this morning. Even the names they call diseases by sweeten and soften their harshness.

Consumption, for them, is a cough; dysentery, an upset stomach; pleurisy, a chill; and as they name them gently, so they bear them. They are serious indeed when they interrupt their usual work; they take to their beds only to die. *That simple and open virtue has been turned into an obscure and clever science.*

WAR ON HIS DOORSTEP

Civil war ravages his lands, and suspicion falls on him from both sides.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
3.12.4	I'escriuois cecy enuiron le temps, qu'vne forte charge de nos troubles, se croupit plusieurs mois, de tout son poix, droict sur moy. I'auois d'vne part, les ennemis à ma porte: d'autre part, les picoreurs, pires ennemis, *non armis, sed vitiis, certatur*. Et essayois toute sorte d'iniures militaires, à la fois: *Hostis adest dextra læuàque à parte timendus. / Vicinóque malo terret vtrumque latus.* Monstrueuse guerre. Les autres agissent au dehors, ceste-cy encore contre soy: se ronge et se desfaict, par son propre venin. Elle est de nature si maligne et ruineuse, qu'elle se ruine quand et quand le reste: et se deschire et despece de rage.	I was writing this at about the time when a heavy load of our troubles settled for several months, with all its weight, right on top of me. On one side I had the enemy at my door; on the other, the marauders, worse enemies: *the fight is waged not with arms but with vices.* And I was experiencing every kind of military outrage at once: *An enemy to be feared is at hand on the right and on the left, / And with harm close by he menaces both flanks.* A monstrous war! Other wars act outward; this one acts against itself as well, eating away and destroying itself with its own poison. It is by nature so malignant and ruinous that it ruins itself along with everything else, and tears and rends itself in its fury.[6]
	Nous la voyons plus souuent, se dissoudre par elle mesme, que par disette d'aucune chose necessaire, ou par la force ennemie. Toute discipline la fuït. Elle vient guerir la sedition, et en est pleine. Veut chastier la desobeissance, et en montre l'exemple: et employee à la deffence des loix, faict sa part de rebellion à l'encontre des siennes propres. Où en sommes nous? Nostre medecine porte infection. *Nostre mal s'empoisonne* *Du secours qu'on luy donne.* *Exuperat magis ægrescitque medendo.* *Omnia fanda nefanda, malo permista furore,* *Iustificam nobis mentem auertêre deorum.*	We see it more often dissolve of itself than through scarcity of any necessity or through enemy force. All discipline flees from it. It comes to cure sedition and is full of it. It means to punish disobedience and sets the example of it; and, employed in defense of the laws, it plays its part in rebellion against its own. What have we come to? Our medicine carries infection. *Our sickness is poisoned* *By the help it is given.* *It grows worse and sicker with the treatment.* *Right and wrong, all confounded in our wicked frenzy,* *Have turned from us the just will of the gods.*[7]
3.12.5	En ces maladies populaires, on peut distinguer sur le commencement, les sains des malades: mais quand elles viennent à durer, comme la nostre, tout le corps s'en sent, et la teste et les talons: aucune partie n'est exempte de corruption. Car il n'est air, qui se hume si gouluement: qui s'espande et penetre, comme faict la licence. Nos armees ne se lient et tiennent plus que par simant estranger: des François on ne sçait plus faire vn corps d'armee, constant et reglé. Quelle honte? Il n'y a qu'autant de discipline, que nous en font voir des soldats empruntez. Quant à nous, nous nous conduisons à discretion, et non pas du chef; chacun selon la sienne: il a plus affaire au dedans qu'au dehors.	In these epidemic diseases one can tell the healthy from the sick at the beginning; but when they come to last, as ours has, the whole body feels it, head and heels alike: no part is free from corruption. For there is no air that is breathed in so greedily, that spreads and penetrates so, as license. Our armies are bound and held together now only by foreign cement; out of Frenchmen no one knows any longer how to make a steady, disciplined army. What a disgrace! There is only as much discipline as borrowed soldiers show us. As for us, we conduct ourselves at our own discretion, not the commander's—each at his own; the

6 The campaigns of 1585–1586 in Guyenne during the Wars of Religion, fought around Montaigne's lands. The verses are from Ovid, Letters from Pontus.
7 Virgil, Aeneid; then Catullus.

FRENCH

ENGLISH

commander has more to deal with inside than outside.

C'est au commandement de suiure, courtizer, et plier: à luy seul d'obeïr: tout le reste est libre et dissolu. Il me plaist de voir, combien il y a de lascheté et de pusillanimité en l'ambition: par combien d'abiection et de seruitude, il luy faut arriuer à son but. Mais cecy me deplaist-il de voir, des natures debonnaires, et capables de iustice, se corrompre tous les iours, au maniement et commandement de cette confusion. La longue souffrance, engendre la coustume; la coustume, le consentement et l'imitation. Nous auions assez d'ames mal nées, sans gaster les bonnes et genereuses. Si que, si nous continuons, il restera mal-ayseement à qui fier la santé de cet estat, au cas que Fortune nous la redonne.

It is for the command to follow, to court and to bend; it alone has to obey; all the rest are free and dissolute. It pleases me to see how much cowardice and faintheartedness there is in ambition, and through how much abjection and servility it must reach its goal. But this it displeases me to see: good-natured characters, capable of justice, being corrupted every day in managing and commanding this chaos. Long toleration breeds custom; custom, consent and imitation. We had enough ill-born souls without spoiling the good and noble ones. So that, if we go on like this, there will hardly be anyone left to whom we can entrust the health of this state, should Fortune give it back to us.

Hunc saltem euerso iuuenem succurrere seclo, / Ne prohibete!

At least do not prevent this young man / From coming to the aid of a world turned upside down![8]

3.12.6 Qu'est deuenu cet ancien precepte: Que les soldats ont plus à craindre leur chef, que l'ennemy? Et ce merueilleux exemple: Qu'vn pommier s'estant trouué enfermé dans le pourpris du camp de l'armee Romaine, elle fut veuë l'endemain en desloger, laissant au possesseur, le comte entier de ses pommes, meures et delicieuses? I'aymeroy bien, que nostre ieunesse, au lieu du temps qu'elle employe, à des peregrinations moins vtiles, et apprentissages moins honorables, elle le mist, moitié à veoir de la guerre sur mer, sous quelque bon capitaine commandeur de Rhodes: moitié à recognoistre la discipline des armees Turkesques. Car elle a beaucoup de differences, et d'auantages sur la nostre. Cecy en est: que nos soldats deuiennent plus licentieux aux expeditions: là, plus retenus et craintifs.

What has become of that ancient precept, that soldiers should fear their commander more than the enemy? And of that marvelous example: when an apple tree was found enclosed within the bounds of a Roman army's camp, the army was seen the next day moving off and leaving the owner the full count of his apples, ripe and delicious? I would much like our young men, instead of spending their time on less useful travels and less honorable apprenticeships, to put half of it into seeing war at sea under some good captain, a Knight Commander of Rhodes, and half into studying the discipline of the Turkish armies. For it differs from ours in many ways and has many advantages over it. This is one: our soldiers become more licentious on campaign; theirs, more restrained and fearful.[9]

Car les offenses ou larrecins sur le menu peuple, qui se punissent de bastonades en la paix, sont capitales en la guerre. Pour vn œuf prins sans payer, ce sont de conte prefix, cinquante coups de baston. Pour toute autre chose, tant legere soit elle, non necessaire à la nourriture, on les empale, ou decapite sans deport. Ie me suis estonné, en l'histoire de Selim, le plus cruel conquerant qui fut onques, veoir, que lors qu'il subiugua l'Ægypte, les beaux iardins d'autour de la ville de Damas,

For offenses or thefts against the common people, which are punished with a beating in peacetime, are capital crimes in war. For an egg taken without paying, the fixed count is fifty strokes of the stick. For anything else, however slight, that is not needed for food, they are impaled or beheaded without delay. I was astonished to see, in the history of Selim, the cruelest conqueror that ever was, that when he subjugated Egypt, the fine gar-

8 Virgil, Georgics, of the young Octavian; readers have seen here an allusion to Henry of Navarre.
9 The apple-tree story is told by Frontinus of the army of Marcus Scaurus. The Knights of Saint John, once of Rhodes, then held Malta.

FRENCH

tous ouuers, et en terre de conqueste, son armee campant sur le lieu mesmes, furent laissés vierges des mains des soldats, parce qu'ils n'auoient pas eu le signe de piller.

3.12.7 Mais est-il quelque mal en vne police, qui vaille estre combatu par vne drogue si mortelle? Non pas, disoit Fauonius, l'vsurpation de la possession tyrannique d'vne republique. Platon de mesme ne consent pas qu'on face violence au repos de son païs, pour le guerir: et n'accepte pas l'amendement qui trouble et hazarde tout, et qui couste le sang et ruine des citoyens. Establissant l'office d'vn homme de bien, en ce cas, de laisser tout là: seulement prier Dieu qu'il y porte sa main extraordinaire. Et semble sçauoir mauuais gré à Dion son grand amy, d'y auoir vn peu autrement procedé. I'estois Platonicien de ce costé là, avant que ie sçeusse qu'il y eust de Platon au monde.

Et si ce personnage, doit purement estre refusé de nostre consorce: (luy, qui par la sincerité de sa conscience, merita enuers la faueur diuine, de penetrer si auant en la Chrestienne lumiere, au trauers des tenebres publiques, du monde de son temps,) ie ne pense pas, qu'il nous sie bien, de nous laisser instruire à vn payen. Combien c'est d'impieté, de n'atendre de Dieu, nul secours simplement sien, et sans nostre cooperation.

Ie doubte souuent, si entre tant de gens, qui se meslent de telle besoigne, nul s'est rencontré, d'entendement si imbecille, à qui on aye en bon escient persuadé, qu'il alloit vers la reformation, par la derniere des difformations: qu'il tiroit vers son salut, par les plus expresses causes que nous ayons de tres certaine damnation: que renuersant la police, le magistrat, et les loix, en la tutelle desquelles Dieu l'a colloqué: remplissant de haines parricides, les courages fraternels: appellant à son ayde, les diables et les furies: il puisse apporter secours à la sacrosaincte douceur et iustice, de la loy diuine.

L'ambition, l'auarice, la cruauté, la vengeance, n'ont point assez de propre et naturelle impetuosité: amorçons-les et les attisons, par le glorieux titre de iustice et deuotion. Il ne se peut imaginer vn pire estat des choses, qu'où la meschanceté vient à estre legitime:

ENGLISH

dens around the city of Damascus—wide open, in conquered land, with his army camped on the very spot—were left untouched by the soldiers' hands, because they had not been given the signal to plunder.

But is there any ill in a government worth fighting with so deadly a drug? Not even, said Favonius, the usurpation of a commonwealth by a tyrant's seizure. Plato likewise does not consent to doing violence to the peace of one's country in order to cure it, and does not accept the reform that disturbs and endangers everything and costs the citizens their blood and their ruin. He lays down that the duty of a good man, in that case, is to leave everything be, and only pray God to set his extraordinary hand to it. And he seems to bear a grudge against Dion, his great friend, for having proceeded somewhat differently. I was a Platonist on this point before I knew there was any Plato in the world.[10]

And if this man is to be flatly excluded from our fellowship (he who, through the sincerity of his conscience, deserved divine favor to penetrate so far into the Christian light through the general darkness of the world of his time), I do not think it becomes us to let ourselves be taught by a pagan how impious it is to expect from God no help that is simply his own, without our cooperation.

I often wonder whether, among so many people who meddle in such business, there has been anyone of so feeble an understanding as to have been seriously persuaded that he was moving toward reformation by the worst of deformations; that he was heading for his salvation by the most explicit causes we have of most certain damnation; that by overturning the government, the magistracy and the laws under whose protection God has placed him, by filling brotherly hearts with parricidal hatreds, by calling the devils and the Furies to his aid, he could bring help to the sacrosanct gentleness and justice of the divine law.

Ambition, avarice, cruelty and vengeance do not have enough impetuosity of their own: let us bait them and fan them with the glorious title of justice and devotion. No worse state of affairs can

10 Marcus Favonius, a follower of Cato, held that civil war was worse than tyranny. Dion overthrew the tyrant Dionysius II of Syracuse by force.

FRENCH

et prendre auec le congé du magistrat, le manteau de la vertu: *Nihil in speciem fallacius quàm praua religio, vbi deorum numen prætenditur sceleribus.* L'extreme espece d'iniustice, selon Platon, c'est que, ce qui est iniuste, soit tenu pour iuste.

3.12.8 Le peuple y souffrit bien largement lors, non les dommages presens seulement, *Vndique totis Vsque adeo turbatur agris,* mais les futurs aussi. Les viuans y eurent à patir, si eurent ceux qui n'estoient encore nays. On le pilla, et moy par consequent, iusques à l'esperance: luy rauissant tout ce qu'il auoit à s'apprester à viure pour longues annees, *Quæ nequeunt secum ferre aut abducere, perdunt;*
Et cremat insontes turba scelesta casas.
Muris nulla fides, squallent populatibus agri.

3.12.9 Outre cette secousse, i'en souffris d'autres. I'encourus les inconueniens, que la moderation apporte en telles maladies. Ie fus pelaudé à toutes mains. Au Gibelin i'estois Guelphe, au Guelphe Gibelin. Quelqu'vn de mes poetes dict bien cela, mais ie ne sçay où c'est. La situation de ma maison, et l'accointance des hommes de mon voisinage, me presentoient d'vn visage: ma vie et mes actions d'vn autre. Il ne s'en faisoit point des accusations formées: car il n'y auoit où mordre. Ie ne desempare iamais les loix: et qui m'eust recherché, m'en eust deu de reste. C'estoient suspicions muettes, qui couroient sous main, ausquelles il n'y a iamais faute d'apparence, en vn meslange si confus, non plus que d'espris ou enuieux ou ineptes.

I'ayde ordinairement aux presomptions iniurieuses, que la Fortune seme contre moy: par vne façon, que i'ay dés tousiours, de fuyr à me iustifier, excuser et interpreter: estimant que c'est mettre ma conscience en compromis, de playder pour elle. *Perspicuitas enim argumentatione eleuatur.* Et comme, si chacun voyoit en moy, aussi cler que ie fay: au lieu de me tirer arriere de l'accusation, ie m'y auance; et la renchery plustost, par vne confession ironique et moqueuse: si ie ne m'en tais tout à plat, comme de chose indigne de response. Mais ceux qui le prennent pour vne trop hautaine confiance, ne m'en

ENGLISH

be imagined than where wickedness becomes legitimate and, with the magistrate's leave, puts on the cloak of virtue: *Nothing is more deceptive in appearance than a depraved religion, where the will of the gods is made a cloak for crimes.* The extreme form of injustice, according to Plato, is for what is unjust to be held just.[11]

The people suffered greatly then, not only the present damage, *such turmoil there is Everywhere, in all the fields,* but the future damage as well. The living had to suffer from it, and so did those not yet born. They plundered the people—and me, consequently—right down to their hope, robbing them of everything they had laid by to live on for many years: *What they cannot carry or drive off, they destroy;*
And the criminal mob burns innocent cottages.
Walls give no security; the fields lie waste from the raids.

Besides this shock, I suffered others. I incurred the troubles that moderation brings in such diseases. I was mauled on every side. To the Ghibelline I was a Guelph, to the Guelph a Ghibelline. One of my poets puts it well, but I do not know where. The location of my house and my acquaintance with the men of my neighborhood presented me in one light, my life and my actions in another. No formal accusations were made, for there was nothing to bite on. I never abandon the laws, and anyone who had investigated me would have ended up in my debt. They were silent suspicions circulating underhand, which never lack some plausibility in so confused a mixture—any more than there is ever a lack of envious or foolish minds.[12]

I usually lend a hand to the damaging presumptions that Fortune sows against me, through a habit I have always had of shunning to justify, excuse or explain myself, for I think that to plead for my conscience is to put it up for arbitration. *For clarity is diminished by argument.* And as if everyone could see into me as clearly as I do, instead of drawing back from the accusation I step forward to meet it, and rather heighten it with an ironic, mocking confession—unless I keep flatly silent about it, as a thing unworthy of an answer. But

11 Livy.
12 Guelphs and Ghibellines: the rival factions of medieval Italy, supporting the papacy and the emperor respectively.

FRENCH

veulent gueres moins de mal, que ceux, qui le prennent pour foiblesse d'vne cause indefensible.

Nommeement les grands, enuers lesquels faute de sommission, est l'extreme faute. Rudes à toute iustice, qui se cognoist, qui se sent: non demise, humble et suppliante. I'ay souuent heurté à ce pillier. Tant y a que de ce qui m'aduint lors, vn ambitieux s'en fust pendu: si eust faict vn auaritieux. Ie n'ay soing quelconque d'acquerir. *Sit mihi quod nunc est, etiam minus; vt mihi viuam / Quod superest æui, si quid superesse volent dij.* Mais les pertes qui me viennent par l'iniure d'autruy, soit larrecin, soit violence, me pincent, enuiron comme vn homme malade et gehenné d'auarice. L'offence a sans mesure plus d'aigreur, que n'a la perte. Mille diuerses sortes de maux accoururent à moy à la file.

Ie les eusse plus gaillardement soufferts, à la foule. Ie pensay desia, entre mes amis, à qui ie pourrois commettre vne vieillesse necessiteuse et disgratiee. Apres auoir rodé les yeux par tout, ie me trouuay en pourpoint. Pour se laisser tomber à plomb, et de si haut, il faut que ce soit entre les bras d'vne affection solide, vigoureuse et fortunee. Elles sont rares, s'il y en a. En fin ie cogneus que le plus seur, estoit de me fier à moy-mesme de moy, et de ma necessité. Et s'il m'aduenoit d'estre froidement en la grace de la Fortune, que ie me recommandasse de plus fort à la mienne: m'attachasse, regardasse de plus pres à moy.

En toutes choses les hommes se iettent aux appuis estrangers, pour espargner les propres: seuls certains et seuls puissans, qui sçait s'en armer. Chacun court ailleurs, et à l'aduenir, d'autant que nul n'est arriué à soy. Et me resolus, que c'estoient vtiles inconueniens: d'autant premierement qu'il faut aduertir à coups de foyt, les mauuais disciples, quand la raison n'y peut assez, comme par le feu et violence des coins, nous ramenons vn bois tortu à sa droicteur. Ie me presche, il y a si long temps, de me tenir à moy, et separer des choses estrangeres: toutesfois, ie tourne encores tousiours les yeux à costé. L'inclination, vn mot fauorable d'vn grand, vn bon visage, me tente.

ENGLISH

those who take this for overweening confidence bear me hardly less ill will than those who take it for the weakness of an indefensible cause.

Especially the great, with whom lack of submission is the ultimate fault. They are harsh toward any justice that knows itself and feels its own worth, and is not submissive, humble and suppliant. I have often bumped against this pillar. Be that as it may, over what happened to me then an ambitious man would have hanged himself; so would a greedy one. I have no concern whatever for acquiring. *Let me have what I have now, or even less, and live for myself / What remains of my life, if the gods will that any remain.* But losses that come to me through another's wrongdoing, whether theft or violence, pinch me much as they would a man sick and tortured with avarice. The offense is immeasurably more bitter than the loss. A thousand different kinds of ills came rushing at me one after another.[13]

I would have borne them more cheerfully all together in a crowd. I was already considering which of my friends I could entrust with a needy and unfortunate old age. After casting my eyes all around, I found myself stripped bare. To let oneself fall straight down, and from such a height, one must fall into the arms of a solid, vigorous and fortunate affection. Such are rare, if there are any. In the end I realized that the safest course was to trust myself with myself and with my need; and that if I happened to stand coldly in Fortune's favor, I should commend myself more strongly to my own, cling to myself, look more closely to myself.

In all things men throw themselves on outside supports to spare their own, which alone are sure and alone powerful, for one who knows how to arm himself with them. Everyone runs elsewhere, and into the future, because no one has arrived at himself. And I concluded that these were useful misfortunes: first, because bad pupils must be warned with strokes of the whip when reason is not enough, just as with fire and the force of wedges we bring a crooked piece of wood back to straightness. I have been preaching to myself for so long to hold on to myself and keep apart from outside things; yet I still keep turning my eyes

13 Horace, Epistles.

FRENCH

ENGLISH

aside. A great man's goodwill, a favorable word from him, a kindly look, tempts me.

Dieu sçait s'il en est cherté en ce temps, et quel sens il porte. I'oys encore sans rider le front, les subornemens qu'on me faict, pour me tirer en place marchande: et m'en deffens si mollement, qu'il semble, que ie souffrisse plus volontiers d'en estre vaincu. Or à vn esprit si indocile, il faut des bastonnades: et faut rebattre et reserrer, à bons coups de mail, ce vaisseau qui se desprent, se descout, qui s'eschappe et desrobe de soy. Secondement, que cet accident me seruoit d'exercitation, pour me preparer à pis: si moy, qui et par le benefice de la Fortune, et par la condition de mes mœurs, esperois estre des derniers, venois à estre des premiers attrappé de cette tempeste.

God knows whether there is any shortage of those these days, and what meaning such things carry! I still listen without a frown to the inducements offered me to draw me into the marketplace, and I defend myself against them so feebly that it seems I would rather willingly let myself be won over. Now a mind so unteachable needs beatings; and this vessel that is coming apart, coming unstitched, slipping away and escaping from itself, must be hammered back and tightened with good blows of the mallet. Secondly, this misfortune served me as an exercise to prepare me for worse, in case I, who through the kindness of Fortune and the nature of my character hoped to be among the last, should come to be among the first caught by this storm.

M'instruisant de bonne heure, à contraindre ma vie, et la renger pour vn nouuel estat. La vraye liberté c'est pouuoir toute chose sur soy. *Potentissimus est qui se habet in potestate.* En vn temps ordinaire et tranquille, on se prepare à des accidens moderez et communs: mais en cette confusion, où nous sommes depuis trente ans, tout homme François, soit en particulier, soit en general, se voit à chaque heure, sur le poinct de l'entier renuersement de sa fortune. D'autant faut-il tenir son courage fourny de prouisions plus fortes et vigoureuses. Sçachons gré au sort, de nous auoir faict viure en vn siecle, non mol, languissant, ny oisif. Tel qui ne l'eust esté par autre moyen, se rendra fameux par son malheur.

It taught me early to constrain my life and set it in order for a new condition. True freedom is to have power over oneself in all things. *Most powerful is he who has himself in his own power.* In ordinary, peaceful times one prepares for moderate and common mishaps; but in this confusion we have been in for thirty years, every Frenchman, whether individually or collectively, sees himself at every hour on the verge of the complete overthrow of his fortune. All the more must we keep our courage stocked with stronger and more vigorous provisions. Let us be grateful to fate for having made us live in an age that is not soft, languid or idle. Many a man who would not have become famous by any other means will make himself famous by his misfortune.

Comme ie ne ly guere és histoires, ces confusions, des autres estats, sans regret de ne les auoir peu mieux considerer present. Ainsi faict ma curiosité, que ie m'aggree aucunement, de veoir de mes yeux, ce notable spectacle de nostre mort publique, ses symptomes et sa forme. Et puis que ie ne la sçaurois retarder, suis content d'estre destiné à y assister, et m'en instruire. Si cherchons nous euidemment de recognoistre en ombre mesme, et en la fable des Theatres, la montre des ieux tragiques de l'humaine fortune. Ce n'est pas sans compassion de ce que nous oyons: mais nous nous plaisons d'esueiller nostre desplaisir, par la rareté de ces pitoyables euenemens. Rien ne chatouille, qui ne pince.

Just as I rarely read in histories of such upheavals in other states without regretting that I could not have observed them better in person, so my curiosity makes me take some satisfaction in seeing with my own eyes this notable spectacle of our public death, its symptoms and its form. And since I could not delay it, I am content to be destined to witness it and learn from it. Indeed we plainly seek to see, even in shadow and in the fictions of the theater, the representation of the tragic play of human fortune. It is not without compassion for what we hear; but we take pleasure in arousing our distress through the rarity of these pitiful events. Nothing tickles that does not pinch.

FRENCH

Et les bons historiens, fuyent comme vne eaue dormante, et mer morte, des narrations calmes: pour regaigner les seditions, les guerres, où ils sçauent que nous les appellons. Ie doute si ie puis assez honnestement aduouër, à combien vil prix du repos et tranquillité de ma vie, ie l'ay plus de moitié passee en la ruine de mon pays. Ie me donne vn peu trop bon marché de patience, és accidens qui ne me saisissent au propre: et pour me plaindre à moy, regarde non tant ce qu'on m'oste, que ce qui me reste de sauue, et dedans et dehors. Il y a de la consolation, à escheuer tantost l'vn, tantost l'autre, des maux qui nous guignent de suitte, et assenent ailleurs, autour de nous.

Aussi, qu'en matiere d'interests publiques, à mesure, que mon affection est plus vniuersellement espandue, elle en est plus foible. Ioinct qu'il est vray à demy, *Tantum ex publicis malis sentimus, quantum ad priuatas res pertinet*. Et que la santé, d'où nous partismes estoit telle, qu'elle soulage elle mesme le regret, que nous en deurions auoir. C'estoit santé, mais non qu'à la comparaison de la maladie, qui l'a suyuie. Nous ne sommes cheus de gueres haut. La corruption et le brigandage, qui est en dignité et en office, me semble le moins supportable. On nous volle moins iniurieusement dans vn bois, qu'en lieu de seureté.

C'estoit vne iointure vniuerselle de membres gastez en particulier à l'enuy les vns des autres: et la plus part, d'vlceres enuieillis, qui ne receuoient plus, ny ne demandoient guerison.

3.12.10 Ce croulement donq m'anima certes plus, qu'il ne m'atterra, à l'aide de ma conscience, qui se portoit non paisiblement seulement, mais fierement; et ne trouuois en quoy me plaindre de moy. Aussi, comme Dieu n'enuoye iamais non plus les maux, que les biens tous purs aux hommes, ma santé tint bon ce temps-là, outre son ordinaire. Et ainsi que sans elle ie ne puis rien, il est peu de choses, que ie ne puisse auec elle. Elle me donna moyen d'esueiller toutes mes prouisions, et de porter la main au deuant de la playe, qui eust passé volontiers plus outre. Et esprouuay en ma patience, que i'auois quelque tenue contre la Fortune: et qu'à me faire perdre mes arçons, il falloit vn grand heurt.

Ie ne le dis pas, pour l'irriter à me faire vne charge plus vigoureuse. Ie suis son seruiteur: ie luy tends les mains. Pour Dieu qu'elle se contente. Si ie sens ses assaux? si

ENGLISH

And good historians shun calm narratives like stagnant water and a dead sea, to get back to seditions and wars, where they know we are calling them. I doubt whether I can decently admit at how low a cost to the repose and tranquility of my life I have spent more than half of it amid the ruin of my country. I get my patience a little too cheaply in misfortunes that do not seize me personally; and when I come to complain to myself, I look not so much at what is taken from me as at what remains safe, both within and without. There is some consolation in dodging, now one, now another, of the ills that keep eyeing us one after another and land their blows elsewhere, all around us.

Also, in matters of public interest, the more widely my affection is spread, the weaker it is. Add that it is half true that *we feel public misfortunes only insofar as they touch our private affairs*. And that the health from which we started was such that it itself eases the regret we ought to feel for it. It was health, but only by comparison with the sickness that followed it. We have not fallen from very high. Corruption and brigandage that hold rank and office seem to me the least bearable. Being robbed in a wood is less of an outrage than being robbed in a place of safety.

It was a general assemblage of limbs, each rotten in its own way, vying with one another, and most of them with inveterate ulcers that no longer admitted or asked for a cure.

So this collapse certainly roused me more than it crushed me, with the help of my conscience, which bore itself not only peacefully but proudly; and I found nothing to reproach myself with. Also, since God never sends men evils, any more than goods, that are wholly unmixed, my health held up during that time better than usual. And just as without it I can do nothing, there are few things I cannot do with it. It enabled me to rouse all my reserves and to put my hand up against the wound, which might well have gone deeper. And I found, by testing my patience, that I had some grip against Fortune, and that it would take a heavy blow to knock me out of the saddle.

I do not say this to provoke her into charging me more vigorously. I am her servant; I hold out my hands to her. For God's sake, let her be satisfied!

FRENCH

fais. Comme ceux que la tristesse accable et possede, se laissent pourtant par interualles tastonner à quelque plaisir, et leur eschappe vn sousrire: ie puis aussi assez sur moy, pour rendre mon estat ordinaire, paisible, et deschargé d'ennuyeuse imagination: mais ie me laisse pourtant à boutades, surprendre des morsures de ces malplaisantes pensees, qui me batent, pendant que ie m'arme pour les chasser, ou pour les luicter. Voicy vn autre rengregement de mal, qui m'arriua à la suitte du reste.

ENGLISH

Do I feel her assaults? I certainly do. Just as those overwhelmed and possessed by sadness still let themselves be touched at intervals by some pleasure, and a smile escapes them, so I have enough power over myself to make my ordinary state peaceful and free of distressing thoughts; but still I let myself be caught off guard now and then by the bites of these unpleasant thoughts, which strike me while I am arming myself to drive them away or wrestle with them. Here is another aggravation of my troubles that came to me on the heels of the rest.

THE PLAGUE

Plague drives his household from home, and the dying peasants show him true resolution.

FRENCH

Et dehors et dedans ma maison, ie fus accueilly d'vne peste, vehemente au prix de toute autre. Car comme les corps sains sont subiects à plus griefues maladies, d'autant qu'ils ne peuuent estre forcez que par celles-là: aussi mon air tressalubre, où d'aucune memoire, la contagion, bien que voisine, n'auoit sçeu prendre pied, venant à s'empoisonner, produisit des effects estranges. *Mista senum et iuuenum densantur funera, nullum / Sæua caput Proserpina fugit.* I'euz à souffrir cette plaisante condition, que la veue de ma maison m'estoit effroyable. Tout ce qui y estoit, estoit sans garde, et à l'abandon de qui en auoit enuie. Moy qui suis si hospitalier, fus en tres penible queste de retraicte, pour ma famille.

Vne famille esgaree, faisant peur à ses amis, et à soy-mesme, et horreur où qu'elle cherchast à se placer: ayant à changer de demeure, soudain qu'vn de la trouppe commençoit à se douloir du bout du doigt. Toutes maladies sont alors prises pour peste: on ne se donne pas le loysir de les recognoistre. Et c'est le bon: que selon les regles de l'art, à tout danger qu'on approche, il faut estre quarante iours en transe de ce mal: l'imagination vous exerceant cependant à sa mode, et enfleurant vostre santé mesme. Tout cela m'eust beaucoup moins touché, si ie n'eusse eu à me ressentir de la peine d'autruy, et seruir six mois miserablement, de guide à cette carauane.

Car ie porte en moy mes preseruatifs, qui sont, resolution et souffrance. L'apprehension ne me presse guere:

ENGLISH

Both outside and inside my house I was greeted by a plague more violent than any other. For just as healthy bodies are subject to more serious diseases, because only those can overcome them, so my very healthy air, where within anyone's memory the contagion, though close by, had never been able to gain a foothold, produced strange effects when it came to be poisoned. *The funerals of old and young crowd thick together; no head / Does cruel Proserpina pass by.* I had to endure this pleasant predicament: the sight of my house filled me with dread. Everything in it was unguarded and abandoned to anyone who wanted it. I, who am so hospitable, was put to a very painful search for a refuge for my household.[14]

A household gone astray, frightening its friends and itself, and causing horror wherever it tried to settle, having to change lodgings as soon as one of the band began to feel a pain in the tip of a finger. All illnesses are then taken for plague; no one takes the time to identify them. And the best of it is that, by the rules of medicine, whenever you come near any danger you must spend forty days in dread of the disease, your imagination meanwhile working on you in its own way and making even your health feverish. All this would have affected me much less if I had not had to feel the sufferings of others and serve wretchedly for six months as guide to this caravan.

FRENCH

laquelle on craint particulierement en ce mal. Et si estant seul, ie l'eusse voulu prendre, c'eust esté vne suitte, bien plus gaillarde et plus esloignee. C'est vne mort, qui ne me semble des pires. Elle est communément courte, d'estourdissement, sans douleur, consolee par la condition publique: sans ceremonie, sans deuil, sans presse. Mais quant au monde des enuirons, la centiesme partie des ames ne se peut sauuer. *Videas desertáque regna / Pàstorum, et longè saltus latéque vacantes.* En ce lieu, mon meilleur reuenu est manuel. Ce que cent hommes trauailloient pour moy, chauma pour long temps.

Or lors, quel exemple de resolution ne vismes nous, en la simplicité de tout ce peuple? Generalement, chacun renonçoit au soing de la vie. Les raisins demeurerent suspendus aux vignes, le bien principal du pays: tous indifferemment se preparans et attendans la mort, à ce soir, ou au lendemain: d'vn visage et d'vne voix si peu effroyee, qu'il sembloit qu'ils eussent compromis à cette necessité, et que ce fust vne condemnation vniuerselle et ineuitable. Elle est tousiours telle. Mais à combien peu, tient la resolution au mourir? La distance et difference de quelques heures: la seule consideration de la compagnie, nous en rend l'apprehension diuerse.

Voyez ceux-cy: pour ce qu'ils meurent en mesme mois: enfans, ieunes, vieillards, ils ne s'estonnent plus, ils ne se pleurent plus. I'en vis qui craignoient de demeurer derriere, comme en vne horrible solitude. Et n'y cogneu communément, autre soing que des sepultures: il leur faschoit de voir les corps espars emmy les champs, à la mercy des bestes: qui y peuplerent incontinent. Comment les fantasies humaines se descouppent! Les Neorites, nation qu'Alexandre subiugua, iettent les corps des morts au plus profond de leurs bois, pour y estre mangez. Seule sepulture estimee entr'eux heureuse. Tel sain faisoit desia sa fosse: d'autres s'y couchoient encore viuans. Et vn maneuure des miens, auec ses mains, et ses pieds, attira sur soy la terre en mourant.

Estoit ce pas s'abrier pour s'endormir plus à son aise? D'vne entreprise en hauteur aucunement pareille à celle

ENGLISH

For I carry my preservatives within me: resolution and endurance. Apprehension, which is particularly feared in this disease, hardly troubles me. And if I had been alone and had wanted to take flight, it would have been a much more cheerful flight, and much farther away. It is a death that does not seem to me among the worst. It is usually short, a stupor, without pain, consoled by the common lot, without ceremony, without mourning, without a crowd. But as for the people round about, not one soul in a hundred could be saved. *You would see the shepherds' realms deserted, / And the pastures empty far and wide.* In this place my best income comes from manual labor. What a hundred men worked for me lay idle for a long time.

Now what an example of resolution did we not see then in the simplicity of all these people! Generally, everyone gave up caring for life. The grapes, the chief wealth of the region, remained hanging on the vines; all alike were preparing for and awaiting death that evening or the next day, with faces and voices so little frightened that it seemed they had come to terms with this necessity, and that it was a universal and inevitable sentence. It always is. But on how little does resolution in dying depend! The gap and difference of a few hours, the mere thought of company, changes our apprehension of it.

Look at these people: because they are dying in the same month—children, young people, old people—they are no longer stunned, they no longer weep for themselves. I saw some who were afraid of being left behind, as in a horrible solitude. And generally I saw no concern among them but for burial: it grieved them to see the bodies scattered across the fields at the mercy of the animals, which promptly swarmed there. How differently human notions are cut! The Neorites, a nation that Alexander subjugated, throw the bodies of the dead into the depths of their woods to be eaten there—the only burial they consider happy. One man, still healthy, was already digging his grave; others lay down in theirs while still alive. And one of my laborers, as he was dying, pulled the earth over himself with his hands and feet.[15]

Was that not tucking himself in to sleep more comfortably? An undertaking somewhat comparable

14 The plague of 1585–1586 in Guyenne, which drove Montaigne and his household from their home for six months.

FRENCH

des soldats Romains, qu'on trouua apres la iournee de Cannes, la teste plongee dans des trous, qu'ils auoient faicts et comblez de leurs mains, en s'y suffoquant. Somme toute vne nation fut incontinent par vsage, logee en vne marche, qui ne cede en roideur à aucune resolution estudiee et consultee.

3.12.11 La plus part des instructions de la science, à nous encourager, ont plus de montre que de force, et plus d'ornement que de fruict. Nous auons abandonné Nature, et luy voulons apprendre sa leçon: elle, qui nous menoit si heureusement et si seurement. Et ce pendant, les traces de son instruction, et ce peu qui par le benefice de l'ignorance, reste de son image, empreint en la vie de cette tourbe rustique d'hommes impollis: la science est contrainte, de l'aller tous les iours empruntant, pour en faire patron à ses disciples, de constance, d'innocence, et de tranquillité. Il fait beau voir, que ceux-cy plains de tant de belle cognoissance, ayent à imiter cette sotte simplicité: et à l'imiter, aux premieres actions de la vertu.

Et que nostre sapience, apprenne des bestes mesmes, les plus vtiles enseignemens, aux plus grandes et necessaires parties de nostre vie. Comme il nous faut viure et mourir, mesnager nos biens, aymer et esleuer nos enfans, entretenir iustice. Singulier tesmoignage de l'humaine maladie: et que cette raison qui se manie à nostre poste, trouuant tousiours quelque diuersité et nouuelleté, ne laisse chez nous aucune trace apparente de la Nature. Et en ont faict les hommes, comme les parfumiers de l'huile: ils l'ont sophistiquee de tant d'argumentations, et de discours appellez du dehors, qu'elle en est deuenue variable, et particuliere à chacun: et a perdu son propre visage, constant, et vniuersel.

Et nous faut en chercher tesmoignage des bestes, non subiect à faueur, corruption, ny à diuersité d'opinions. Car il est bien vray, qu'elles mesmes ne vont pas tousiours exactement dans la route de Nature, mais ce qu'elles en desuoyent, c'est si peu, que vous en apperceuez tousiours l'orniere. Tout ainsi que les cheuaux qu'on meine en main, font bien des bonds, et des escapades, mais c'est à la longueur de leurs longes: et suyuent neantmoins tousiours les pas de celuy qui les guide: et comme l'oiseau prend son vol, mais sous la bride de sa filiere.

ENGLISH

in loftiness to that of the Roman soldiers who were found after the battle of Cannae with their heads plunged into holes they had dug and filled in with their own hands, suffocating themselves in them. In short, a whole nation was promptly brought by habit to a pitch that yields in firmness to no studied and deliberated resolution.[16]

Most of learning's instructions for encouraging us have more show than force, and more ornament than fruit. We have abandoned Nature and want to teach her her lesson—she who guided us so happily and so surely. And meanwhile the traces of her teaching, and the little of her image that, thanks to ignorance, remains imprinted on the life of this rustic crowd of unpolished men—these learning is forced to go borrowing every day, to make of them a model of constancy, innocence and tranquility for its pupils. It is a fine thing to see these men, full of so much fine knowledge, having to imitate this foolish simplicity, and to imitate it in the very first actions of virtue;

and to see our wisdom learn from the very beasts the most useful teachings for the greatest and most necessary parts of our life: how we should live and die, manage our property, love and raise our children, maintain justice. A singular testimony to human sickness; and proof that this reason, which we handle as we please, always finding some diversity and novelty, leaves in us no visible trace of Nature. And men have done with Nature as perfumers do with oil: they have adulterated her with so many arguments and reasonings brought in from outside that she has become variable and particular to each person, and has lost her own constant and universal face.

And we must seek testimony of her from the beasts, testimony not subject to favor, corruption or diversity of opinions. For it is quite true that they themselves do not always go exactly along Nature's road; but they stray from it so little that you can always see the rut. Just as horses led by hand do plenty of bucking and breaking away, but only to the length of their halters, and still always follow the steps of the one leading them; and as the hawk takes flight, but under the restraint of its tether line.

15 A people of Gedrosia, on the coast of modern Pakistan, described by Diodorus Siculus.
16 Hannibal's great victory over the Romans in 216 BC.

FORETHOUGHT OF ILLS

Rehearsing misfortunes torments more than suffering them; nature will teach us to die.

FRENCH

Exilia, tormenta, bella, morbos, naufragia meditare, vt nullo sis malo tyro. A quoy nous sert cette curiosité, de preoccuper tous les inconueniens de l'humaine nature, et nous preparer auec tant de peine à l'encontre de ceux mesme, qui n'ont à l'auanture point à nous toucher? (*Parem passis tristitiam facit, pati posse.* Non seulement le coup, mais le vent et le pet nous frappe). Ou comme les plus fieureux, car certes c'est fieure, aller dés à cette heure vous faire donner le fouët, par ce qu'il peut aduenir, que Fortune vous le fera souffrir vn iour: et prendre vostre robe fourree dés la S. Iean, pour ce que vous en aurez besoing à Noel?

Iettez vous à l'experience de tous les maux qui vous peuuent arriuer, nommement des plus extremes: esprouuez vous là, disent-ils, asseurez vous là. Au rebours; le plus facile et plus naturel, seroit en descharger mesme sa pensee. Ils ne viendront pas assez tost, leur vray estre ne nous dure pas assez, il faut que nostre esprit les estende et les allonge, et qu'auant la main il les incorpore en soy, et s'en entretienne, comme s'ils ne poisoient pas raisonnablement à nos sens.

Ils poiseront assez, quand ils y seront (dit vn des maistres, non de quelque tendre secte, mais de la plus dure) cependant fauorise toy: croy ce que tu aimes le mieux: que te sert il d'aller recueillant et preuenant ta male fortune: et de perdre le present, par la crainte du futur: et estre dés cette heure miserable, par ce que tu le dois estre auec le temps? Ce sont ses mots. La science nous faict volontiers vn bon office, de nous instruire bien exactement des dimensions des maux. *Curis acuens mortalia corda.* Ce seroit dommage, si partie de leur grandeur eschappoit à nostre sentiment et cognoissance.

Il est certain, qu'à la plus part, la preparation à la mort, a donné plus de torment, que n'a faict la souffrance. Il fut iadis veritablement dict, et par vn bien iudicieux autheur: *Minus afficit sensus fatigatio, quàm cogitatio.* Le sentiment de la mort presente, nous anime par fois de soy mesme,

ENGLISH

Meditate on exile, torture, war, disease, shipwreck, so that you may be a novice to no misfortune. What good does it do us, this eagerness to anticipate all the ills of human nature and to prepare ourselves with so much trouble even against those that may perhaps never touch us? (*The possibility of suffering makes us as sad as those who suffer.* Not only the blow, but the wind and the fart of it strike us.) Or, like the most feverish—for it certainly is a fever—to go and have yourself whipped right now because it may happen that Fortune will make you suffer it one day, and to put on your fur-lined gown on Saint John's Day in June because you will need it at Christmas?

"Throw yourselves into the experience of all the ills that can befall you, especially the most extreme," they say; "test yourselves there, make yourselves secure there." On the contrary: the easiest and most natural thing would be to unburden even our thoughts of them. They will not come soon enough; their real existence does not last long enough for us; our mind must stretch them out and lengthen them, absorb them into itself beforehand and dwell on them, as if they did not weigh heavily enough on our senses.

"They will weigh enough when they are here," says one of the masters—not of some soft sect, but of the hardest. "Meanwhile, favor yourself; believe what you like best. What good does it do you to go gathering up and anticipating your ill fortune, to lose the present for fear of the future, and to be miserable now because you are bound to be so in time?" Those are his words. Learning certainly does us a fine service by instructing us very precisely in the dimensions of our ills. *Sharpening mortal hearts with cares.* It would be a pity if any part of their magnitude escaped our feeling and knowledge.[17]

It is certain that for most people preparing for death has caused more torment than undergoing it. It was truly said long ago, and by a very judicious author: *Exertion affects the senses less than brooding does.* The sense of death at hand some-

17 Seneca, the Stoic, in his Letters.

FRENCH

d'vne prompte resolution, de ne plus euiter chose du tout ineuitable. Plusieurs gladiateurs se sont veus au temps passé, apres auoir couardement combattu, aualler courageusement la mort; offrans leur gosier au fer de l'ennemy, et le conuians. La veue esloignee de la mort aduenir, a besoing d'vne fermeté lente, et difficile par consequent à fournir. Si vous ne sçauez pas mourir, ne vous chaille.

Nature vous en informera sur le champ, plainement et suffisamment; elle fera exactement cette besongne pour vous, n'en empeschez vostre soing. *Incertam frustra, mortales, funeris horam*
Quæritis, et qua sit mors aditura via.
Pœna minor certam subito perferre ruinam,
Quod timeas grauius sustinuisse diu. Nous troublons la vie par le soing de la mort, et la mort par le soing de la vie. L'vne nous ennuye, l'autre nous effraye. Ce n'est pas contre la mort, que nous nous preparons, c'est chose trop momentanee. Vn quart d'heure de passion sans consequence, sans nuisance, ne merite pas des preceptes particuliers. A dire vray, nous nous preparons contre les preparations de la mort.

La philosophie nous ordonne, d'auoir la mort tousiours deuant les yeux, de la preuoir et considerer auant le temps: et nous donne apres, les regles et les precautions, pour prouuoir à ce, que cette preuoyance, et cette pensee ne nous blesse. Ainsi font les medecins qui nous iettent aux maladies, afin qu'ils ayent où employer leurs drogues et leur art. Si nous n'auons sçeu viure, c'est iniustice de nous apprendre à mourir et difformer la fin de son total. Si nous auons sçeu viure, constamment et tranquillement, nous sçaurons mourir de mesme. Ils s'en venteront tant qu'il leur plaira. *Tota philosophorum vita commentatio mortis est.* Mais il m'est aduis, que c'est bien le bout, non pourtant le but de la vie.

C'est sa fin, son extremité, non pourtant son obiect. Elle doit estre elle mesme à soy, sa visee, son dessein. Son droit estude est se regler, se conduire, se souffrir. Au nombre de plusieurs autres offices, que comprend le general et principal chapitre de sçauoir viure, est cet article de sçauoir mourir. Et des plus legers, si nostre crainte ne luy donnoit poids.

ENGLISH

times inspires us of itself with a prompt resolution no longer to avoid what is utterly inevitable. Many gladiators were seen in times past who, after fighting like cowards, swallowed death courageously, offering their throats to the enemy's sword and inviting it. The distant prospect of death to come requires a slow firmness, and one therefore hard to sustain. If you do not know how to die, never mind.[18]

Nature will teach you on the spot, fully and adequately; she will do this job for you exactly; do not trouble yourself about it. *In vain, mortals, you seek the uncertain hour*
Of your end, and by what road death will come.
It is less pain to suffer a sudden, certain ruin
Than to endure for long what you fear. We trouble life with concern about death, and death with concern about life. The one distresses us, the other frightens us. It is not against death that we prepare ourselves; that is too momentary a thing. A quarter of an hour of suffering, without consequence and without harm, does not deserve special precepts. To tell the truth, we are preparing ourselves against the preparations for death.[19]

Philosophy orders us to keep death always before our eyes, to foresee it and consider it ahead of time, and then gives us rules and precautions to see to it that this foresight and this thought do not wound us. That is what physicians do who throw us into illnesses so that they will have something to use their drugs and their skill on. If we have not known how to live, it is unjust to teach us how to die and to make the end out of keeping with the whole. If we have known how to live steadfastly and tranquilly, we will know how to die the same way. They may boast about it as much as they like: *The whole life of philosophers is a meditation on death.* But it seems to me that death is indeed the end of life, yet not its aim.

It is its end, its extremity, yet not its object. Life should be its own aim, its own purpose. Its proper study is to regulate itself, guide itself, bear with itself. Among the many other duties comprised in the general and principal chapter of knowing how to live is this article of knowing how to die—and

18 Quintilian, Institutes of Oratory.
19 Maximianus, Elegies, once attributed to Cornelius Gallus.

FRENCH

ENGLISH

one of the lightest, if our fear did not give it weight.

3.12.12 A les iuger par l'vtilité, et par la verité naifue, les leçons de la simplicité, ne cedent gueres à celles que nous presche la doctrine au contraire. Les hommes sont diuers en sentiment et en force: il les faut mener à leur bien, selon eux: et par routes diuerses. *Quò me cumque rapit tempestas, deferor hospes.* Ie ne vy iamais paysan de mes voisins, entrer en cogitation de quelle contenance, et asseurance, il passeroit cette heure derniere. Nature luy apprend à ne songer à la mort, que quand il se meurt. Et lors il y a meilleure grace qu'Aristote: lequel la mort presse doublement, et par elle, et par vne si longue premeditation.

Judged by their usefulness and by their natural truth, the lessons of simplicity hardly yield to those that learning preaches to us to the contrary. Men differ in feeling and in strength; they must be led to their good according to what they are, and by different roads. *Wherever the storm drives me, I put in as a guest.* I never saw any peasant among my neighbors start pondering with what countenance and assurance he would pass that last hour. Nature teaches him not to think about death except when he is dying. And then he does it with better grace than Aristotle, whom death presses doubly, both by itself and by such long premeditation.

Pourtant fut-ce l'opinion de Cæsar, que la moins premeditee mort, estoit la plus heureuse, et plus deschargee. *Plus dolet quàm necesse est, qui antê dolet quàm necesse est.* L'aigreur de cette imagination, naist de nostre curiosité. Nous nous empeschons tousiours ainsi: voulans deuancer et regenter les prescriptions naturelles. Ce n'est qu'aux docteurs, d'en disner plus mal, tous sains, et se renfroigner de l'image de la mort. Le commun, n'a besoing ny de remede ny de consolation, qu'au heurt, et au coup. Et n'en considere qu'autant iustement qu'il en souffre. Est-ce pas ce que nous disons, que la stupidité, et faute d'apprehension, du vulgaire, luy donne cette patience aux maux presens, et cette profonde nonchalance des sinistres accidens futurs?

That is why it was Caesar's opinion that the least premeditated death was the happiest and the least burdened. *He suffers more than necessary who suffers before it is necessary.* The bitterness of this imagining springs from our curiosity. This is how we always encumber ourselves, wanting to anticipate and lord it over nature's prescriptions. It is only for learned doctors to dine the worse for it while in perfect health, and to scowl at the image of death. Ordinary people need neither remedy nor consolation except at the impact, at the blow, and they consider it exactly as much as they suffer from it. Is that not what we say: that the stupidity and lack of apprehension of the common people give them this patience in present ills and this profound unconcern about sinister future events? [20]

Que leur ame pour estre plus crasse, et obtuse, est moins penetrable et agitable? Pour Dieu s'il est ainsi, tenons d'ores en auant escole de bestise. C'est l'extreme fruit, que les sciences nous promettent, auquel ceste-cy conduict si doucement ses disciples.

That their souls, being coarser and duller, are less easily penetrated and stirred? For God's sake, if that is so, let us from now on hold a school of stupidity. It is the ultimate fruit that the sciences promise us, and this school leads its pupils to it so gently.

SOCRATES' DEFENSE

Montaigne paraphrases Socrates' plea to his judges as a model of natural simplicity.

FRENCH

ENGLISH

3.12.13 Nous n'aurons pas faute de bons regens, interpretes de la simplicité naturelle. Socrates en sera l'vn. Car de ce qu'il

We will not lack good teachers to interpret natural simplicity. Socrates will be one. For, as far as I re-

20 Plutarch reports that Caesar said this at supper on the eve of his assassination.

FRENCH

m'en souuient, il parle enuiron en ce sens, aux iuges qui deliberent de sa vie: I'ay peur, messieurs, si ie vous prie de ne me faire mourir, que ie m'enferre en la delation de mes accusateurs; qui est: Que ie fais plus l'entendu que les autres: comme ayant quelque cognoissance plus cachee, des choses qui sont au dessus et au dessous de nous. Ie sçay que ie n'ay ni frequenté, ny recogneu la mort, ni n'ay veu personne qui ait essayé ses qualitez, pour m'en instruire.

Ceux qui la craignent presupposent la cognoistre: quant à moy, ie ne sçay ny quelle elle est, ny quel il faict en l'autre monde. A l'auanture est la mort chose indifferente, à l'auanture desirable. Il est à croire pourtant, si c'est vne transmigration d'vne place à autre, qu'il y a de l'amendement, d'aller viure auec tant de grands personnages trespassez: et d'estre exempt d'auoir plus affaire à iuges iniques et corrompus. Si c'est vn aneantissement de nostre estre, c'est encore amendement d'entrer en vne longue et paisible nuit. Nous ne sentons rien de plus doux en la vie, qu'vn repos et sommeil tranquille, et profond sans songes.

Les choses que ie sçay estre mauuaises, comme d'offencer son prochain, et desobeir au superieur, soit Dieu, soit homme, ie les euite soigneusement: celles desquelles ie ne sçay, si elles sont bonnes ou mauuaises, ie ne les sçaurois craindre. Si ie m'en vay mourir, et vous laisse en vie: les Dieux seuls voyent, à qui, de vous ou de moy, il en ira mieux. Parquoy pour mon regard, vous en ordonnerez, comme il vous plaira. Mais selon ma façon de conseiller les choses iustes et vtiles, ie dy bien, que pour vostre conscience vous ferez mieux de m'eslargir, si vous ne voyez plus auant que moy en ma cause.

Et iugeant selon mes actions passees, et publiques, et priuees, selon mes intentions, et selon le profit, que tirent tous les iours de ma conuersation tant de nos citoyens, ieunes et vieux, et le fruit, que ie vous fay à tous, vous ne pouuez duëment vous descharger enuers mon merite, qu'en ordonnant, que ie sois nourry, attendu ma pauureté, au Prytanee, aux despens publiques: ce que souuent ie vous ay veu à moindre raison, octroyer à d'autres. Ne prenez pas à obstination ou desdaing, que, suyuant la coustume, ie n'aille vous suppliant et esmouuant à commiseration.

I'ay des amis et des parents, n'estant, comme dict Homere, engendré ny de bois, ny de pierre non plus que

ENGLISH

member, he speaks roughly to this effect to the judges deliberating on his life: I am afraid, gentlemen, that if I beg you not to put me to death, I will entangle myself in the charge my accusers bring, which is that I set myself up as knowing more than others, as having some more hidden knowledge of things above and below us. I know that I have neither frequented nor explored death, nor seen anyone who has tested its qualities so as to instruct me about it.[21]

Those who fear it presuppose that they know it; as for me, I know neither what it is nor what things are like in the other world. Perhaps death is a thing indifferent, perhaps a thing desirable. It is to be believed, however, that if it is a migration from one place to another, there is improvement in going to live with so many great men who have passed away, and in being exempt from having anything more to do with unjust and corrupt judges. If it is an annihilation of our being, it is still an improvement to enter a long and peaceful night. We feel nothing sweeter in life than a tranquil rest and a sleep deep and without dreams.

The things I know to be bad, such as wronging one's neighbor and disobeying one's superior, whether God or man, I carefully avoid; those I do not know to be good or bad, I could not fear. If I go off to die and leave you alive, the gods alone see which of us, you or I, will fare better. Therefore, as far as I am concerned, you will decide as you please. But, in keeping with my way of advising what is just and useful, I do say that for the sake of your conscience you will do better to set me free, unless you see further into my case than I do.

And judging by my past actions, both public and private, by my intentions, by the profit that so many of our citizens, young and old, draw every day from my conversation, and by the benefit I bring to you all, you cannot duly acquit yourselves toward my deserts except by ordering that, in view of my poverty, I be fed in the Prytaneum at public expense—which I have often seen you grant to others on lesser grounds. Do not take it for obstinacy or disdain that I do not, following custom, go about beseeching you and moving you to pity.[22]

I have friends and relatives—for I was not, as Homer says, begotten of wood or stone any more

21 A free paraphrase of Socrates' defense in Plato's Apology.

FRENCH

les autres: capables de se presenter, avec des larmes, et le dueil: et ay trois enfans esplorez, dequoy vous tirer à pitié. Mais ie feroy honte à nostre ville, en l'aage que ie suis, et en telle reputation de sagesse, que m'en voyci en preuention, de m'aller desmettre à si lasches contenances. Que diroit-on des autres Atheniens? I'ay tousiours admonnesté ceux qui m'ont ouy parler, de ne racheter leur vie, par vne action deshonnete.

Et aux guerres de mon pays à Amphipolis, à Potidee, à Delie, et autres où ie me suis trouué, i'ay montré par effect, combien i'estoy loing de garantir ma seureté par ma honte. D'auantage i'interesserois vostre deuoir, et vous conuierois à choses laydes: car ce n'est pas à mes prieres de vous persuader: c'est aux raisons pures et solides de la iustice. Vous auez iuré aux Dieux d'ainsi vous maintenir. Il sembleroit, que ie vous vousisse soupçonner et recriminer, de ne croire pas, qu'il y en aye. Et moy mesme tesmoigneroy contre moy, de ne croire point en eux, comme ie doy: me deffiant de leur conduicte, et ne remettant purement en leurs mains mon affaire.

Ie m'y fie du tout: et tiens pour certain, qu'ils feront en cecy, selon qu'il sera plus propre à vous et à moy. Les gens de bien ny viuans, ny morts, n'ont aucunement à se craindre des Dieux. Voyla pas vn playdoyé puerile, d'vne hauteur inimaginable et employé en quelle necessité? Vrayement ce fut raison, qu'il le preferast à celuy, que ce grand orateur Lysias, auoit mis par escrit pour luy: excellemment façonné au stile iudiciaire: mais indigne d'vn si noble criminel. Eust on ouï de la bouche de Socrates vne voix suppliante? Cette superbe vertu, eust elle calé, au plus fort de sa montre?

Et sa riche et puissante nature, eust elle commis à l'art sa defense: et en son plus haut essay, renoncé à la verité et naïueté, ornemens de son parler, pour se parer du fard, des figures, et feintes, d'vne oraison apprinse? Il feit tressagement, et selon luy, de ne corrompre vne teneur de vie incorruptible, et vne si saincte image de l'humaine forme, pour allonger d'vn an sa decrepitude: et trahir l'immortelle memoire de cette fin glorieuse. Il deuoit sa vie, non pas à soy, mais à l'exemple du monde. Seroit ce

ENGLISH

than others are—who are capable of appearing in tears and mourning; and I have three weeping children with whom to move you to pity. But I would bring shame on our city, at my age and with such a reputation for wisdom that I stand accused because of it, if I stooped to such base displays. What would people say of the other Athenians? I have always admonished those who have heard me speak not to buy back their lives by a dishonorable act.

And in my country's wars, at Amphipolis, at Potidaea, at Delium and others where I was present, I showed in deed how far I was from securing my safety by my shame. Moreover, I would be compromising your duty and inviting you to ugly acts; for it is not for my entreaties to persuade you, but for the pure and solid reasons of justice. You have sworn to the gods to conduct yourselves thus. It would seem that I wanted to suspect you and accuse you of not believing that there are any. And I would be bearing witness against myself that I do not believe in them as I should, by distrusting their guidance and not placing my case simply in their hands.[23]

I trust in them entirely, and hold it certain that in this matter they will do what is most fitting for you and for me. Good men, whether living or dead, have nothing whatever to fear from the gods. Is that not a childlike plea, of unimaginable loftiness—and used in what an extremity! Truly it was right that he should prefer it to the one the great orator Lysias had written out for him, excellently fashioned in the judicial style but unworthy of so noble a defendant. Would anyone have heard a pleading voice from the mouth of Socrates? Would that proud virtue have struck its sails at the height of its display?[24]

And would his rich and powerful nature have entrusted its defense to art, and in its supreme trial renounced truth and naturalness, the ornaments of his speech, to deck itself out with the makeup, the figures and the feints of a memorized oration? He acted very wisely, and true to himself, in not corrupting an incorruptible tenor of life and so holy an image of human form in order to prolong

22 The Prytaneum: the public hall in Athens where honored citizens were fed at the city's expense.
23 Battles of the Peloponnesian War in the 430s and 420s BC, at which Socrates served as a foot soldier.
24 Lysias (c. 445–380 BC), Athenian orator and writer of speeches for litigants.

FRENCH

pas dommage publique, qu'il eust acheuee d'vne oysiue et obscure façon? Certes vne si nonchallante et molle consideration de sa mort, meritoit que la posterité la considerast d'autant plus pour luy.

Ce qu'elle fit. Et il n'y a rien en la iustice si iuste, que ce que la Fortune ordonna pour sa recommandation. Car les Atheniens eurent en telle abomination ceux, qui en auoient esté cause, qu'on les fuyoit comme personnes excommuniees. On tenoit pollu tout ce, à quoy ils auoient touché: personne à l'estuue ne lauoit auec eux, personne ne les saluoit ni accointoit: si qu'en fin ne pouuant plus porter cette haine publique, ils se pendirent eux mesmes.

3.12.14 Si quelqu'vn estime, que parmy tant d'autres exemples que i'auois à choisir pour le seruice de mon propos, és dits de Socrates, i'aye mal trié cestuy-cy: et qu'il iuge, ce discours estre esleué au dessus des opinions communes: ie l'ay faict à escient: car ie iuge autrement. Et tiens que c'est vn discours, en rang, et en naïfueté bien plus arriere, et plus bas, que les opinions communes. Il represente en vne hardiesse inartificielle et securité enfantine la pure et premiere impression et ignorance de nature. Car il est croyable, que nous auons naturellement crainte de la douleur; mais non de la mort, à cause d'elle. C'est vne partie de nostre estre, non moins essentielle que le viure.

A quoy faire, nous en auroit Nature engendré la haine et l'horreur, veu qu'elle luy tient rang de tres-grande vtilité, pour nourrir la succession et vicissitude de ses ouurages? Et qu'en cette republique vniuerselle, elle sert plus de naissance et d'augmentation, que de perte ou ruyne: *Sic rerum summa nouatur: / Mille animas vna necata dedit.* La deffaillance d'vne vie, est le passage à mille autres vies. Nature a empreint aux bestes, le soing d'elles et de leur conseruation. Elles vont iusques-là, de craindre leur empirement: de se heurter et blesser: que nous les encheuestrions et battions, accidents subiects à leur sens et experience. Mais que nous les tuions, elles ne le peuuent craindre, ny n'ont la faculté d'imaginer et conclurre la mort.

ENGLISH

his decrepitude by a year, and in not betraying the immortal memory of that glorious end. He owed his life not to himself but to the example of the world. Would it not have been a public loss if he had ended it in an idle and obscure way? Certainly so unconcerned and easy a consideration of his own death deserved that posterity should consider it all the more on his behalf.

And so it did. And there is nothing in justice so just as what Fortune ordained to honor his memory. For the Athenians held those who had caused his death in such abomination that people shunned them like excommunicated persons. Everything they had touched was held polluted; no one would bathe with them at the baths, no one greeted them or had any dealings with them; so that in the end, unable to bear this public hatred any longer, they hanged themselves.

Someone may think that, of all the examples I could have chosen from the sayings of Socrates to serve my purpose, I picked this one badly, and judge that this reasoning rises above common opinion. I did it deliberately, for I judge otherwise. I hold that, in rank and in naturalness, it is a reasoning that stands much further back and lower than common opinion. With an artless boldness and a childlike assurance, it shows nature's pure and first impression, and nature's ignorance. For it is believable that we naturally fear pain, but not death for its own sake. Death is a part of our being no less essential than living.

Why would Nature have bred in us a hatred and horror of it, when it is so very useful to her in sustaining the succession and alternation of her works? And when, in this universal commonwealth, it serves birth and increase more than loss or ruin: *Thus the sum of things is renewed: / One life put to death has given a thousand.* The failing of one life is the passage to a thousand other lives. Nature has imprinted on animals the care of themselves and of their preservation. They go so far as to fear being impaired: knocking and hurting themselves, our haltering and beating them, accidents within the reach of their senses and experience. But they cannot fear that we will kill them, nor do they have the faculty to imagine death or reason their way to it.[25]

FRENCH	ENGLISH
Si dit-on encore qu'on les void, non seulement la souffrir gayement: la plus-part des cheuaux hannissent en mourant, les cygnes la chantent: mais de plus, la rechercher à leur besoing; comme portent plusieurs exemples des elephans.	And yet it is said that they are seen not only to bear it cheerfully (most horses neigh as they die, and swans sing it), but also to seek it out when they need to, as many examples of elephants show.

BORROWED FLOWERS

He admits his book gathers other men's flowers, though he borrows far less than he could.

FRENCH	ENGLISH
3.12.15 Outre ce, la façon d'argumenter, de laquelle se sert icy Socrates, est-elle pas admirable esgallement, en simplicité et en vehemence? Vrayment il est bien plus aisé, de parler comme Aristote, viure comme Cæsar, qu'il n'est aisé de parler et viure comme Socrates. Là, loge l'extreme degré de perfection et de difficulté: l'art n'y peut ioindre. Or nos facultez ne sont pas ainsi dressées. Nous ne les essayons, ny ne les cognoissons: nous nous inuestissons de celles d'autruy, et laissons chomer les nostres. Comme quelqu'vn pourroit dire de moy: que i'ay seulement faict icy vn amas de fleurs estrangeres, n'y ayant fourny du mien, que le filet à les lier.	Besides, the way of arguing that Socrates uses here: is it not equally admirable for its simplicity and its force? Truly it is much easier to speak like Aristotle and live like Caesar than to speak and live like Socrates. There lies the extreme degree of perfection and of difficulty; art cannot reach it. Now our faculties are not trained that way. We neither try them out nor know them; we clothe ourselves in other people's and let our own lie idle. Someone might say of me, for instance, that here I have merely made a heap of other people's flowers, supplying nothing of my own but the thread to tie them.
Certes i'ay donné à l'opinion publique, que ces parements empruntez m'accompaignent: mais ie n'entends pas qu'ils me couurent, et qu'ils me cachent: c'est le rebours de mon dessein. Qui ne veux faire montre que du mien et de ce qui est mien par nature. Et si ie m'en fusse creu, à tout hazard, i'eusse parlé tout fin seul. Ie m'en charge de plus fort, tous les iours, outre ma proposition et ma forme premiere, sur la fantasie du siecle: et par oisiueté. S'il me messied à moy, comme ie le croy, n'importe: il peut estre vtile à quelque autre. Tel allegue Platon et Homere, qui ne les vid onques: et moy, ay prins des lieux assez, ailleurs qu'en leur source.	It is true that I have yielded to public opinion in letting these borrowed ornaments go along with me; but I do not mean them to cover me and hide me. That is the reverse of my design, since I want to show nothing but what is my own, and mine by nature. If I had trusted myself, I would have taken the risk and spoken entirely on my own. Every day I load myself with them more heavily, beyond my intention and my original form, to suit the fancy of the age, and out of idleness. If it does not become me, as I believe, no matter: it may be useful to someone else. Some people quote Plato and Homer who never set eyes on them; and I have taken plenty of passages from places other than their source.
Sans peine et sans suffisance, ayant mille volumes de liures, autour de moy, en ce lieu où i'escris, i'emprunteray presentement s'il me plaist, d'vne douzaine de tels rauaudeurs, gens que ie ne fueillette guere, dequoy esmailler le traicté de la Physionomie. Il ne faut que l'epitre liminaire d'vn Allemand pour me farcir d'allegations: et nous allons quester par là vne friande gloire, à piper le sot monde. Ces pastissages de lieux communs, dequoy tant de gents mesnagent leur estude,	Without effort and without ability, having a thousand volumes around me in this place where I write, I could borrow right now, if I pleased, from a dozen such patchers of old cloth (people I hardly ever leaf through) enough to enamel this treatise on Physiognomy. All it takes is the prefatory epistle of some German to stuff me with quotations; and that is how we go begging for a tooth-

25 The first line is from Lucretius, On the Nature of Things; the second from Ovid, Fasti.

FRENCH

ENGLISH

ne seruent guere qu'à subiects communs: et seruent à nous montrer, non à nous conduire: ridicule fruict de la science, que Socrates exagite si plaisamment contre Euthydemus.

some glory, to fool the silly world. These hodge-podges of commonplaces, with which so many people husband their studies, are hardly any use except for commonplace subjects. They serve to show us off, not to guide us: a ridiculous fruit of learning, which Socrates mocks so amusingly in his exchange with Euthydemus.[26]

I'ay veu faire des liures de choses, ny iamais estudiées ny entenduës: l'autheur commettant à diuers de ses amis sçauants, la recherche de cette-cy, et de cette autre matiere, à le bastir: se contentant pour sa part, d'en auoir proietté le dessein, et lié par son industrie, ce fagot de prouisions incogneuës: au moins est sien l'ancre, et le papier. Cela, c'est achetter, ou emprunter vn liure, non pas le faire. C'est apprendre aux hommes, non qu'on sçait faire vn liure, mais, ce dequoy ils pouuoient estre en doute, qu'on ne le sçait pas faire. Vn president se ventoit où i'estois, d'auoir amoncelé deux cens tant de lieux estrangers, en vn sien arrest presidental. En le preschant, il effaçoit la gloire qu'on luy en donnoit.

I have seen books made about things their authors had never studied or understood. The author hands over to various learned friends the research on this subject and that, to build it up, and contents himself with having drawn up the plan and bound together, by his own ingenuity, this bundle of provisions unknown to him. At least the ink and the paper are his. That is buying or borrowing a book, not making one. It teaches people not that you know how to make a book but, on a point they might have been in doubt about, that you do not. A presiding judge boasted in my presence of having piled up two hundred and some passages from other authors in one of his presidential rulings. By proclaiming it, he wiped out the glory people gave him for it.

Pusillanime et absurde venterie à mon gré, pour vn tel subiect et telle personne. Ie fais le contraire: et parmy tant d'emprunts, suis bien aise d'en pouuoir desrober quelqu'vn: le desguisant et difformant à nouueau seruice. Au hazard, que ie laisse dire, que c'est par faute d'auoir entendu son naturel vsage, ie luy donne quelque particuliere adresse de ma main, à ce qu'il en soit d'autant moins purement estranger. Ceux-cy mettent leurs larrecins en parade et en conte. Aussi ont-ils plus de credit aux loix que moy. Nous autres naturalistes, estimons, qu'il y aye grande et incomparable preference, de l'honneur de l'inuention, à l'honneur de l'allegation.

A petty and absurd boast, to my taste, for such a subject and such a person. I do the opposite. Among so many borrowings, I am very glad when I can steal one, disguising and reshaping it for new service. At the risk of letting people say that it is because I failed to understand its natural use, I give it some particular twist of my own hand, so that it may be that much less purely foreign. These people put their thefts on parade and on record; so they stand better with the law than I do. We naturalists consider that the honor of invention is greatly and incomparably to be preferred to the honor of quotation.

3.12.16 Si i'eusse voulu parler par science, i'eusse parlé plustost. I'eusse escrit du temps plus voisin de mes estudes, que i'auois plus d'esprit et de memoire. Et me fusse plus fié à la vigueur de cet aage là, qu'à cettuy-cy, si i'eusse voulu faire mestier d'escrire. Et quoy, si cette faueur gratieuse, que la Fortune m'a n'aguere offerte par l'entremise de cet ouurage, m'eust peu rencontrer en telle saison au lieu de celle-cy; où elle est egallement desirable à posseder, et preste à perdre? Deux de mes cognoissans, grands hommes en cette faculté, ont perdu par moitié, à mon aduis, d'auoir refusé de se mettre au iour, à quarante ans,

If I had wanted to speak from learning, I would have spoken sooner. I would have written at a time closer to my studies, when I had more wit and memory; and if I had wanted to make a profession of writing, I would have trusted the vigor of that age more than this one. And what if this gracious favor that Fortune has lately offered me through this work had come my way in that season, instead of this one, when it is as desirable to possess as it is ready to be lost? Two of my acquaintances,

26 Euthydemus is the target of Socrates' teasing both in Plato's dialogue of that name and in Xenophon's Memorabilia.

FRENCH

pour attendre les soixante. La maturité a ses deffaux, comme la verdeur, et pires.

Et autant est la vieillesse incommode à cette nature de besongne, qu'à toute autre. Quiconque met sa decrepitude soubs la presse, faict folie, s'il espere en espreindre des humeurs, qui ne sentent le disgratié, le resueur et l'assoupy. Nostre esprit se constipe et s'espessit en vieillissant. Ie dis pompeusement et opulemment l'ignorance, et dis la science maigrement et piteusement. Accessoirement cette-cy, et accidentalement: celle-là expressément, et principallement. Et ne traicte à poinct nommé de rien, que du rien: ny d'aucune science, que de celle de l'inscience. I'ay choisi le temps, où ma vie, que i'ay à peindre, ie l'ay toute deuant moy: ce qui en reste, tient plus de la mort.

Et de ma mort seulement, si ie la rencontrois babillarde, comme font d'autres, donrois-ie encores volontiers aduis au peuple, en deslogeant.

ENGLISH

great men in this field, lost half their worth, in my opinion, by refusing to go before the public at forty so as to wait for sixty. Maturity has its defects, as greenness does, and worse ones.[27]

And old age is as ill-suited to this kind of work as to any other. Whoever puts his decrepitude under the press is a fool if he hopes to squeeze out of it juices that do not smack of the dismal, the dreamy and the drowsy. Our mind gets constipated and thickens as it ages. I speak of ignorance pompously and lavishly, and of learning meagerly and pitifully: of learning secondarily and incidentally, of ignorance expressly and principally. And I deal specifically with nothing but nothing, and with no knowledge but the knowledge of unknowing. I have chosen the time when the life I have to portray lies entirely before me; what remains of it has more to do with death.

And as for my death, if I found it talkative, as others do, I would still gladly give people notice of it as I moved out.

BEAUTY AND THE FACE

Socrates' ugliness hid a beautiful soul; beauty is powerful, but faces are poor guarantees.

FRENCH

3.12.17 Socrates a esté vn exemplaire parfaict en toutes grandes qualitez. I'ay despit, qu'il eust rencontré vn corps si disgratié, comme ils disent, et si disconuenable à la beauté de son ame, luy si amoureux et si affolé de la beauté. Nature luy fit iniustice. Il n'est rien plus vray-semblable, que la conformité et relation du corps à l'esprit.

Ipsi animi, magni refert, quali in corpore locati sint: multa enim è corpore existunt, quæ acuant mentem: multa, quæ obtundant. Cettuy-cy parle d'vne laideur desnaturée, et difformité de membres: mais nous appellons laideur aussi, vne mesauenance au premier regard, qui loge principallement au visage: et nous desgoute par le teint, vne tache, vne rude contenance, par quelque cause souuent inexplicable, en des membres pourtant bien ordonnez et entiers. La laideur, qui reuestoit vne ame tres-belle en la Boittie, estoit de ce predicament. Cette laideur superficielle, qui est toutesfois la plus imperieuse, est de moindre preiudice à l'estat de l'esprit: et a peu de certitude en l'opinion des hommes. L'autre, qui d'vn plus

ENGLISH

Socrates was a perfect model in all great qualities. It vexes me that he met with a body so ill-favored, as they say, and so ill-matched to the beauty of his soul: he who was so in love with beauty, so mad about it. Nature did him an injustice. Nothing is more likely than that the body should match and correspond to the mind.

It matters greatly to the mind itself in what kind of body it is lodged; for many things arise from the body to sharpen the mind, and many to blunt it. This writer is speaking of an unnatural ugliness and deformity of limbs. But we also call ugliness an unattractiveness at first sight, which lies chiefly in the face and puts us off by the complexion, a blemish, a rough bearing, often for some inexplicable reason, in limbs that are nevertheless well ordered and whole. The ugliness that clothed a very beautiful soul in La Boétie was of this kind. This superficial ugliness, though it is the most imperious, does less harm to the state of the mind, and car-

27 The "gracious favor" is probably the friendship of Marie de Gournay, who sought Montaigne out after reading the Essays and became his "adopted daughter."

FRENCH

propre nom, s'appelle difformité plus substantielle, porte plus volontiers coup iusques au dedans.

Non pas tout soulier de cuir bien lissé, mais tout soulier bien formé, montre l'interieure forme du pied. Comme Socrates disoit de la sienne, qu'elle en accusoit iustement, autant en son ame, s'il ne l'eust corrigée par institution. Mais en le disant, ie tiens qu'il se mocquoit, suiuant son vsage: et iamais ame si excellente, ne se fit elle-mesme.

3.12.18 Ie ne puis dire assez souuent, combien i'estime la beauté, qualité puissante et aduantageuse. Il l'appelloit, vne courte tyrannie: et Platon, le priuilege de nature. Nous n'en auons point qui la surpasse en credit. Elle tient le premier rang au commerce des hommes. Elle se presente au deuant: seduict et preoccupe nostre iugement, auec grande authorité et merueilleuse impression. Phryné perdoit sa cause, entre les mains d'vn excellent aduocat, si, ouurant sa robbe, elle n'eust corrompu ses iuges, par l'esclat de sa beauté. Et ie trouue, que Cyrus, Alexandre, Cæsar, ces trois maistres du monde, ne l'ont pas oubliée à faire leurs grands affaires. Non a pas le premier Scipion. Vn mesme mot embrasse en Grec le bel et le bon. Et le S.

Esprit appelle souuent bons, ceux qu'il veut dire beaux. Ie maintiendroy volontiers le rang des biens, selon que portoit la chanson, que Platon dit auoir esté triuiale, prinse de quelque ancien poëte: La santé, la beauté, la richesse. Aristote dit, appartenir aux beaux, le droict de commander: et quand il en est, de qui la beauté approche celle des images des Dieux, que la veneration leur est pareillement deuë. A celuy qui luy demandoit, pourquoy plus long temps, et plus souuent, on hantoit les beaux: Cette demande, feit-il, n'appartient à estre faicte, que par vn aueugle. La plus-part et les plus grands philosophes, payerent leur escholage, et acquirent la sagesse, par l'entremise et faueur de leur beauté.

Non seulement aux hommes qui me seruent, mais aux bestes aussi, ie la considere à deux doigts pres de la bonté.

3.12.19 Si me semble-il, que ce traict et façon de visage, et ces lineaments, par lesquels on argumente aucunes

ENGLISH

ries little certainty in people's opinion. The other, more properly called deformity, being more substantial, more readily strikes home to the inside.[28]

Not every shoe of well-polished leather, but every well-shaped shoe, shows the inner shape of the foot. So Socrates said of his ugliness that it accurately revealed as much in his soul, had he not corrected it by education. But in saying so, I think he was joking, as was his habit; never did so excellent a soul make itself.

I cannot say often enough how highly I value beauty, a powerful and advantageous quality. Socrates called it a short-lived tyranny, and Plato the privilege of nature. We have no quality that surpasses it in credit. It holds the first rank in human dealings. It steps forward in front; it seduces and prejudges our judgment with great authority and a wondrous impression. Phryne would have lost her case, in the hands of an excellent advocate, had she not opened her robe and corrupted her judges with the radiance of her beauty. And I find that Cyrus, Alexander and Caesar, those three masters of the world, did not forget it in conducting their great affairs. Nor did the first Scipio. In Greek a single word embraces the beautiful and the good. And the Holy[29]

Spirit often calls good those it means to call beautiful. I would gladly keep the ranking of goods given in the song that Plato says was commonly sung, taken from some ancient poet: health, beauty, wealth. Aristotle says that the right to command belongs to the beautiful, and that when there are people whose beauty approaches that of the images of the gods, veneration is likewise due to them. To someone who asked him why people spent more time, and more often, with the beautiful, he said: "That is a question only a blind man would ask." Most philosophers, and the greatest, paid for their schooling and acquired wisdom through the help and favor of their beauty.

Not only in the men who serve me but in animals too, I consider it within two fingers of goodness.

Yet it seems to me that the cast and shape of the face, and the features from which people infer cer-

28 The quotation is from Cicero, Tusculan Disputations.
29 Phryne was a famous Athenian courtesan of the 4th century BC, tried for impiety and acquitted.

FRENCH

complexions internes, et nos fortunes à venir, est chose qui ne loge pas bien directement et simplement, soubs le chapitre de beauté et de laideur. Non plus que toute bonne odeur, et serenité d'air, n'en promet pas la santé: ny toute espesseur et puanteur, l'infection, en temps pestilent. Ceux qui accusent les dames, de contre-dire leur beauté par leurs mœurs, ne rencontrent pas tousiours. Car en vne face qui ne sera pas trop bien composée, il peut loger quelque air de probité et de fiance. Comme au rebours, i'ay leu par fois entre deux beaux yeux, des menasses d'vne nature maligne et dangereuse.

Il y a des physionomies fauorables: et en vne presse d'ennemis victorieux, vous choisirez incontinent parmy des hommes incogneus, l'vn plustost que l'autre, à qui vous rendre et fier vostre vie: et non proprement par la consideration de la beauté.

3.12.20 C'est vne foible garantie que la mine, toutesfois elle a quelque consideration. Et si i'auois à les foyter, ce seroit plus rudement, les meschans qui dementent et trahissent les promesses que Nature leur auoit plantées au front. Ie punirois plus aigrement la malice, en vne apparence debonnaire. Il semble qu'il y ait aucuns visages heureux, d'autres malencontreux. Et crois, qu'il y a quelque art, à distinguer les visages debonnaires des niais, les seueres des rudes, les malicieux des chagrins, les desdaigneux des melancholiques, et telles autres qualitez voisines. Il y a des beautez, non fieres seulement, mais aigres: il y en a d'autres douces, et encores au delà, fades. D'en prognostiquer les auantures futures, ce sont matieres que ie laisse indecises.

ENGLISH

tain inner dispositions and our future fortunes, do not fall very directly and simply under the heading of beauty and ugliness. Any more than every pleasant smell and every clear sky promises health, or every heaviness and stench promises infection, in time of plague. Those who accuse ladies of belying their beauty by their character do not always hit the mark. For a face that is not very well composed may harbor an air of honesty and trustworthiness; just as, conversely, I have sometimes read between two beautiful eyes the threat of a malignant and dangerous nature.

There are favorable physiognomies. In a crowd of victorious enemies, among men you do not know, you will immediately choose one rather than another to surrender to and entrust your life to, and not strictly on account of beauty.

Looks are a weak guarantee; still, they count for something. If I had to whip the wicked, I would whip more harshly those who belie and betray the promises that Nature had planted on their brows. I would punish malice more severely in a kindly appearance. It seems that some faces are lucky and others unlucky. And I believe there is some skill in telling kindly faces from simple ones, stern from rough, malicious from sullen, disdainful from melancholy, and other such neighboring qualities. There are beauties that are not only proud but sour; there are others that are sweet, and beyond that, insipid. As for foretelling future events from them, those are matters I leave undecided.

GOODNESS FROM NATURE

Goodness should grow from nature and reason, not from hope and fear.

FRENCH

3.12.21 I'ay pris, comme i'ay dict ailleurs, bien simplement et cruëment, pour mon regard, ce precepte ancien: Que nous ne sçaurions faillir à suiure Nature: que le souuerain precepte, c'est de se conformer à elle. Ie n'ay pas corrigé comme Socrates, par la force de la raison, mes complexions naturelles: et n'ay aucunement troublé par art, mon inclination. Ie me laisse aller, comme ie suis venu. Ie ne combats rien. Mes deux maistresses pieces viuent de leur grace en paix et bon accord: mais le laict de ma nourrice a esté, Dieu mercy, mediocrement sain et temperé.

ENGLISH

As I have said elsewhere, I have taken quite simply and crudely, for my own part, this ancient precept: that we cannot go wrong in following Nature, that the sovereign precept is to conform to her. I have not, like Socrates, corrected my natural dispositions by force of reason, nor in any way disturbed my inclination by art. I let myself go as I came. I fight nothing. My two chief parts live of their own accord in peace and good harmony; but my nurse's milk was, thank God, reasonably healthy and temperate.

FRENCH	ENGLISH
Diray-ie cecy en passant: que ie voy tenir en plus de prix qu'elle ne vaut, qui est seule quasi en vsage entre nous, certaine image de preud'hommie scholastique, serue des preceptes, contraincte soubs l'esperance et la crainte? Ie l'aime telle que loix et religions, non facent, mais parfacent, et authorisent: qui se sente dequoy se soustenir sans aide: née en nous de ses propres racines, par la semence de la raison vniuerselle, empreinte en tout homme non desnaturé. Cette raison, qui redresse Socrates de son vicieux ply, le rend obeïssant aux hommes et aux Dieux, qui commandent en sa ville: courageux en la mort, non parce que son ame est immortelle, mais parce qu'il est mortel.	May I say this in passing? I see a certain image of school-taught goodness held in higher esteem than it is worth, though it is almost the only kind in use among us: a slave to precepts, held down by hope and fear. I love goodness of the kind that laws and religions do not make but perfect and authorize; that feels it has the means to stand without help; that is born in us from its own roots, from the seed of universal reason imprinted in every man who is not unnatural. This reason, which straightens Socrates out of his vicious bent, makes him obedient to the men and gods who command in his city, and courageous in death, not because his soul is immortal but because he is mortal.
Ruineuse instruction à toute police, et bien plus dommageable qu'ingenieuse et subtile, qui persuade aux peuples, la religieuse creance suffire seule, et sans les mœurs, à contenter la diuine iustice. L'vsage nous faict veoir, vne distinction enorme, entre la deuotion et la conscience.	It is a ruinous teaching for any government, and much more harmful than it is ingenious and subtle, that persuades peoples that religious belief alone, without morals, is enough to satisfy divine justice. Experience shows us an enormous difference between devotion and conscience.

SAVED BY HIS FACE

Twice his open face and frank speech disarmed men who meant to seize him.

FRENCH	ENGLISH
3.12.22 I'ay vne apparence fauorable, et en forme et en interpretation. *Quid dixi habere me? Imò habui Chreme! / Heu tantùm attriti corporis ossa vides!* Et qui faict vne contraire montre à celle de Socrates. Il m'est souuent aduenu, que sur le simple credit de ma presence, et de mon air, des personnes qui n'auoient aucune cognoissance de moy, s'y sont grandement fiées, soit pour leurs propres affaires, soit pour les miennes. Et en ay tiré és païs estrangers des faueurs singulieres et rares. Mais ces deux experiences, valent à l'auanture, que ie les recite particulierement. Vn quidam delibera de surprendre ma maison et moy. Son art fut, d'arriuer seul à ma porte, et d'en presser vn peu instamment l'entrée.	I have a favorable appearance, both in its features and in how it is read. *Did I say I have? No, I had, Chremes! / Alas, you see only the bones of a worn-out body!* And it makes the opposite impression to Socrates'. It has often happened that people who did not know me at all have relied on me greatly, on the mere credit of my presence and my air, whether in their own affairs or in mine. And in foreign countries I have obtained singular and rare favors from it. But the following two experiences are perhaps worth telling in detail. A certain fellow made a plan to take my house and me by surprise. His trick was to arrive alone at my gate and press rather urgently to be let in.[30]
Ie le cognoissois de nom, et auois occasion de me fier de luy, comme de mon voisin et aucunement mon allié. Ie luy fis ouurir comme ie fais à chacun. Le voicy tout effroyé, son cheual hors d'haleine, fort harassé. Il m'entretint de cette fable: Qu'il venoit d'estre rencontré à vne demie lieuë de là, par vn sien ennemy, lequel ie cognoissois aussi, et auois ouy parler de leur querelle:	I knew him by name, and had reason to trust him as my neighbor and in some degree my relation by marriage. I had the gate opened for him, as I do for everyone. There he is, all terrified, his horse out of breath, very worn out. He regaled me with this tale: that he had just been set upon half a league

30 The first line is from Terence, The Self-Tormentor; the second from the elegies of Maximianus.

FRENCH

que cet ennemy luy auoit merueilleusement chaussé les esperons: et qu'ayant esté surpris en desarroy et plus foible en nombre, il s'estoit ietté à ma porte à sauueté. Qu'il estoit en grand peine de ses gens, lesquels il disoit tenir pour morts ou prins. I'essayay tout naïfuement de le conforter, asseurer, et refreschir.

Tantost apres, voila quatre ou cinq de ses soldats, qui se presentent en mesme contenance, et effroy, pour entrer: et puis d'autres, et d'autres encores apres, bien equippez, et bien armez: iusques à vingt cinq ou trante, feignants auoir leur ennemy aux talons. Ce mystere commençoit à taster mon soupçon. Ie n'ignorois pas en quel siecle ie viuois, combien ma maison pouuoit estre enuiée, et auois plusieurs exemples d'autres de ma cognoissance, à qui il estoit mes-aduenu de mesme. Tant y a, que trouuant qu'il n'y auoit point d'acquest d'auoir commencé à faire plaisir, si ie n'acheuois, et ne pouuant me deffaire sans tout rompre; ie me laissay aller au party le plus naturel et le plus simple, comme ie fais tousiours: commendant qu'ils entrassent.

Aussi à la verité, ie suis peu deffiant et soupçonneux de ma nature. Ie panche volontiers vers l'excuse, et l'interpretation plus douce. Ie prens les hommes selon le commun ordre, et ne croy pas ces inclinations peruerses et desnaturées, si ie n'y suis forcé par grand tesmoignage; non plus que les monstres et miracles. Et suis homme en outre, qui me commets volontiers à la Fortune, et me laisse aller à corps perdu, entre ses bras. Dequoy iusques à cette heure i'ay eu plus d'occasion de me louër, que de me plaindre. Et l'ay trouuée et plus auisée, et plus amie de mes affaires, que ie ne suis.

Il y a quelques actions en ma vie, desquelles on peut iustement nommer la conduite difficile; ou, qui voudra, prudente. De celles-là mesmes, posez, que la tierce partie soit du mien, certes les deux tierces sont richement à elle. Nous faillons, ce me semble, en ce que nous ne nous fions pas assez au ciel de nous. Et pretendons plus de nostre conduite, qu'il ne nous appartient. Pourtant fouruoyent si souuent nos desseins. Il est enuieux de l'estenduë, que nous attribuons aux droicts de l'humaine prudence, au preiudice des siens. Et nous les racourcit d'autant plus, que nous les amplifions.

Ceux-cy se tindrent à cheual, en ma cour: le chef auec moy dans ma sale, qui n'auoit voulu qu'on establast son

ENGLISH

away by an enemy of his, whom I also knew (I had heard about their quarrel); that this enemy had chased him hard; and that, having been caught in disarray and outnumbered, he had thrown himself at my gate for safety. He was very worried about his men, he said, whom he believed dead or captured. I quite innocently tried to comfort, reassure and refresh him.

Soon after, here come four or five of his soldiers, with the same bearing and the same fright, asking to come in; then others, and still others after them, well equipped and well armed, up to twenty-five or thirty, pretending to have their enemy at their heels. This mystery began to stir my suspicion. I knew very well what age I was living in, and how much my house might be coveted, and I knew several people of my acquaintance to whom the same misfortune had happened. Be that as it may, finding that there was nothing to be gained by beginning to do a kindness if I did not finish it, and unable to get out of it without breaking off entirely, I let myself go along the most natural and simplest course, as I always do, and ordered that they be let in.

Besides, to tell the truth, I am by nature not very distrustful or suspicious. I readily lean toward excuse and the gentler interpretation. I take men according to the common order, and I do not believe in perverse and unnatural inclinations unless strong evidence forces me to, any more than in monsters and miracles. Moreover, I am a man who readily commits himself to Fortune and throws himself headlong into her arms. So far I have had more cause to congratulate myself on this than to complain. I have found her both wiser and better disposed toward my affairs than I am.

There are some actions in my life whose conduct may justly be called difficult, or, if you like, prudent. Even of those, suppose a third is my own: the other two thirds are certainly and richly hers. We go wrong, it seems to me, in not entrusting ourselves enough to heaven, and in claiming more for our own conduct than is our due. That is why our plans so often go astray. Heaven is jealous of the scope we give to the rights of human prudence at the expense of its own, and it cuts them down for us all the more, the more we enlarge them.

These men stayed on horseback in my courtyard. The leader was with me in my hall; he had refused

FRENCH

cheual, disant auoir à se retirer incontinent qu'il auroit eu nouuelles de ses hommes. Il se veid maistre de son entreprinse: et n'y restoit sur ce poinct, que l'execution. Souuent depuis il a dict, car il ne craignoit pas de faire ce conte, que mon visage, et ma franchise, luy auoient arraché la trahison des poings. Il remonte à cheual, ses gens ayants continuellement les yeux sur luy, pour voir quel signe il leur donneroit: bien estonnez de le voir sortir et abandonner son aduantage.

3.12.23 Vne autre fois, me fiant à ie ne sçay quelle treue, qui venoit d'estre publiée en nos armées, ie m'acheminay à vn voyage, par païs estrangement chatoüilleux. Ie ne fus pas si tost esuenté, que voila trois ou quatre caualcades de diuers lieux pour m'attraper. L'vne me ioignit à la troisieme iournée: où ie fus chargé par quinze ou vingt Gentils-hommes masquez, suiuis d'vne ondée d'argoulets. Me voila pris et rendu, retiré dans l'espais d'vne forest voisine, desmonté, deualizé, mes cofres fouillez, ma boite prise, cheuaux et esquipage dispersé à nouueaux maistres. Nous fusmes long temps à contester dans ce halier, sur le faict de ma rançon: qu'ils me tailloient si haute, qu'il paroissoit bien que ie ne leur estois guere cogneu.

Ils entrerent en grande contestation de ma vie. De vray, il y auoit plusieurs circonstances, qui me menassoyent du danger où i'en estois. *Tunc animis opus, Ænea, tunc pectore firmo.* Ie me maintins tousiours sur le tiltre de ma trefue, à leur quitter seulement le gain qu'ils auoient faict de ma despouille, qui n'estoit pas à mespriser, sans promesse d'autre rançon.

Apres deux ou trois heures, que nous eusmes esté là, et qu'ils m'eurent faict monter sur vn cheual, qui n'auoit garde de leur eschapper, et commis ma conduicte particuliere à quinze ou vingt harquebusiers, et dispersé mes gens à d'autres, ayant ordonné qu'on nous menast prisonniers, diuerses routes, et moy desia acheminé à deux ou trois harquebusades de là, *Iam prece Pollucis, iam Castoris implorata:* voicy vne soudaine et tres-inopinée mutation qui leur print. Ie vis reuenir à moy le chef, auec paroles plus douces: se mettant en peine de rechercher en la trouppe mes hardes escartées, et me les faisant

ENGLISH

to have his horse stabled, saying he would have to leave as soon as he had news of his men. He saw himself master of his enterprise, and at that point nothing remained but the execution. He has often said since (for he was not afraid to tell this story) that my face and my frankness had wrested the treachery from his grip. He gets back on his horse, his men keeping their eyes on him constantly to see what signal he would give them, and quite stunned to see him ride out and abandon his advantage.

Another time, trusting to some truce or other that had just been proclaimed in our armies, I set out on a journey through strangely ticklish country. No sooner had word of me got out than three or four troops of horsemen set off from various places to catch me. One of them overtook me on the third day, and I was charged by fifteen or twenty masked gentlemen, followed by a wave of mounted arquebusiers. There I am, taken and surrendered, led into the thick of a nearby forest, unhorsed, robbed, my chests searched, my money box taken, my horses and gear shared out among new masters. We spent a long time arguing in that thicket over my ransom, which they set so high that it was quite plain they hardly knew who I was.

They fell into a great argument over my life. And in truth there were several circumstances that showed me the danger I was in. *Then was the time for courage, Aeneas, then for a steady heart.* I kept standing on the terms of my truce, offering to leave them only what they had gained by stripping me, which was not to be despised, with no promise of any other ransom.[31]

We had been there two or three hours; they had put me on a horse that had no chance of getting away from them, assigned fifteen or twenty arquebusiers to guard me in particular, and split my people among others, with orders to take us away as prisoners by different roads; and I was already two or three arquebus shots away, *after prayers to Pollux, after pleas to Castor,* when suddenly a most unexpected change came over them. I saw the leader come back to me with gentler words, taking pains to search through the troop for my scattered

31 Virgil, Aeneid.

FRENCH

rendre, selon qu'il s'en pouuoit recouurer, iusques à ma boite.

Le meilleur present qu'ils me firent, ce fut en fin ma liberté: le reste ne me touchoit gueres en ce temps-là. La vraye cause d'vn changement si nouueau, et de ce rauisement, sans aucune impulsion apparente, et d'vn repentir si miraculeux, en tel temps, en vne entreprinse pourpensée et deliberée, et deuenue iuste par l'vsage, (car d'arriuée ie leur confessay ouuertement le party duquel i'estois, et le chemin que ie tenois) certes ie ne sçay pas bien encores quelle elle est. Le plus apparent qui se demasqua, et me fit cognoistre son nom, me redist lors plusieurs fois, que ie deuoy cette deliurance à mon visage, liberté, et fermeté de mes parolles, qui me rendoient indigne d'vne telle mes-aduenture, me demanda asseurance d'vne pareille.

Il est possible, que la bonté diuine se voulut seruir de ce vain instrument pour ma conseruation. Elle me deffendit encore lendemain d'autres pires embusches, desquelles ceux-cy mesme m'auoient aduerty. Le dernier est encore en pieds, pour en faire le conte: le premier fut tué il n'y a pas long temps.

3.12.24 Si mon visage ne respondoit pour moy, si on ne lisoit en mes yeux, et en ma voix, la simplicité de mon intention, ie n'eusse pas duré sans querelle, et sans offence, si long temps: auec cette indiscrette liberté, de dire à tort et à droict, ce qui me vient en fantasie, et iuger temerairement des choses. Cette façon peut paroistre auec raison inciuile, et mal accommodée à nostre vsage: mais outrageuse et malitieuse, ie n'ay veu personne qui l'en ait iugée: ny qui se soit piqué de ma liberté, s'il l'a receuë de ma bouche. Les paroles redites, ont comme autre son, autre sens. Aussi ne hay-ie personne.

Et suis si lasche à offencer, que pour le seruice de la raison mesme, ie ne le puis faire. Et lors que l'occasion m'a conuié aux condemnations criminelles, i'ay plustost manqué à la iustice. *Vt magis peccari nolim, quàm satis animi ad vindicanda peccata habeam.* On reprochoit, dit-on, à Aristote, d'auoir esté trop misericordieux enuers vn meschant homme: I'ay esté de vray, dit-il, misericordieux

ENGLISH

belongings and having them returned to me, as far as they could be recovered, right down to my money box.[32]

The best present they gave me, in the end, was my freedom; the rest hardly mattered to me at the time. The true cause of so novel a change, of this second thought without any apparent impulse, of so miraculous a repentance at such a time, in an enterprise planned and deliberate and made legitimate by common practice (for at the outset I openly admitted to them which party I belonged to and which road I was taking): truly I still do not quite know what it was. The most prominent of them, who took off his mask and told me his name, said to me several times then that I owed my deliverance to my face and to the freedom and firmness of my words, which made me undeserving of such a misadventure; and he asked me to pledge him the same in return.

It is possible that divine goodness chose to use this vain instrument for my preservation. It protected me again the next day from other, worse ambushes, of which these very men had warned me. The leader of the second band is still on his feet to tell the story; the man in the first was killed not long ago.

If my face did not answer for me, if people did not read the simplicity of my intentions in my eyes and my voice, I would not have lasted so long without quarrels and without giving offense, given this indiscreet freedom of mine to say, rightly or wrongly, whatever comes into my head, and to judge things rashly. This manner may reasonably seem uncivil and ill-suited to our customs; but I have never seen anyone judge it outrageous or malicious, nor anyone take offense at my freedom if he heard it from my own mouth. Words repeated have, as it were, a different sound and a different sense. Besides, I hate nobody.

And I am so slack at giving offense that I cannot do it even in the service of reason. When occasion has called me to pass criminal sentences, I have rather fallen short of justice. *So that I would rather sins were not committed than have the heart to punish them.* Aristotle, they say, was reproached for having been too merciful to a wicked man. "I have in-

32 Catullus. Castor and Pollux were invoked as protectors of travelers in danger.

FRENCH

enuers l'homme, non enuers la meschanceté. Les iugements ordinaires, s'exasperent à la punition par l'horreur du meffaict. Cela mesme refroidit le mien. L'horreur du premier meurtre, m'en faict craindre vn second. Et la laideur de la premiere cruauté m'en faict abhorrer toute imitation.

A moy, qui ne suis qu'escuyer de trefles, peut toucher, ce qu'on disoit de Charillus Roy de Sparte: Il ne sçauroit estre bon, puis qu'il n'est pas mauuais aux meschans. Ou bien ainsi: car Plutarque le presente en ces deux sortes, comme mille autres choses diuersement et contrairement: Il faut bien qu'il soit bon, puis qu'il l'est aux meschants mesme. De mesme qu'aux actions legitimes, ie me fasche de m'y employer, quand c'est enuers ceux qui s'en desplaisent: aussi à dire verité, aux illegitimes, ie ne fay pas assez de conscience, de m'y employer, quand c'est enuers ceux qui y consentent.

ENGLISH

deed been merciful," he said, "to the man, not to the wickedness." Ordinary judgments are stirred to punish by the horror of the crime. That very horror cools mine. The horror of the first murder makes me fear a second; and the ugliness of the first cruelty makes me abhor any imitation of it.[33]

To me, who am only the jack of clubs, may apply what was said of Charillus, king of Sparta: "He cannot be good, since he is not bad to the wicked." Or else this way, for Plutarch gives it both ways, as he gives a thousand other things in different and contrary forms: "He must indeed be good, since he is good even to the wicked." Just as, in lawful actions, I am reluctant to take part when it is against people who dislike it, so too, to tell the truth, in unlawful ones I am not scrupulous enough about taking part when it is with people who consent to it.[34]

33 Livy, History of Rome.
34 Charillus was an early king of Sparta; the sayings come from Plutarch. The jack of clubs, a low court card, stands for a person of no consequence.

III.13 Of Experience

De l'Experience

Montaigne finds laws and reason too weak to capture life's variety and turns to self-knowledge, health, and enjoying ordinary living.

FRENCH

ENGLISH

3.13.1 IL n'est desir plus naturel que le desir de cognoissance. Nous essayons tous les moyens qui nous y peuuent mener. Quand la raison nous faut, nous y employons l'experience. *Per varios vsus artem experientia fecit: / Exemplo monstrante viam.* Qui est vn moyen de beaucoup plus foible et plus vil. Mais la verité est chose si grande, que nous ne deuons desdaigner aucune entremise qui nous y conduise. La raison a tant de formes, que nous ne sçauons à laquelle nous prendre. L'experience n'en a pas moins. La consequence que nous voulons tirer de la conference des euenemens, est mal seure, d'autant qu'ils sont tousiours dissemblables. Il n'est aucune qualité si vniuerselle, en cette image des choses, que la diuersité et varieté.

There is no desire more natural than the desire for knowledge. We try every means that can lead us to it. When reason fails us, we use experience: *Through various trials experience created art, / Example showing the way.* It is a much weaker and humbler means. But truth is so great a thing that we must not disdain any channel that leads us to it. Reason has so many forms that we do not know which one to take hold of. Experience has no fewer. The inference we try to draw from comparing events is unreliable, because they are always unlike. In this image of things, no quality is so universal as diversity and variety.[1]

Et les Grecs, et les Latins, et nous, pour le plus expres exemple de similitude, nous seruons de celuy des œufs. Toutesfois il s'est trouué des hommes, et notamment vn en Delphes, qui recognoissoit des marques de difference entre les œufs, si qu'il n'en prenoit iamais l'vn pour l'autre. Et y ayant plusieurs poules, sçauoit iuger de laquelle estoit l'œuf. La dissimilitude s'ingere d'elle-mesme en nos ouurages, nul art peut arriuer à la similitude. Ny Perrozet ny autre, ne peut si soigneusement polir et blanchir l'enuers de ses cartes, qu'aucuns ioueurs ne les distinguent, à les voir seulement couler par les mains d'vn autre. La ressemblance ne faict pas tant, vn, comme la difference faict, autre.

The Greeks, the Latins and we ourselves all use eggs as the most telling example of likeness. Yet there have been men, notably one at Delphi, who could recognize marks of difference between eggs, so that he never took one for another; and when there were several hens, he could tell which one an egg came from. Dissimilarity intrudes of itself into our works; no art can achieve similarity. Neither Perrozet nor anyone else can polish and whiten the backs of his cards so carefully that some players cannot tell them apart just by watching them slip through another player's hands. Resemblance does not make things one so much as difference makes them other.[2]

Nature s'est obligée à ne rien faire autre, qui ne fust dissemblable.

Nature has bound herself to make nothing that is not unlike everything else.

LAWS AND INTERPRETATION

Multiplying laws and glosses breeds more doubt and more lawsuits, not fewer.

FRENCH

ENGLISH

3.13.2 Pourtant, l'opinion de celuy-là ne me plaist guere, qui pensoit par la multitude des loix, brider l'authorité des

That is why I hardly like the opinion of the man who thought he could curb the authority of judges

FRENCH

iuges, en leur taillant leurs morceaux. Il ne sentoit point, qu'il y a autant de liberté et d'estenduë à l'interpretation des loix, qu'à leur façon. Et ceux-là se moquent, qui pensent appetisser nos debats, et les arrester, en nous r'appellant à l'expresse parolle de la Bible. D'autant que nostre esprit ne trouue pas le champ moins spatieux, à contre-roller le sens d'autruy, qu'à representer le sien: et comme s'il y auoit moins d'animosité et d'aspreté à gloser qu'à inuenter. Nous voyons, combien il se trompoit.

Car nous auons en France, plus de loix que tout le reste du monde ensemble; et plus qu'il n'en faudroit à regler tous les mondes d'Epicurus: *Vt olim flagitijs, sic nunc legibus laboramus*: et si auons tant laissé à opiner et decider à nos iuges, qu'il ne fut iamais liberté si puissante et si licencieuse. Qu'ont gaigné nos legislateurs à choisir cent mille especes et faicts particuliers, et y attacher cent mille loix? Ce nombre n'a aucune proportion, auec l'infinie diuersité des actions humaines. La multiplication de nos inuentions, n'arriuera pas à la variation des exemples.

Adioustez y en cent fois autant: il n'aduiendra pas pourtant, que des euenemens à venir, il s'en trouue aucun, qui en tout ce grand nombre de milliers d'euenemens choisis et enregistrez, en rencontre vn, auquel il se puisse ioindre et apparier, si exactement, qu'il n'y reste quelque circonstance et diuersité, qui requiere diuerse consideration de iugement. Il y a peu de relation de nos actions, qui sont en perpetuelle mutation, auec les loix fixes et immobiles. Les plus desirables, ce sont les plus rares, plus simples, et generales. Et encore crois-ie, qu'il vaudroit mieux n'en auoir point du tout, que de les auoir en tel nombre que nous auons. Nature les donne tousiours plus heureuses, que ne sont celles que nous nous donnons.

Tesmoing la peinture de l'aage doré des poëtes: et l'estat où nous voyons viure les nations, qui n'en ont point d'autres. En voila, qui pour tous iuges, employent en leurs causes, le premier passant, qui voyage le long de leurs montaignes. Et ces autres, eslisent le iour du marché, quelqu'vn d'entr'eux, qui sur le champ decide

ENGLISH

by a multitude of laws, cutting up their portions for them. He did not perceive that there is as much freedom and latitude in interpreting laws as in making them. And those people are making fun of us who think they can reduce and halt our disputes by calling us back to the express words of the Bible: as if our mind did not find as wide a field in checking someone else's meaning as in presenting its own, and as if there were less animosity and bitterness in glossing than in inventing. We can see how mistaken he was.

For we have more laws in France than all the rest of the world put together, and more than would be needed to govern all the worlds of Epicurus: *As once we suffered from crimes, so now we suffer from laws.* And yet we have left so much to our judges' opinion and decision that there was never a liberty so powerful and so licentious. What have our legislators gained by singling out a hundred thousand particular kinds of cases and facts and attaching a hundred thousand laws to them? That number bears no proportion to the infinite diversity of human actions. Multiplying our inventions will never catch up with the variety of cases.[3]

Add a hundred times as many: still it will not happen that any future event finds, among all those many thousands of events selected and recorded, one that it can be joined and matched with so exactly that there does not remain some circumstance or difference requiring a different judgment. There is little relation between our actions, which are in perpetual change, and fixed, immovable laws. The most desirable laws are the fewest, the simplest and the most general. And even so, I believe it would be better to have none at all than to have them in such numbers as we do. Nature always gives happier ones than those we give ourselves.

Witness the poets' picture of the golden age, and the state in which we see nations live that have no laws but hers. Here are some who, for their only judge, use in their disputes the first passerby traveling along their mountains. And these others choose one of their number on market day, who

2 Perrozet was a well-known card maker of Montaigne's time.
1 Manilius, Astronomica.
3 Tacitus, Annals. Epicurus taught that there are innumerable worlds.

FRENCH

tous leurs proces. Quel danger y auroit-il, que les plus sages vuidassent ainsi les nostres, selon les occurrences, et à l'œil; sans obligation d'exemple, et de consequence? A chaque pied son soulier. Le Roy Ferdinand, enuoyant des colonies aux Indes, prouueut sagement qu'on n'y menast aucuns escholiers de la jurisprudence: de crainte, que les proces ne peuplassent en ce nouueau monde.

Comme estant science de sa nature, generatrice d'altercation et diuision, iugeant auec Platon, que c'est vne mauuaise prouision de païs, que iurisconsultes, et medecins.

3.13.3 Pourquoy est-ce, que notre langage commun, si aisé à tout autre vsage, deuient obscur et non intelligible, en contract et testament: et que celuy qui s'exprime si clairement, quoy qu'il die et escriue, ne trouue en cela, aucune maniere de se declarer, qui ne tombe en doute et contradiction?

Si ce n'est, que les Princes de cet art s'appliquans d'vne peculiere attention, à trier des mots solemnes, et former des clauses artistes, ont tant poisé chasque syllabe, espluché si primement chasque espece de couture, que les voila enfrasquez et embrouillez en l'infinité des figures, et si menuës partitions: qu'elles ne peuuent plus tomber soubs aucun reglement et prescription, ny aucune certaine intelligence: *Confusum est quidquid vsque in puluerem sectum est.* Qui a veu des enfans, essayans de renger à certain nombre, vne masse d'argent vif: plus ils le pressent et pestrissent, et s'estudient à le contraindre à leur loy, plus ils irritent la liberté de ce genereux metal: il fuit à leur art, et se va menuisant et esparpillant, au delà de tout conte.

C'est de mesme; car en subdiuisant ces subtilitez, on apprend aux hommes d'accroistre les doubtes: on nous met en train, d'estendre et diuersifier les difficultez: on les allonge, on les disperse. En semant les questions et les retaillant, on faict fructifier et foisonner le monde, en incertitude et en querelle. Comme la terre se rend fertile, plus elle est esmiée et profondement remuée. *Difficultatem facit doctrina.* Nous doutions sur Vlpian, et redoutons encore sur Bartolus et Baldus. Il falloit effacer la trace de cette diuersité innumerable d'opinions: non point s'en parer, et en entester la posterité. Ie ne sçay

ENGLISH

decides all their lawsuits on the spot. What danger would there be in having the wisest settle ours in the same way, case by case and by eye, without being bound by precedent and consequence? For each foot its own shoe. King Ferdinand, when he sent colonists to the Indies, wisely provided that no students of law should be taken there, for fear that lawsuits would breed in that new world.[4]

He regarded it as a science that by its very nature breeds altercation and division, and judged with Plato that lawyers and physicians are a poor stock for a country.

Why is it that our common language, so easy for every other use, becomes obscure and unintelligible in contracts and wills, and that a man who expresses himself so clearly in whatever he says or writes can find no way of stating his meaning in these that does not fall into doubt and contradiction?

Unless it is that the princes of this art, applying themselves with special care to picking solemn words and framing artful clauses, have weighed every syllable and examined every kind of seam so minutely that they are now tangled and muddled in an infinity of figures and in such fine distinctions that these can no longer come under any rule or prescription, or any definite understanding. *Whatever is cut up into dust is confused.* Whoever has seen children trying to divide a mass of quicksilver into a set number of parts knows that the more they press and knead it and strive to force it to their law, the more they provoke the freedom of this noble metal: it eludes their skill and keeps breaking up and scattering beyond all count.[5]

It is the same here: by subdividing these subtleties, people are taught to multiply doubts; we are set on the road to extending and diversifying difficulties; we lengthen them, we scatter them. By sowing questions and pruning them, we make the world bear fruit and teem with uncertainty and quarrels, just as the earth grows more fertile the more finely it is broken up and the more deeply it is turned. *Learning creates difficulty.* We had doubts about Ulpian, and we have doubts all

4 Ferdinand II of Aragon (1452–1516), who with Isabella of Castile sponsored Columbus.
5 Seneca, Letters to Lucilius.

FRENCH

qu'en dire: mais il se sent par experience, que tant d'interpretations dissipent la verité, et la rompent.

Aristote a escrit pour être entendu; s'il ne l'a peu, moins le fera vn moins habille: et vn tiers, que celuy qui traicte sa propre imagination. Nous ouurons la matiere, et l'espandons en la destrempant. D'vn subiect nous en faisons mille: et retombons en multipliant et subdiuisant, à l'infinité des atomes d'Epicurus. Iamais deux hommes ne iugerent pareillement de mesme chose. Et est impossible de voir deux opinions semblables exactement: non seulement en diuers hommes, mais en mesme homme, à diuerses heures. Ordinairement ie trouue à doubter, en ce que le commentaire n'a daigné toucher. Ie bronche plus volontiers en païs plat: comme certains cheuaux, que ie cognois, qui choppent plus souuent en chemin vny.

3.13.4 Qui ne diroit que les gloses augmentent les doubtes et l'ignorance, puis qu'il ne se voit aucun liure, soit humain, soit diuin, sur qui le monde s'embesongne, duquel l'interpretation face tarir la difficulté? Le centiesme commentaire, le renuoye à son suiuant, plus espineux, et plus scabreux, que le premier ne l'auoit trouué. Quand est-il conuenu entre nous, ce liure en a assez, il n'y a meshuy plus que dire? Cecy se voit mieux en la chicane. On donne authorité de loy à infinis docteurs, infinis arrests, et à autant d'interpretations. Trouuons nous pourtant quelque fin au besoin d'interpreter? s'y voit-il quelque progrez et aduancement vers la tranquillité?

nous faut-il moins d'aduocats et de iuges, que lors que cette masse de droict, estoit encore en sa premiere enfance? Au contraire, nous obscurcissons et enseuelissons l'intelligence. Nous ne la descouurons plus, qu'à la mercy de tant de clostures et barrieres. Les hommes mescognoissent la maladie naturelle de leur esprit. Il ne faict que fureter et quester; et va sans cesse, tournoyant, bastissant, et s'empestrant, en sa besongne: comme nos vers à soye, et s'y estouffe. *Mus in pice.* Il pense remarquer de loing, ie ne sçay quelle apparence de

ENGLISH

over again about Bartolus and Baldus. The traces of this countless diversity of opinions should have been wiped out, not paraded as ornaments and drummed into posterity's heads. I do not know what to say about it; but experience makes us feel that so many interpretations dissipate the truth and break it.[6]

Aristotle wrote to be understood. If he could not manage it, a less able man will manage it even less, and a third party less than the man who was treating his own ideas. We open up the matter and spread it out by diluting it. Out of one subject we make a thousand, and by multiplying and subdividing we end up in the infinity of Epicurus's atoms. Never did two men judge the same thing alike. And it is impossible to find two opinions exactly alike, not only in different men but in the same man at different times. I usually find something to doubt in what the commentary has not deigned to touch. I stumble more readily on flat ground, like certain horses I know that trip more often on a smooth road.

Who would not say that glosses increase doubt and ignorance, since there is no book, human or divine, that the world busies itself with whose interpretation makes the difficulty dry up? The hundredth commentary hands it on to the next one thornier and more rugged than the first had found it. When have we ever agreed among ourselves: this book has had enough, there is nothing more to say about it now? This is best seen in legal wrangling. We give the authority of law to countless doctors, countless rulings and as many interpretations. Do we find any end, for all that, to the need to interpret? Is there any progress or advance toward tranquility to be seen?

Do we need fewer lawyers and judges than when this mass of law was still in its first infancy? On the contrary, we obscure and bury understanding. We can no longer reach it except at the mercy of so many fences and barriers. Men do not recognize the natural sickness of their mind. It does nothing but ferret and search, and goes on endlessly circling, building and entangling itself in its own work, like our silkworms, and suffocates in it. *A mouse in pitch.* It thinks it can make out in the dis-

6 Quintilian, The Orator's Education. Ulpian was a Roman jurist of the 3rd century AD; Bartolus and Baldus were famous 14th-century Italian commentators on Roman law.

FRENCH

clarté et verité imaginaire: mais pendant qu'il y court, tant de difficultez luy trauersent la voye, d'empeschemens et de nouuelles questes, qu'elles l'esgarent et l'enyurent.

Non guere autrement, qu'il aduint aux chiens d'Esope, lesquels descouurans quelque apparence de corps mort flotter en mer, et ne le pouuans approcher, entreprindrent de boire cette eau, d'asseicher le passage, et s'y estoufferent. A quoy se rencontre, ce qu'vn Crates disoit des escrits de Heraclitus, qu'ils auoient besoin d'vn lecteur bon nageur, afin que la profondeur et pois de sa doctrine, ne l'engloutist et suffoquast.

3.13.5 Ce n'est rien que foiblesse particuliere, qui nous faict contenter de ce que d'autres, ou que nous-mesmes auons trouué en cette chasse de cognoissance: vn plus habile ne s'en contentera pas. Il y a tousiours place pour vn suiuant, ouy et pour nous mesmes, et route par ailleurs. Il n'y a point de fin en nos inquisitions. Nostre fin est en l'autre monde. C'est signe de racourcissement d'esprit, quand il se contente: ou signe de lasseté. Nul esprit genereux, ne s'arreste en soy. Il pretend tousiours, et va outre ses forces. Il a des eslans au delà de ses effects. S'il ne s'auance, et ne se presse, et ne s'accule, et ne se choque et tourneuire, il n'est vif qu'à demy.

Ses poursuites sont sans terme, et sans forme. Son aliment, c'est admiration, chasse, ambiguité. Ce que declaroit assez Apollo, parlant tousiours à nous doublement, obscurement et obliquement: ne nous repaissant pas, mais nous amusant et embesongnant. C'est vn mouuement irregulier, perpetuel, sans patron et sans but. Ses inuentions s'eschauffent, se suiuent, et s'entreproduisent l'vne l'autre. *Ainsi voit-on en vn ruisseau coulant,*
Sans fin l'vne eau, apres l'autre roulant,
Et tout de rang, d'vn eternel conduict;
L'vne suit l'autre, et l'vne l'autre fuit.
Par cette-cy, celle-là est poussée,
Et cette-cy, par l'autre est deuancée:
Tousiours l'eau va dans l'eau, et tousiours est ce
Mesme ruisseau, et tousiours eau diuerse.

3.13.6 Il y a plus affaire à interpreter les interpretations, qu'à interpreter les choses: et plus de liures sur les liures, que

ENGLISH

tance some sort of glimmer of light and imaginary truth; but while it runs toward it, so many difficulties, obstacles and new quests cross its path that they lead it astray and make it drunk.[7]

It is not much different from what happened to Aesop's dogs. Spotting what looked like a dead body floating in the sea, and being unable to get near it, they set about drinking up the water to dry a path to it, and choked. This fits with what one Crates said of the writings of Heraclitus: that they needed a reader who was a good swimmer, so that the depth and weight of his doctrine would not swallow him up and drown him.

It is nothing but individual weakness that makes us content with what others, or we ourselves, have found in this hunt for knowledge; an abler man will not be content with it. There is always room for a successor, yes, and for ourselves, and a road somewhere else. There is no end to our inquiries; our end is in the other world. It is a sign of a shrunken mind when the mind is content, or a sign of weariness. No noble mind stops within itself; it is always reaching and goes beyond its strength; its leaps outrun its achievements. If it does not push forward, press on, back itself into a corner, collide and wheel about, it is only half alive.

Its pursuits are without limit and without form. Its food is wonder, the chase, ambiguity. Apollo made this plain enough by always speaking to us in double, obscure and oblique terms, not feeding us but amusing and occupying us. It is an irregular, perpetual motion, without model and without goal. Its inventions excite one another, follow one another and give birth to one another. *So in a running stream we see*
One water rolling after another without end,
All in order, in an eternal course;
One follows another, and one flees another.
By this one, that one is pushed along,
And this one by the other is outrun:
Always water flows into water, and always it is
The same stream, and always different water.[8]

There is more work in interpreting interpretations than in interpreting things, and more books about

7 A Latin proverb for someone hopelessly stuck, collected in Erasmus's Adages.
8 The verses are by La Boétie.

FRENCH

sur autre subiect. Nous ne faisons que nous entregloser. Tout fourmille de commentaires: d'autheurs, il en est grand cherté. Le principal et plus fameux sçauoir de nos siecles, est-ce pas sçauoir entendre les sçauants? Est-ce pas la fin commune et derniere de touts estudes? Nos opinions s'entent les vnes sur les autres. La premiere sert de tige à la seconde: la seconde à la tierce. Nous eschellons ainsi de degré en degré. Et aduient de là, que le plus haut monté, a souuent plus d'honneur, que de merite. Car il n'est monté que d'vn grain, sur les espaules du penultime.

3.13.7 Combien souuent, et sottement à l'auanture, ay-ie estendu mon liure à parler de soy? Sottement, quand ce ne seroit que pour cette raison: Qu'il me deuoit souuenir, de ce que ie dy des autres, qui en font de mesmes. Que ces œillades si frequentes à leurs ouurages, tesmoignent que le cœur leur frissonne de son amour, et les rudoyements mesmes, desdaigneux dequoy ils le battent, que ce ne sont que mignardises, et affetteries, d'vne faueur maternelle. Suiuant Aristote, à qui, et se priser et se mespriser, naissent souuent de pareil air d'arrogance.

Car mon excuse: Que ie doy auoir en cela plus de liberté que les autres, d'autant qu'à poinct nommé, i'escry de moy, et de mes escrits, comme de mes autres actions: que mon theme se renuerse en soy: ie ne sçay, si chacun la prendra.

3.13.8 I'ay veu en Allemagne, que Luther a laissé autant de diuisions et d'altercations, sur le doubte de ses opinions, et plus, qu'il n'en esmeut sur les escritures sainctes. Nostre contestation est verbale. Ie demande que c'est que nature, volupté, cercle, et substitution. La question est de parolles, et se paye de mesme. Vne pierre c'est vn corps: mais qui presseroit: Et corps qu'est-ce? substance: et substance quoy? ainsi de suitte: acculeroit en fin le respondant au bout de son Calepin. On eschange vn mot pour vn autre mot, et souuent plus incogneu. Ie sçay mieux que c'est qu'homme, que ie ne sçay que c'est animal, ou mortel, ou raisonnable. Pour satisfaire à vn doute, ils m'en donnent trois. C'est la teste d'Hydra.

Socrates demandoit à Memnon, que c'estoit que vertu: Il y a, dist Memnon, vertu d'homme et de femme, de

ENGLISH

books than about any other subject. We do nothing but gloss one another. Everything swarms with commentaries; of authors there is a great shortage. Is not the principal and most celebrated learning of our times the learning to understand the learned? Is that not the common and final goal of all study? Our opinions are grafted onto one another. The first serves as stock for the second, the second for the third. So we climb from rung to rung. And so it happens that the man who has climbed highest often has more honor than merit, for he has climbed only a grain's height above the shoulders of the one before him.

How often, and perhaps how foolishly, have I stretched my book to talk about itself? Foolishly, if only for this reason: I ought to have remembered what I say of others who do the same, that these frequent fond glances at their works show that their hearts quiver with love for them, and that even the disdainful roughness with which they beat them is nothing but the coddling and affectation of a mother's fondness. As Aristotle has it, prizing oneself and despising oneself often spring from the same air of arrogance.

As for my excuse, that I ought to have more freedom in this than others, since I write expressly about myself and my writings as about my other actions, and my theme turns back upon itself: I do not know whether everyone will accept it.

I have seen in Germany that Luther has left behind as many divisions and altercations over the doubtful meaning of his opinions as he stirred up over the Holy Scriptures, and more. Our disputes are about words. I ask what nature, pleasure, circle and substitution are. The question is one of words, and is paid in the same coin. A stone is a body. But if someone pressed: "And what is a body?" "Substance." "And what is substance?" and so on, he would end up driving the respondent to the last page of his Calepino. One word is exchanged for another, and often for one less known. I know better what man is than I know what animal is, or mortal, or rational. To settle one doubt, they give me three: it is the Hydra's head.[9]

Socrates asked Meno what virtue was. "There is," said Meno, "the virtue of a man and of a woman,

9 Ambrogio Calepino's Latin dictionary (1502) was so widely used that "calepin" came to mean any dictionary.

FRENCH

magistrat et d'homme priué, d'enfant et de vieillart. Voicy qui va bien, s'escria Socrates: nous estions en cherche d'vne vertu, tu nous en apporte vn exaim. Nous communiquons vne question, on nous en redonne vne ruchée. Comme nul euenement et nulle forme, ressemble entierement à vne autre, aussi ne differe l'vne de l'autre entierement. Ingenieux meslange de Nature. Si nos faces n'estoient semblables, on ne sçauroit discerner l'homme de la beste: si elles n'estoient dissemblables, on ne sçauroit discerner l'homme de l'homme. Toutes choses se tiennent par quelque similitude. Tout exemple cloche. Et la relation qui se tire de l'experience, est tousiours defaillante et imparfaicte.

On ioinct toutesfois les comparaisons par quelque bout. Ainsi seruent les loix; et s'assortissent ainsin, à chacun de nos affaires, par quelque interpretation destournée, contrainte et biaise.

ENGLISH

of a magistrate and of a private person, of a child and of an old man." "That's splendid!" cried Socrates. "We were looking for one virtue, and you bring us a whole swarm." We put forward one question, and we are handed back a hiveful. Just as no event and no form entirely resembles another, so none entirely differs from another. An ingenious blend of Nature's. If our faces were not alike, we could not tell man from beast; if they were not unlike, we could not tell man from man. All things hold together by some likeness. Every example limps. And the correspondence drawn from experience is always defective and imperfect.[10]

Still, we join our comparisons together at some end. That is how laws serve, and that is how they are fitted to each of our affairs: by some roundabout, forced and slanted interpretation.

THE INJUSTICE OF JUSTICE

Courts condemn the innocent and serve forms over truth; laws are obeyed because they are laws.

FRENCH

3.13.9 Puisque les loix ethiques, qui regardent le deuoir particulier de chacun en soy, sont si difficiles à dresser: comme nous voyons qu'elles sont: ce n'est pas merueille, si celles qui gouuernent tant de particuliers, le sont d'auantage. Considerez la forme de cette iustice qui nous regit; c'est vn vray tesmoignage de l'humaine imbecillité: tant il y a de contradiction et d'erreur. Ce que nous trouuons faueur et rigueur en la iustice: et y en trouuons tant, que ie ne sçay si l'entre-deux s'y trouue si souuent: ce sont parties maladiues, et membres iniustes, du corps mesmes et essence de la iustice.

Des païsans, viennent de m'aduertir en haste, qu'ils ont laissé presentement en vne forest qui est à moy, vn homme meurtry de cent coups, qui respire encores, et qui leur a demandé de l'eau par pitié, et du secours pour le sousleuer. Disent qu'ils n'ont osé l'approcher, et s'en sont fuis, de peur que les gens de la iustice ne les y attrapassent: et comme il se faict de ceux qu'on rencontre pres d'vn homme tué, ils n'eussent à rendre conte de cet accident, à leur totale ruyne: n'ayans ny suffisance, ny argent, pour deffendre leur innocence. Que leur eussé-ie dict? Il est certain, que cet office d'humanité, les eust mis en peine.

ENGLISH

Since ethical laws, which concern each person's individual duty in himself, are so hard to frame, as we see they are, it is no wonder if those that govern so many individuals are harder still. Consider the form of this justice that rules us: it is a true testimony to human weakness, so full is it of contradiction and error. What we find to be favor and severity in justice (and we find so much of both that I do not know whether the middle way is found there as often) are diseased parts and unjust members of the very body and essence of justice.

Some peasants have just come in haste to tell me that a moment ago, in a forest of mine, they left a man battered with a hundred blows, still breathing, who begged them for water out of pity and for help to lift him up. They say they did not dare go near him and ran away, for fear that the officers of the law would catch them there and that, as happens to people found near a murdered man, they would have to answer for this incident, to their utter ruin, having neither the ability nor the money to defend their innocence. What could I have said to them? It is certain that this act of humanity would have got them into trouble.

10 The exchange is from Plato's dialogue Meno.

FRENCH

ENGLISH

3.13.10 Combien auons nous descouuert d'innocens auoir esté punis: ie dis sans la coulpe des iuges; et combien en y a-il eu, que nous n'auons pas descouuert? Cecy est aduenu de mon temps. Certains sont condamnez à la mort pour vn homicide; l'arrest sinon prononcé, au moins conclud et arresté. Sur ce poinct, les iuges sont aduertis par les officiers d'vne cour subalterne, voisine, qu'ils tiennent quelques prisonniers, lesquels aduoüent disertement cet homicide, et apportent à tout ce faict, vne lumiere indubitable. On delibere, si pourtant on doit interrompre et differer l'execution de l'arrest donné contre les premiers. On considere la nouuelleté de l'exemple, et sa consequence, pour accrocher les iugemens: Que la condemnation est iuridiquement passée; les iuges priuez de repentance.

How many innocent people have we discovered to have been punished, and I mean without any fault on the judges' part? And how many more have there been whom we have not discovered? This happened in my time. Certain men are condemned to death for a homicide. The sentence, if not yet pronounced, has at least been reached and settled. At this point the judges are informed by the officers of a lower court nearby that they are holding some prisoners who openly confess to this homicide and cast an unmistakable light on the whole affair. The judges deliberate whether they ought nonetheless to interrupt and postpone the execution of the sentence passed on the first men. They consider the novelty of the precedent and what it would mean for holding up judgments. The condemnation has been passed in due legal form, and judges are denied any right to change their minds.

Somme, ces pauures diables sont consacrez aux formules de la iustice. Philippus, ou quelque autre, prouueut à vn pareil inconuenient, en cette maniere. Il auoit condamné en grosses amendes, vn homme enuers vn autre, par vn iugement resolu. La verité se descouurant quelque temps apres, il se trouua qu'il auoit iniquement iugé. D'vn costé estoit la raison de la cause: de l'autre costé la raison des formes iudiciaires. Il satisfit aucunement à toutes les deux, laissant en son estat la sentence, et recompensant de sa bourse, l'interest du condamné. Mais il auoit affaire à vn accident reparable; les miens furent pendus irreparablement. Combien ay-ie veu de condemnations, plus crimineuses que le crime?

In short, these poor devils are offered up to the formulas of justice. Philip, or someone else, dealt with a similar difficulty in this way. He had condemned a man, by a final judgment, to pay heavy damages to another. When the truth came out some time later, it turned out that he had judged unjustly. On one side stood the justice of the case; on the other, the logic of judicial forms. He satisfied both to some extent: he left the sentence as it stood and made good the condemned man's loss out of his own purse. But he was dealing with a mishap that could be repaired. My men were hanged beyond repair. How many condemnations have I seen that were more criminal than the crime?[11]

3.13.11 Tout cecy me faict souuenir de ces anciennes opinions: Qu'il est force de faire tort en detail, qui veut faire droict en gros; et iniustice en petites choses, qui veut venir à chef de faire iustice és grandes: Que l'humaine iustice est formée au modelle de la medecine, selon laquelle, tout ce qui est vtile est aussi iuste et honneste. Et de ce que tiennent les Stoïciens, que Nature mesme procede contre iustice, en la plus-part de ses ouurages. Et de ce que tiennent les Cyrenaïques, qu'il n'y a rien iuste de soy: que les coustumes et loix forment la iustice. Et les Theodoriens, qui trouuent iuste au sage le larrecin, le

All this reminds me of those ancient opinions. One is that whoever wants to do right on the whole must do wrong in the details, and whoever wants to succeed in doing justice in great things must do injustice in small ones. Another is that human justice is formed on the model of medicine, by which everything useful is also just and honorable. Then there is what the Stoics hold, that Nature herself goes against justice in most of her works. There is what the Cyrenaics hold, that nothing is just in itself and that customs and laws make justice. And there are the Theodorians, who

11 Philip II of Macedon, father of Alexander the Great; the story is in Plutarch.

FRENCH

sacrilege, toute sorte de paillardise, s'il cognoist qu'elle luy soit profitable.

Il n'y a remede. I'en suis là, comme Alcibiades, que ie ne me representeray iamais, que ie puisse, à homme qui decide de ma teste: où mon honneur, et ma vie, depende de l'industrie et soing de mon procureur, plus que de mon innocence. Ie me hazarderois à vne telle iustice, qui me recogneust du bien faict, comme du mal faict: où i'eusse autant à esperer, qu'à craindre. L'indemnité n'est pas monnoye suffisante, à vn homme qui faict mieux, que de ne faillir point. Nostre iustice ne nous presente que l'vne de ses mains; et encore la gauche. Quiconque il soit, il en sort auecques perte.

3.13.12 En la Chine, duquel royaume la police et les arts, sans commerce et cognoissance des nostres, surpassent nos exemples, en plusieurs parties d'excellence: et duquel l'histoire m'apprend, combien le monde est plus ample et plus diuers, que ny les anciens, ny nous, ne penetrons: les officiers deputez par le Prince, pour visiter l'estat de ses prouinces, comme ils punissent ceux, qui maluersent en leur charge, ils remunerent aussi de pure liberalité, ceux qui s'y sont bien portez outre la commune sorte, et outre la necessité de leur deuoir: on s'y presente, non pour se garantir seulement, mais pour y acquerir: ny simplement pour estre payé, mais pour y estre estrené.

3.13.13 Nul iuge n'a encore, Dieu mercy, parlé à moy comme iuge, pour quelque cause que ce soit, ou mienne, ou tierce, ou criminelle, ou ciuile. Nulle prison m'a receu, non pas seulement pour m'y promener. L'imagination m'en rend la veuë mesme du dehors, desplaisante. Ie suis si affady apres la liberté, que qui me deffendroit l'accez de quelque coin des Indes, i'en viurois aucunement plus mal à mon aise. Et tant que ie trouueray terre, ou air ouuert ailleurs, ie ne croupiray en lieu, où il me faille cacher.

Mon Dieu, que mal pourroy-ie souffrir la condition, où ie vois tant de gens, clouez à vn quartier de ce royaume, priuez de l'entrée des villes principales, et des courts, et de l'vsage des chemins publics, pour auoir querellé nos loix. Si celles que ie sers, me menassoient seulement le

ENGLISH

think theft, sacrilege and every kind of lechery just for the wise man, if he knows it to be profitable to him.

There is no remedy. I am in the same position as Alcibiades: I will never, if I can help it, put myself in the hands of a man who is to decide on my head, where my honor and my life depend more on the skill and diligence of my attorney than on my innocence. I would take my chances with a justice that took account of my good deeds as well as my bad ones, where I had as much to hope for as to fear. Going unpunished is not sufficient payment for a man who does better than merely not doing wrong. Our justice holds out only one of its hands to us, and the left one at that. Whoever a man may be, he comes out of it the loser.[12]

Consider China. Its government and arts, without any dealings with ours or knowledge of them, surpass our examples in several kinds of excellence, and its history teaches me how much wider and more varied the world is than either the ancients or we can fathom. There the officers sent by the Prince to inspect the state of his provinces punish those who abuse their office, and they also reward, out of pure liberality, those who have conducted themselves better than the common run and beyond what their duty required. People present themselves to these officers not merely to protect themselves but to gain something, and not simply to be paid but to receive a gift.[13]

No judge, thank God, has yet spoken to me as a judge, in any case whatever, my own or another's, criminal or civil. No prison has ever received me, not even for a stroll. The very thought of one makes even the sight of its outside unpleasant to me. I am so infatuated with liberty that if anyone barred me from some corner of the Indies, I would live somewhat less at ease for it. And as long as I can find earth or open air elsewhere, I will not lie stagnating in a place where I have to hide.

My God, how badly I would bear the condition in which I see so many people! They are nailed to one district of this kingdom, barred from entering the principal cities and the courts and from using the public roads, for having quarreled with our laws.

12 Alcibiades fled rather than stand trial at Athens, saying he would not trust even his own mother with his life (Plutarch).
13 Montaigne's source was probably Juan González de Mendoza's History of China (1585), translated into French in 1588.

FRENCH	ENGLISH
bout du doigt, ie m'en irois incontinent en trouuer d'autres, où que ce fust. Toute ma petite prudence, en ces guerres ciuiles où nous sommes, s'employe à ce, qu'elles n'interrompent ma liberté d'aller et venir.	If the laws I serve threatened so much as the tip of my finger, I would immediately go off and find others, wherever it might be. All my little prudence, in these civil wars we are in, goes into keeping them from interrupting my freedom to come and go.
3.13.14 Or les loix se maintiennent en credit, non par ce qu'elles sont iustes, mais par ce qu'elles sont loix. C'est le fondement mystique de leur authorité: elles n'en ont point d'autre. Qui bien leur sert. Elles sont souuent faictes par des sots. Plus souuent par des gens, qui en haine d'equalité ont faute d'equité. Mais tousiours par des hommes, autheurs vains et irresolus. Il n'est rien si lourdement, et largement fautier, que les loix: ny si ordinairement. Quiconque leur obeit par ce qu'elles sont iustes, ne leur obeyt pas iustement par où il doit. Les nostres Françoises, prestent aucunement la main, par leur desreiglement et deformité, au desordre et corruption, qui se voit en leur dispensation, et execution.	Now laws keep their credit not because they are just, but because they are laws. That is the mystical foundation of their authority; they have no other. And it serves them well. They are often made by fools. More often they are made by people who, out of hatred of equality, are wanting in equity. But always by men, vain and irresolute authors. There is nothing so grossly and widely faulty as the laws, nor so regularly. Whoever obeys them because they are just does not obey them for the right reason. Our French laws, by their irregularity and deformity, rather lend a hand to the disorder and corruption that can be seen in the way they are administered and carried out.

STUDYING MYSELF

Self-study is his physics and metaphysics, and it teaches him his own fallibility.

FRENCH	ENGLISH
Le commandement est si trouble, et inconstant, qu'il excuse aucunement, et la desobeissance, et le vice de l'interpretation, de l'administration, et de l'obseruation. Quel que soit donq le fruict que nous pouuons auoir de l'experience, à peine seruira beaucoup à nostre institution, celle que nous tirons des exemples estrangers, si nous faisons si mal nostre profit, de celle, que nous auons de nous mesme, qui nous est plus familiere: et certes suffisante à nous instruire de ce qu'il nous faut. Ie m'estudie plus qu'autre subiect. C'est ma metaphysique, c'est ma physique.	The command is so muddled and inconsistent that it partly excuses both disobedience and faults of interpretation, administration and observance. Whatever fruit, then, we can draw from experience, the experience we take from foreign examples will hardly do much for our education if we make such poor use of the experience we have of ourselves. That experience is more familiar to us, and certainly sufficient to teach us what we need. I study myself more than any other subject. That is my metaphysics; that is my physics.
Qua Deus hanc mundi temperet arte domum: *Qua venit exoriens, qua deficit, vnde coactis* *Cornibus in plenum menstrua luna redit:* *Vnde salo superant venti, quid flamine captet* *Eurus, et in nubes vnde perennis aqua:* *Sit ventura dies mundi quæ subruat arces,* *Quærite quos agitat mundi labor.* En cette vniuersité, ie me laisse ignoramment et negligemment manier à la loy generale du monde. Ie la sçauray assez, quand ie la sentiray. Ma science ne luy peut faire changer de routte. Elle ne se diuersifiera pas pour moy: c'est folie de l'esperer. Et plus grande folie, de s'en mettre en peine:	*By what art God governs this house of the world;* *whence the moon comes rising, where it wanes, how with its horns* *drawn together it returns each month to the full;* *whence the winds prevail over the sea, what the east wind* *seeks with its blast, and whence the clouds draw their unceasing water;* *whether a day will come to topple the citadels of the world—* *inquire, you who are tormented by the toil of knowing the world.* In this universe I let myself be handled,

FRENCH

puis qu'elle est necessairement semblable, publique, et commune.

La bonté et capacité du gouuerneur nous doit à pur et à plein descharger du soing de gouuernement. Les inquisitions et contemplations philosophiques, ne seruent que d'aliment à nostre curiosité. Les philosophes, auec grande raison, nous renuoyent aux regles de Nature. Mais elles n'ont que faire de si sublime cognoissance. Ils les falsifient, et nous presentent son visage peint, trop haut en couleur, et trop sophistiqué: d'où naissent tant de diuers pourtraits d'vn subiect si vniforme. Comme elle nous a fourny de pieds à marcher, aussi a elle de prudence à nous guider en la vie. Prudence non tant ingenieuse, robuste et pompeuse, comme celle de leur inuention: mais à l'aduenant, facile, quiete et salutaire.

Et qui faict tresbien ce que l'autre dit: en celuy, qui a l'heur, de sçauoir l'employer naïuement et ordonnément: c'est à dire naturellement. Le plus simplement se commettre à Nature, c'est s'y commettre le plus sagement. O que c'est vn doux et mol cheuet, et sain, que l'ignorance et l'incuriosité, à reposer vne teste bien faicte.

3.13.15 I'aymerois mieux m'entendre bien en moy, qu'en Ciceron. De l'experience que i'ay de moy, ie trouue assez dequoy me faire sage, si i'estoy bon escholier. Qui remet en sa memoire l'excez de sa cholere passee, et iusques où cette fieure l'emporta, voit la laideur de cette passion, mieux que dans Aristote, et en conçoit vne haine plus iuste. Qui se souuient des maux qu'il a couru, de ceux qui l'ont menassé, des legeres occasions qui l'ont remué d'vn estat à autre, se prepare par là, aux mutations futures, et à la recognoissance de sa condition. La vie de Cæsar n'a point plus d'exemple, que la nostre pour nous. Et emperiere, et populaire: c'est tousiours vne vie, que tous accidents humains regardent.

Escoutons y seulement: nous nous disons, tout ce, dequoy nous auons principalement besoing. Qui se souuient de

ENGLISH

ignorantly and negligently, by the general law of the world. I shall know it well enough when I feel it. My knowledge cannot make it change its course. It will not vary for my sake; it is folly to hope so. And it is greater folly to trouble oneself about it, since it is necessarily uniform, public and common.[14]

The goodness and capacity of the governor ought to relieve us purely and fully of the care of governing. Philosophical inquiries and contemplations serve only to feed our curiosity. The philosophers, with good reason, refer us to the rules of Nature. But those rules have no need of such sublime knowledge. The philosophers falsify them and show us Nature's face painted, too high in color and too elaborately made up; hence so many different portraits of so uniform a subject. As she has given us feet to walk with, so has she given us prudence to guide us through life. It is not a prudence as ingenious, robust and pompous as the one they invented, but correspondingly easy, quiet and wholesome.

And it does very well what the other only talks about, in the man who has the good fortune to know how to use it simply and in good order, that is to say, naturally. To commit oneself to Nature most simply is to commit oneself to her most wisely. Oh, what a soft, gentle and wholesome pillow ignorance and incuriosity are for resting a well-made head!

I would rather understand myself well by studying myself than by studying Cicero. In the experience I have of myself I find enough to make me wise, if I were a good scholar. Whoever recalls the excess of his past anger, and how far that fever carried him away, sees the ugliness of this passion better than in Aristotle and conceives a more justified hatred of it. Whoever remembers the ills he has run into, those that have threatened him, and the slight occasions that have shifted him from one state to another, prepares himself by that for future changes and for recognizing his own condition. Caesar's life holds no more of an example for us than our own. Imperial or common, it is always a life exposed to all human accidents.

Let us only listen: we tell ourselves everything we chiefly need. Whoever remembers having been

FRENCH

s'estre tant et tant de fois mesconté de son propre iugement: est-il pas vn sot, de n'en entrer pour iamais en deffiance? Quand ie me trouue conuaincu par la raison d'autruy, d'vne opinion fauce; ie n'apprens pas tant, ce qu'il m'a dit de nouueau, et cette ignorance particuliere: ce seroit peu d'acquest: comme en general i'apprens ma debilité, et la trahison de mon entendement: d'où ie tire la reformation de toute la masse. En toutes mes autres erreurs, ie fais de mesme: et sens de cette regle grande vtilité à la vie. Ie ne regarde pas l'espece et l'indiuidu, comme vne pierre où i'aye bronché.

I'apprens à craindre mon alleure par tout, et m'attens à la regler. D'apprendre qu'on a dit ou fait vne sottise, ce n'est rien que cela. Il faut apprendre, qu'on n'est qu'vn sot. Instruction bien plus ample, et importante. Les faux pas, que ma memoire m'a fait si souuent, lors mesme qu'elle s'asseure le plus de soy, ne se sont pas inutilement perduz. Elle a beau me iurer à cette heure et m'asseurer: ie secoüe les oreilles: la premiere opposition qu'on faict à son tesmoignage, me met en suspens. Et n'oserois me fier d'elle, en chose de poix: ny la garentir sur le faict d'autruy.

Et n'estoit, que ce que ie fay par faute de memoire, les autres le font encore plus souuent, par faute de foy, ie prendrois tousiours en chose de faict, la verité de la bouche d'vn autre, plustost que de la mienne. Si chacun espioit de pres les effects et circonstances des passions qui les regentent, comme i'ay faict de celle à qui i'estois tombé en partage: il les verroit venir: et rallentiroit vn peu leur impetuosité et leur course. Elles ne nous sautent pas tousiours au collet d'vn prinsault, il y a de la menasse et des degrez.

Fluctus vti primó cœpit cùm albescere vento,
Paulatim sese tollit mare, et altius vndas
Erigit, inde imo consurgit ad æthera fundo. Le iugement tient chez moy vn siege magistral, au moins il s'en efforce soigneusement. Il laisse mes appetis aller leur train: et la haine et l'amitié, voire et celle que ie me porte à moy mesme, sans s'en alterer et corrompre. S'il ne peut reformer les autres parties selon soy, au moins ne se laisse il pas difformer à elles: il faict son ieu à part.

ENGLISH

mistaken in his own judgment so many, many times, is he not a fool if he does not distrust it ever after? When I find myself convinced of a false opinion by another man's reasoning, what I learn is not so much the new thing he has told me and my ignorance on this particular point; that would be small gain. What I learn is my weakness in general and the treachery of my understanding, and from that I draw a reform of the whole mass. I do the same with all my other errors, and I find this rule of great use in life. I do not look on the particular kind and instance as just a stone I have tripped over.

I learn to fear my footing everywhere, and I set about regulating it. To learn that one has said or done something foolish is nothing. One must learn that one is nothing but a fool, a far fuller and more important lesson. The false steps my memory has so often made me take, even when it was surest of itself, have not been wasted. It may swear and assure me all it likes now; I shake my ears. The first objection raised against its testimony leaves me in doubt. I would not dare trust it in a matter of weight, nor vouch for it where someone else is concerned.

And were it not that what I do from lack of memory, others do still more often from lack of good faith, I would always take the truth in matters of fact from another man's mouth rather than from my own. If each man watched closely the effects and circumstances of the passions that rule him, as I have done with the one whose share I fell to, he would see them coming and would slow their violence and their course a little. They do not always leap at our throats in a single bound; there are warnings and stages.

As when a wave first begins to whiten under the wind, little by little the sea swells and lifts its waves higher, then rises from its lowest depths up to the sky. In me judgment holds a magisterial seat; at least it carefully tries to. It lets my appetites go their way, hatred and friendship alike, even the friendship I bear myself, without being altered and corrupted by them. If it cannot reform the other parts to its own pattern, at least it does not let itself be deformed by them. It plays its game apart.[15]

14 Propertius, Elegies III.5.
15 Virgil, Aeneid VII.

FRENCH

3.13.16 L'aduertissement à chacun de se cognoistre, doit estre d'vn important effect, puisque ce Dieu de science et de lumiere le fit planter au front de son temple: comme comprenant tout ce qu'il auoit à nous conseiller. Platon dict aussi, que prudence n'est autre chose, que l'execution de cette ordonnance: et Socrates, le verifie par le menu en Xenophon. Les difficultez et l'obscurité, ne s'apperçoyuent en chacune science, que par ceux qui y ont entree. Car encore faut il quelque degré d'intelligence, à pouuoir remarquer qu'on ignore: et faut pousser à vne porte, pour sçauoir qu'elle nous est close.

D'où naist cette Platonique subtilité, que ny ceux qui sçauent, n'ont à s'enquerir, d'autant qu'ils sçauent: ny ceux qui ne sçauent, d'autant que pour s'enquerir, il faut sçauoir, dequoy on s'enquiert. Ainsin, en cette cy de se cognoistre soy-mesme: ce que chacun se voit si resolu et satisfaict, ce que chacun y pense estre suffisamment entendu, signifie que chacun n'y entend rien du tout, comme Socrates apprend à Euthydeme. Moy, qui ne fais autre profession, y trouue vne profondeur et varieté si infinie, que mon apprentissage n'a autre fruict, que de me faire sentir, combien il me reste à apprendre.

A ma foiblesse si souuent recognuë, ie dois l'inclination que i'ay à la modestie: à l'obeïssance des creances qui me sont prescrites: à vne constante froideur et moderation d'opinions: et la haine de cette arrogance importune et quereleuse, se croyant et fiant toute à soy, ennemie capitale de discipline et de verité. Oyez les regenter. Les premieres sottises qu'ils mettent en auant, c'est au style qu'on establit les religions et les loix. *Nihil est turpius, quàm cognitioni et perceptioni assertionem approbationémque præcurrere.* Aristarchus disoit, qu'anciennement, à peine se trouua-il sept sages au monde: et que de son temps à peine se trouuoit-il sept ignorans. Aurions nous pas plus de raison que luy, de le dire en nostre temps?

L'affirmation et l'opiniastreté, sont signes exprez de bestise. Cestuy-ci aura donné du nez à terre, cent fois pour vn iour: le voyla sur ses ergots, aussi resolu et entier

ENGLISH

The advice that each man should know himself must have an important effect, since that god of knowledge and light had it planted on the front of his temple, as containing all he had to counsel us. Plato also says that prudence is nothing other than carrying out this command, and Socrates proves it point by point in Xenophon. The difficulties and obscurities of any science are perceived only by those who have gained entry to it. For it still takes some degree of intelligence to be able to notice that one is ignorant, and one must push at a door to know that it is closed to us.[16]

From this comes that Platonic subtlety: neither those who know need inquire, since they know, nor those who do not know, since to inquire one must know what one is inquiring about. So it is with this matter of knowing oneself. The fact that each man seems to himself so resolved and satisfied, and thinks himself expert enough in it, means that no one understands anything about it at all, as Socrates teaches Euthydemus. I, who profess nothing else, find in it a depth and variety so infinite that my apprenticeship bears no other fruit than to make me feel how much I still have to learn.[17]

To my weakness, so often recognized, I owe my inclination to modesty, to obedience to the beliefs prescribed to me, and to a constant coolness and moderation in my opinions. I owe it also my hatred of that importunate and quarrelsome arrogance which believes and trusts wholly in itself, the mortal enemy of learning and of truth. Listen to them laying down the law. The very first follies they come out with are delivered in the style in which religions and laws are established. *Nothing is more shameful than for assertion and approval to run ahead of knowledge and perception.* Aristarchus said that in ancient times there were scarcely seven wise men to be found in the world, and that in his own time there were scarcely seven ignorant ones. Would we not have more reason than he to say so in our time?[18]

Assertiveness and obstinacy are express signs of stupidity. This fellow will have fallen flat on his nose a hundred times in a day, and there he is, up

16 Apollo, whose temple at Delphi bore the inscription "Know yourself."
17 Xenophon, Memorabilia IV.2.
18 Cicero, Academica I. Aristarchus of Samothrace was a scholar at Alexandria in the 2nd century BC.

FRENCH

que deuant. Vous diriez qu'on luy a infus depuis, quelque nouuelle ame, et vigueur d'entendement. Et qu'il luy aduient, comme à cet ancien fils de la terre, qui reprenoit nouuelle fermeté, et se renforçoit par sa cheute. *Cui cum tetigere parentem, / Iam defecta vigent renouato robore membra.* Ce testu indocile, pense-il pas reprendre vn nouuel esprit, pour reprendre vne nouuelle dispute? C'est par mon experience, que i'accuse l'humaine ignorance. Qui est, à mon aduis, le plus seur party de l'escole du monde.

Ceux qui ne la veulent conclure en eux, par vn si vain exemple que le mien, ou que le leur, qu'ils la recognoissent par Socrates, le maistre des maistres. Car le philosophe Antisthenes, à ses disciples, Allons, disoit-il, vous et moy ouyr Socrates. Là ie seray disciple auec vous. Et soustenant ce dogme, de sa secte Stoïque, que la vertu suffisoit à rendre vne vie plainement heureuse, et n'ayant besoin de chose quelconque, sinon de la force de Socrates, adioustoit-il.

ENGLISH

on his spurs again, as resolute and unbending as before. You would think someone had since poured into him a new soul and a new vigor of understanding, and that it is with him as with that ancient son of the earth who regained his firmness and grew stronger by his fall: *Whose limbs, when they touched their mother, / exhausted as they were, grew strong again with renewed vigor.* Does this unteachable, stubborn man not think he takes on a new mind when he takes up a new argument? It is from my own experience that I accuse human ignorance, which is, in my opinion, the surest position in the school of the world.[19]

Those who will not reach this conclusion in themselves from so vain an example as mine or their own, let them recognize it through Socrates, the master of masters. For the philosopher Antisthenes used to say to his disciples: "Let us go, you and I, and hear Socrates. There I shall be a disciple with you." And upholding the dogma of his Stoic sect, that virtue was enough to make a life fully happy and in need of nothing whatever, he would add: "except the strength of Socrates."

JUDGING OTHERS, ADVISING KINGS

Long self-observation helps him read his friends; kings most need someone to tell them the truth.

FRENCH

3.13.17 Cette longue attention que i'employe à me considerer, me dresse à iuger aussi passablement des autres. Et est peu de choses, dequoy ie parle plus heureusement et excusablement. Il m'aduient souuent, de voir et distinguer plus exactement les conditions de mes amis, qu'ils ne font eux mesmes. I'en ay estonné quelqu'vn, par la pertinence de ma description: et l'ay aduerty de soy. Pour m'estre dés mon enfance, dressé à mirer ma vie dans celle d'autruy, i'ay acquis vne complexion studieuse en cela. Et quand i'y pense, ie laisse eschaper autour de moy peu de choses qui y seruent: contenances, humeurs, discours. I'estudie tout: ce qu'il me faut fuïr, ce qu'il me faut suyure. Ainsin à mes amis, ie descouure par leurs productions, leurs inclinations internes.

Non pour renger cette infinie varieté d'actions si diuerses et si descouppees, à certains genres et chapitres, et distribuer distinctement mes partages et diuisions, en

ENGLISH

This long attention I devote to considering myself trains me to judge others fairly well too, and there are few things I speak about more successfully and more defensibly. It often happens that I see and distinguish my friends' characters more exactly than they do themselves. I have astonished more than one by the aptness of my description and shown him things about himself. Having trained myself from childhood to mirror my life in that of others, I have acquired a studious bent in this. And when I put my mind to it, I let few things that serve this purpose slip by me: bearing, temperament, talk. I study everything: what I must avoid, what I must follow. So I reveal to my friends, from what they show outwardly, their inner inclinations.

I do not do it to arrange this infinite variety of such diverse and disconnected actions into fixed kinds and chapters, or to distribute my lots and di-

19 Antaeus, the giant son of Earth, who regained his strength whenever he touched the ground; Lucan, Pharsalia IV.

FRENCH

classes et regions cognuës, *Sed neque quàm multæ species, et nomina quæ sint, / Est numerus.* Les sçauans parlent, et denotent leurs fantasies, plus specifiquement, et par le menu. Moy, qui n'y voy qu'autant que l'vsage m'en informe, sans regle, presente generalement les miennes, et à tastons. Comme en cecy: Ie prononce ma sentence par articles descousus: c'est chose qui ne se peut dire à la fois, et en bloc. La relation, et la conformité, ne se trouuent point en telles ames que les nostres, basses et communes.

La sagesse est vn bastiment solide et entier, dont chaque piece tient son rang et porte sa marque. *Sola sapientia in se tota conuersa est.* Ie laisse aux artistes, et ne sçay s'ils en viennent à bout, en chose si meslee, si menue et fortuite, de renger en bandes, cette infinie diuersité de visages; et arrester nostre inconstance, et la mettre par ordre. Non seulement ie trouue malaysé, d'attacher nos actions les vnes aux autres: mais chacune à part soy, ie trouue malaysé, de la designer proprement, par quelque qualité principale: tant elles sont doubles et bigarrees à diuers lustres.

Ce qu'on remarque pour rare, au Roy de Macedoine, Perseus, que son esprit, ne s'attachant à aucune condition, alloit errant par tout genre de vie: et representant des mœurs, si essorees et vagabondes qu'il n'estoit cogneu ny de luy ny d'autre, quel homme ce fust, me semble à peu pres conuenir à tout le monde. Et par dessus tous, i'ay veu quelque autre de sa taille, à qui cette conclusion s'appliqueroit plus proprement encore, ce croy-ie. Nulle assiette moyenne: s'emportant tousiours de l'vn à l'autre extreme, par occasions indiuinables: nulle espece de train, sans trauerse, et contrarieté merueilleuse: nulle faculté simple: si que le plus vray-semblablement qu'on en pourra feindre vn iour, ce sera, qu'il affectoit, et estudioit de se rendre cogneu, par estre mescognoissable.

Il faict besoin d'oreilles bien fortes, pour s'ouyr franchement iuger. Et par ce qu'il en est peu, qui le puissent souffrir sans morsure: ceux qui se hazardent de l'entreprendre enuers nous, nous montrent vn singulier effect d'amitié. Car c'est aimer sainement, d'entreprendre à blesser et offencer, pour profiter. Ie trouue rude de iuger celuy là, en qui les mauuaises

ENGLISH

visions neatly into known classes and regions: *But how many kinds there are, and what their names, / there is no counting.* The learned speak and set down their notions more specifically and in detail. I, who see into the matter only as far as practice informs me, without rule, present mine in general terms and gropingly. As here: I pronounce my opinion in disjointed articles; it is something that cannot be said all at once and in a block. Coherence and consistency are not to be found in souls as low and common as ours.[20]

Wisdom is a solid and complete building, each piece of which keeps its place and bears its mark. *Wisdom alone is wholly turned in upon itself.* I leave it to the professionals, and I do not know whether they will succeed in a thing so mixed, so minute and so fortuitous, to sort this infinite diversity of aspects into groups, to pin down our inconstancy and set it in order. Not only do I find it hard to link our actions to one another; I find it hard to designate each one, taken by itself, properly by some principal quality, so double and motley are they, seen in different lights.[21]

It is noted as a rare thing in Perseus, King of Macedonia, that his mind, attaching itself to no one condition, went wandering through every kind of life, and showed a character so flighty and vagrant that neither he nor anyone else knew what sort of man he was. This seems to me to fit almost everyone. And above all I have seen another man of his stature to whom this conclusion would apply still more properly, I believe. No middle position; always swinging from one extreme to the other for reasons no one could guess; no course of any kind without twists and astonishing contradictions; no single faculty. So the most plausible thing that will one day be imagined about him is that he affected and studied to make himself known by being unknowable.

It takes very strong ears to hear oneself judged frankly. And because there are few who can bear it without being stung, those who venture to undertake it with us show us a singular act of friendship. For it is a healthy love that sets out to wound and offend in order to do good. I find it hard to judge a man in whom the bad qualities outweigh

20 Virgil, Georgics II.
21 Cicero, On Ends III.

FRENCH

qualitez surpassent les bonnes. Platon ordonne trois parties, à qui veut examiner l'ame d'vn autre, science, bienueillance, hardiesse.

3.13.18 Quelquefois on me demandoit, à quoy i'eusse pensé estre bon, qui se fust aduisé de se seruir de moy, pendant que i'en auois l'aage: *Dum melior vires sanguis dabat, æmula necdum / Temporibus geminis canebat sparsa senectus.* A rien, fis-ie. Et m'excuse volontiers de ne sçauoir faire chose, qui m'esclaue à autruy. Mais i'eusse dit ses veritez à mon maistre, et eusse contrerollé ses mœurs, s'il eust voulu. Non en gros, par leçons scholastiques, que ie ne sçay point, et n'en vois naistre aucune vraye reformation, en ceux qui les sçauent. Mais les obseruant pas à pas, à toute opportunité: et en iugeant à l'œil, piece à piece, simplement et naturellement. Luy faisant voir quel il est en l'opinion commune: m'opposant à ses flatteurs.

Il n'y a nul de nous, qui ne valust moins que les Roys, s'il estoit ainsi continuellement corrompu, comme ils sont, de cette canaille de gens. Comment, si Alexandre, ce grand et Roy et philosophe, ne peut s'en deffendre? I'eusse eu assez de fidelité, de iugement, et de liberté, pour cela. Ce seroit vn office sans nom; autrement il perdroit son effect et sa grace. Et est vn roolle qui ne peut indifferemment appartenir à tous. Car la verité mesme, n'a pas ce priuilege, d'estre employee à toute heure, et en toute sorte: son vsage tout noble qu'il est, a ses circonscriptions, et limites.

Il aduient souuent, comme le monde est, qu'on la lasche à l'oreille du Prince, non seulement sans fruict, mais dommageablement, et encore iniustement. Et ne me fera lon pas accroire, qu'vne sainte remonstrance, ne puisse estre appliquee vitieusement: et que l'interest de la substance, ne doyue souuent ceder à l'interest de la forme. Ie voudrois à ce mestier, vn homme contant de sa fortune, *Quod sit, esse velit, nihilque malit:* et nay de moyenne fortune. D'autant, que d'vne part, il n'auroit point de crainte de toucher viuement et profondement le cœur du maistre, pour ne perdre par là, le cours de son auancement. Et d'autre part, pour estre d'vne condition

ENGLISH

the good. Plato prescribes three qualities for anyone who would examine another's soul: knowledge, goodwill, boldness.[22]

I was sometimes asked what I would have thought myself good for, if someone had taken it into his head to make use of me while I was still of an age for it: *While better blood gave me strength, and envious old age / had not yet sprinkled white over both my temples.* "For nothing," I said. And I readily excuse myself for not knowing how to do anything that would make me a slave to another. But I would have told my master the truth about himself and kept watch on his conduct, if he had wanted it. Not wholesale, through scholastic lessons, which I do not know, and from which I see no true reform arise in those who do. But by observing his conduct step by step, at every opportunity, judging it by eye, piece by piece, simply and naturally, making him see what he is in common opinion, standing up to his flatterers.[23]

There is not one of us who would not be worth less than kings if he were continually corrupted, as they are, by that rabble. How could it be otherwise, when even Alexander, that great king and philosopher, could not defend himself against them? I would have had enough loyalty, judgment and freedom for the task. It would be an office without a name; otherwise it would lose its effect and its grace. And it is a role that cannot belong indiscriminately to everyone. For truth itself does not have the privilege of being used at any hour and in any manner. Its use, noble as it is, has its bounds and limits.

It often happens, the world being what it is, that truth is let slip into the Prince's ear not only fruitlessly but harmfully, and unjustly besides. And no one will make me believe that a holy remonstrance cannot be applied wrongly, or that the interest of substance must not often give way to the interest of form. For this trade I would want a man content with his fortune, *Who would wish to be what he is, and prefer nothing else,* and born of middling fortune. For on the one hand he would not hold back from touching his master's heart keenly and deeply for fear of losing his chances of advancement. And on the other, being of middling

22 Plato, Gorgias.
23 Virgil, Aeneid V.

FRENCH	ENGLISH
moyenne, il auroit plus aysee communication à toute sorte de gens.	condition, he would have easier communication with all sorts of people.[24]
Ie le voudroy à vn homme seul: car respandre le priuilege de cette liberté et priuauté à plusieurs, engendreroit vne nuisible irreuerence. Ouy, et de celuy là, ie requerroy sur tout la fidelité du silence.	I would want this given to one man only, for spreading the privilege of such freedom and familiarity among several would breed a harmful irreverence. Yes, and from that man I would require above all the loyalty of silence.
3.13.19 Vn Roy n'est pas à croire, quand il se vante de sa constance, à attendre le rencontre de l'ennemy, pour sa gloire: si pour son profit et amendement, il ne peut souffrir la liberté des parolles d'vn amy, qui n'ont autre effort, que de luy pincer l'ouye: le reste de leur effect estant en sa main. Or il n'est aucune condition d'homme, qui ait si grand besoing, que ceux-là, de vrais et libres aduertissemens.	A king is not to be believed when he boasts of his steadfastness in awaiting the enemy's attack for the sake of his glory, if for his own profit and improvement he cannot bear a friend's free words, which have no other force than to sting his ears, the rest of their effect being in his own hands. Now there is no condition of men that needs true and free admonitions as much as kings do.
Ils soutiennent vne vie publique, et ont à agreer à l'opinion de tant de spectateurs, que comme on a accoustumé de leur taire tout ce qui les diuertit de leur route, ils se trouuent sans le sentir, engagez en la haine et detestation de leurs peuples, pour des occasions souuent, qu'ils eussent peu euiter, à nul interest de leurs plaisirs mesme, qui les en eust aduisez et redressez à temps. Communement leurs fauorits regardent à soy, plus qu'au maistre. Et il leur va de bon: d'autant qu'à la verité, la plus part des offices de la vraye amitié, sont enuers le souuerain, en vn rude et perilleux essay.	They sustain a public life and have to please the opinion of so many spectators that, since people are in the habit of keeping quiet before them about anything that might turn them from their course, they find themselves, without noticing it, caught up in the hatred and detestation of their peoples. Often this is for reasons they could have avoided at no cost even to their pleasures, if someone had warned them and set them right in time. Their favorites commonly look out for themselves more than for their master. And they do well by it, since in truth most of the offices of true friendship toward a sovereign are a rough and perilous trial.
De maniere, qu'il y fait besoin, non seulement de beaucoup d'affection et de franchise, mais encore de courage.	So what is needed is not only a great deal of affection and frankness, but courage as well.

MY EXPERIENCE OF HEALTH

Distrusting medicine, Montaigne describes the habits by which he has kept his health.

FRENCH	ENGLISH
3.13.20 En fin, toute cette fricassee que ie barbouille ici, n'est qu'vn registre des essais de ma vie: qui est pour l'interne santé exemplaire assez, à prendre l'instruction à contrepoil. Mais quant à la santé corporelle, personne ne peut fournir d'experience plus vtile que moy: qui la presente pure, nullement corrompue et alteree par art, et par opination. L'experience est proprement sur son fumier au subiect de la medecine, où la raison luy quitte toute la place. Tybere disoit, que quiconque auoit vescu	In the end, all this hodgepodge I am scribbling here is only a record of the trials of my life. For inner health it is exemplary enough, if one takes its lessons the other way round. But as for bodily health, no one can furnish more useful experience than I, who present it pure, in no way corrupted or altered by art or by opinion. In the matter of medicine, experience is truly on its own dunghill, where reason yields it the whole field. Tiberius

24 Martial, Epigrams X.47.

FRENCH

vingt ans, se deuoit respondre des choses qui luy estoient nuisibles ou salutaires, et se sçauoir conduire sans medecine.

Et le pouuoit auoir apprins de Socrates: lequel conseillant à ses disciples soigneusement, et comme vn tres principal estude, l'estude de leur santé, adioustoit, qu'il estoit malaisé, qu'vn homme d'entendement, prenant garde à ses exercices à son boire et à son manger, ne discernast mieux que tout medecin, ce qui luy estoit bon ou mauuais. Si fait la medecine profession d'auoir tousiours l'experience, pour touche de son operation. Ainsi Platon auoit raison de dire, que pour estre vray medecin, il seroit necessaire que celuy qui l'entreprendroit, eust passé par toutes les maladies, qu'il veut guerir, et par tous les accidens et circonstances dequoy il doit iuger. C'est raison qu'ils prennent la verole, s'ils la veulent sçauoir penser. Vrayement ie m'en fierois à celuy là.

Car les autres nous guident, comme celuy qui peint les mers, les escueils et les ports, estant assis, sur sa table, et y faict promener le modele d'vn nauire en toute seurté. Iettez-le à l'effect, il ne sçait par où s'y prendre. Ils font telle description de nos maux, que faict vn trompette de ville, qui crie vn cheual ou vn chien perdu, tel poil, telle hauteur, telle oreille: mais presentez le luy, il ne le cognoit pas pourtant.

Pour Dieu, que la medecine me face vn iour quelque bon et perceptible secours, voir comme ie crieray de bonne foy, *Tandem efficaci do manus scientiæ!* Les arts qui promettent de nous tenir le corps en santé, et l'ame en santé, nous promettent beaucoup: mais aussi n'en est-il point, qui tiennent moins ce qu'elles promettent. Et en nostre temps, ceux qui font profession de ces arts entre nous, en montrent moins les effects que tous autres hommes. On peut dire d'eux, pour le plus, qu'ils vendent les drogues medecinales: mais qu'ils soient medecins, cela ne peut on dire. I'ay assez vescu, pour mettre en comte l'vsage, qui m'a conduict si loing. Pour qui en voudra gouster: i'en ay faict l'essay, son eschançon.

En voyci quelques articles, comme la souuenance me les fournira. Ie n'ay point de façon, qui ne soit allee variant selon les accidents. Mais i'enregistre celles, que i'ay plus souuent veu en train: qui ont eu plus de possession en moy iusqu'à cette heure.

ENGLISH

used to say that anyone who had lived twenty years ought to be able to answer for himself about what was harmful or wholesome to him, and to know how to manage himself without medicine.

He may have learned this from Socrates. Socrates earnestly advised his disciples to study their health as a most important study, and added that it was hard for a man of understanding who paid attention to his exercise, his drinking and his eating not to discern better than any physician what was good or bad for him. And indeed medicine professes always to use experience as the touchstone of its practice. So Plato was right to say that to be a true physician, whoever took it up would need to have gone through all the illnesses he wants to cure, and all the accidents and circumstances he has to judge. It is only reasonable that physicians should catch the pox if they want to know how to treat it. That is a physician I would truly trust.

For the others guide us like a man who paints seas, reefs and harbors while sitting at his table, and moves a model ship about on it in perfect safety. Throw him into the real thing, and he does not know where to begin. They describe our ills the way a town crier cries a lost horse or dog: such a coat, such a height, such ears. But bring the animal to him, and he still does not recognize it.

For God's sake, let medicine some day give me some real and perceptible help, and see how I will cry out in good faith: *At last I surrender to an effective science!* The arts that promise to keep the body in health and the soul in health promise us a great deal; but there are none that keep their promises less. And in our time those among us who profess these arts show their results less than any other men. The most one can say of them is that they sell medicinal drugs; that they are physicians, one cannot say. I have lived long enough to give an account of the habits that have brought me so far. For anyone who wants a taste of them, I have tried them first, as their cupbearer.[25]

Here are some articles of it, as my memory supplies them. I have no habit that has not kept varying with circumstances. But I record those I have most often seen at work, which have had the strongest hold on me up to now.

25 Horace, Epodes 17.

FRENCH

3.13.21 Ma forme de vie, est pareille en maladie comme en santé: mesme lict, mesmes heures, mesmes viandes me seruent, et mesme breuuage. Ie n'y adiouste du tout rien, que la moderation du plus et du moins, selon ma force et appetit. Ma santé, c'est maintenir sans destourbier mon estat accoustumé. Ie voy que la maladie m'en desloge d'vn costé: si ie crois les medecins, ils m'en destourneront de l'autre: et par fortune, et par art, me voyla hors de ma routte. Ie ne crois rien plus certainement que cecy: que ie ne sçauroy estre offencé par l'vsage des choses que i'ay si long temps accoustumees. C'est à la coustume de donner forme à nostre vie, telle qu'il luy plaist, elle peult tout en cela.

C'est le breuuage de Circé, qui diuersifie nostre nature, comme bon luy semble. Combien de nations, et à trois pas de nous, estiment ridicule la craincte du serein, qui nous blesse si apparemment: et nos bateliers et nos paysans s'en moquent. Vous faites malade vn Alleman, de le coucher sur vn matelas: comme vn Italien sur la plume, et vn François sans rideau et sans feu. L'estomach d'vn Espagnol, ne dure pas à nostre forme de manger, ny le nostre à boire à la Souysse. Vn Allemand me feit plaisir à Auguste, de combattre l'incommodité de nos fouyers, par ce mesme argument, dequoy nous nous seruons ordinairement à condamner leurs poyles.

Car à la verité, cette chaleur croupie, et puis la senteur de cette matiere reschauffée, dequoy ils sont composez, enteste la plus part de ceux qui n'y sont experimentez: moy non. Mais au demeurant, estant cette chaleur egale, constante et vniuerselle, sans lueur, sans fumée, sans le vent que l'ouuerture de nos cheminées nous apporte, elle a bien par ailleurs, dequoy se comparer à la nostre. Que n'imitons nous l'architecture Romaine? Car on dit, qu'anciennement, le feu ne se faisoit en leurs maisons que par le dehors, et au pied d'icelles: d'où s'inspiroit la chaleur à tout le logis, par les tuyaux practiquez dans l'espais du mur, lesquels alloient embrassant les lieux qui en deuoient estre eschauffez.

Ce que i'ay veu clairement signifié, ie ne sçay où, en Seneque. Cestuy-cy, m'oyant louër les commoditez, et beautez de sa ville: qui le merite certes: commença à me plaindre, dequoy i'auois à m'en eslongner. Et des

ENGLISH

My way of life is the same in sickness as in health: the same bed, the same hours, the same food serve me, and the same drink. I add nothing at all to it except moderation in the more or the less, according to my strength and appetite. For me, health means keeping my accustomed state undisturbed. I see that sickness dislodges me from it on one side; if I believe the physicians, they will turn me away from it on the other; and so, by fortune and by art, I am thrown off my course. I believe nothing more firmly than this: that I cannot be harmed by using things I have been accustomed to for so long. It is for custom to give our life whatever form it pleases; in this it can do everything.

It is Circe's potion, which varies our nature as it sees fit. How many nations, even three steps away from us, think ridiculous our fear of the evening damp, which so plainly harms us; and our boatmen and peasants laugh at it. You make a German ill by putting him to bed on a mattress, as you make an Italian ill on a feather bed and a Frenchman without curtains and without a fire. A Spaniard's stomach cannot stand our way of eating, nor ours drinking in the Swiss manner. A German at Augsburg amused me by attacking the inconvenience of our fireplaces with the very argument we usually use to condemn their stoves.[26]

For in truth that stagnant heat, and then the smell of the heated material the stoves are made of, gives a headache to most people who are not used to them, though not to me. But otherwise, since this heat is even, constant and spread throughout, without glare, without smoke, without the draft that the opening of our chimneys lets in, it bears comparison with ours on other counts. Why do we not imitate Roman architecture? For they say that in ancient times the fire in their houses was made only outside, at the foot of the house, and from there the heat was breathed into the whole dwelling through pipes built into the thickness of the walls, which ran around the rooms that were to be heated.

I have seen this clearly indicated somewhere in Seneca, I don't know where. This German, hearing me praise the conveniences and beauties of his city, which certainly deserves it, began to pity me

26 Montaigne passed through Augsburg in 1580 on his journey to Italy.

FRENCH

premiers inconueniens qu'il m'allega, ce fut la poisanteur de teste, que m'apporteroient les cheminées ailleurs. Il auoit ouï faire cette plainte à quelqu'vn, et nous l'attachoit, estant priué par l'vsage de l'apperceuoir chez luy. Toute chaleur qui vient du feu, m'affoiblit et m'appesantit. Si disoit Euenus, que le meilleur condiment de la vie, estoit le feu. Ie prens plustost toute autre façon d'eschaper au froid.

3.13.22 Nous craignons les vins au bas: en Portugal, cette fumée est en delices, et est le breuuage des Princes. En somme, chasque nation a plusieurs coustumes et vsances, qui sont non seulement incognues, mais farouches et miraculeuses à quelque autre nation. Que ferons nous à ce peuple, qui ne fait recepte que de tesmoignages imprimez, qui ne croit les hommes s'ils ne sont en liure, ny la verité, si elle n'est d'aage competant? Nous mettons en dignité nos sottises, quand nous les mettons en moule. Il y a bien pour luy, autre poix, de dire; ie l'ay leu: que si vous dictes: ie l'ay ouy dire.

Mais moy, qui ne mescrois non plus la bouche, que la main des hommes: et qui sçay qu'on escript autant indiscretement qu'on parle: et qui estime ce siecle, comme vn autre passé, i'allegue aussi volontiers vn mien amy, que Aulugelle, et que Macrobe: et ce que i'ay veu, que ce qu'ils ont escrit. Et comme ils tiennent de la vertu, qu'elle n'est pas plus grande, pour estre plus longue: i'estime de mesme de la verité, que pour estre plus vieille, elle n'est pas plus sage. Ie dis souuent que c'est pure sottise, qui nous fait courir apres les exemples estrangers et scholastiques. Leur fertilité est pareille à cette heure à celle du temps d'Homere et de Platon.

Mais n'est-ce pas, que nous cherchons plus l'honneur de l'allegation, que la verité du discours? Comme si c'estoit plus d'emprunter, de la boutique de Vascosan, ou de Plantin, nos preuues, que de ce qui se voit en nostre village. Ou bien certes, que nous n'auons pas l'esprit, d'esplucher, et faire valoir, ce qui se passe deuant nous, et le iuger assez vifuement, pour le tirer en exemple. Car si nous disons, que l'authorité nous manque, pour donner foy à nostre tesmoignage, nous le disons hors de propos.

D'autant qu'à mon aduis, des plus ordinaires choses, et plus communes, et cognuës, si nous sçauons trouuer leur

ENGLISH

for having to leave it. And among the first drawbacks he cited was the heaviness of head that the fireplaces elsewhere would give me. He had heard someone make this complaint and was pinning it on us, since habit kept him from noticing it at home. All heat that comes from a fire weakens me and makes me heavy. And yet Evenus said that fire was the best seasoning of life. I prefer any other way of escaping the cold.[27]

We are wary of wine from the bottom of the cask; in Portugal that heady flavor is a delight and the drink of princes. In short, each nation has many customs and usages that are not only unknown but strange and astonishing to some other nation. What are we to do with people who accept only printed testimony, who do not believe men unless they are in a book, nor truth unless it is of a respectable age? We dignify our follies when we put them into print. For such people it carries quite another weight to say "I have read it" than to say "I have heard it said."

But I do not disbelieve men's mouths any more than their hands. I know that people write as rashly as they speak, and I think this age as good as any past one. So I cite a friend of mine as readily as Aulus Gellius or Macrobius, and what I have seen as readily as what they have written. And as they hold that virtue is no greater for lasting longer, so I hold that truth is no wiser for being older. I often say that it is sheer folly that makes us run after foreign and scholastic examples. They are as plentiful now as in the time of Homer and Plato.[28]

But is it not that we seek the honor of quoting more than the truth of the argument? As if it counted for more to borrow our proofs from the shop of Vascosan or Plantin than from what can be seen in our own village. Or else, surely, that we do not have the wit to sift and make the most of what happens before our eyes, and to judge it keenly enough to make an example of it. For if we say that we lack the authority to make our testimony believed, we are speaking beside the point.[29]

Because in my opinion the greatest miracles of nature and the most marvelous examples, espe-

27 Evenus of Paros, Greek elegiac poet of the 5th century BC.
28 Aulus Gellius (2nd century AD) and Macrobius (5th century AD), Latin authors of miscellanies full of anecdotes and quotations.
29 Michel de Vascosan and Christophe Plantin, leading printers of Paris and Antwerp.

FRENCH

iour, se peuuent former les plus grands miracles de nature, et les plus merueilleux exemples, notamment sur le subiect des actions humaines.

3.13.23 Or sur mon subiect, laissant les exemples que ie sçay par les liures: et ce que dit Aristote d'Andron Argien, qu'il trauersoit sans boire les arides sablons de la Lybie: vn Gentil-homme qui s'est acquitté dignement de plusieurs charges, disoit où i'estois qu'il estoit allé de Madrid à Lisbonne, en plain esté, sans boire. Il se porte vigoureusement pour son aage, et n'a rien d'extraordinaire en l'vsage de sa vie, que cecy, d'estre deux ou trois mois, voire vn an, ce m'a-il dit, sans boire. Il sent de l'alteration, mais il la laisse passer: et tient, que c'est vn appetit qui s'alanguit aiséement de soy-mesme: et boit plus par caprice, que pour le besoing, ou pour le plaisir.

3.13.24 En voicy d'vn autre. Il n'y a pas long temps, que ie rencontray l'vn des plus sçauans hommes de France, entre ceux de non mediocre fortune, estudiant au coin d'vne sale, qu'on luy auoit rembarré de tapisserie: et autour de luy, vn tabut de ses valets, plain de licence. Il me dit, et Seneque quasi autant de soy, qu'il faisoit son profit de ce tintamarre: comme si battu de ce bruict, il se ramenast et reserrast plus en soy, pour la contemplation, et que cette tempeste de voix repercutast ses pensées au dedans.

Estant escholier à Padoüe, il eut son estude si long temps logé à la batterie des coches, et du tumulte de la place, qu'il se forma non seulement au mespris, mais à l'vsage du bruit, pour le seruice de ses estudes. Socrates respondit à Alcibiades, s'estonnant comme il pouuoit porter le continuel tintamarre de la teste de sa femme: Comme ceux, qui sont accoustumez à l'ordinaire bruit des rouës à puiser de l'eau. Ie suis bien au contraire: i'ay l'esprit tendre et facile à prendre l'essor. Quand il est empesché à part soy, le moindre bourdonnement de mousche l'assassine.

3.13.25 Seneque en sa ieunesse, ayant mordu chaudement, à l'exemple de Sextius, de ne manger chose, qui eust prins mort, s'en passoit dans vn an, auec plaisir, comme il dit. Et s'en deporta seulement, pour n'estre soupçonné, d'emprunter cette regle d'aucunes religions nouuelles, qui la semoyent. Il print quand et quand des preceptes d'Attalus, de ne se coucher plus sur des loudiers, qui enfondrent: et employa iusqu'à la vieillesse ceux qui ne cedent point au corps. Ce que l'vsage de son temps, luy

ENGLISH

cially on the subject of human actions, can be made out of the most ordinary, common and familiar things, if we know how to see them in the right light.

Now, on my subject, leaving aside the examples I know from books, and what Aristotle says of Andron of Argos, that he crossed the arid sands of Libya without drinking: a gentleman who has worthily discharged several offices said in my presence that he had gone from Madrid to Lisbon in midsummer without drinking. He is vigorous for his age and has nothing extraordinary in his way of life except this: he goes two or three months, even a year, he told me, without drinking. He feels thirst, but lets it pass, and holds that it is an appetite that easily dies down of itself. He drinks more from whim than from need or for pleasure.

Here is an example of another kind. Not long ago I came upon one of the most learned men in France, among those of no mean fortune, studying in a corner of a hall that had been partitioned off for him with tapestry, and around him an uproar of his servants, taking every liberty. He told me, and Seneca says almost as much of himself, that he profited from this din: as if, battered by the noise, he drew back and gathered himself more closely into himself for contemplation, and this storm of voices drove his thoughts back inward.

When he was a student at Padua, his study was lodged so long amid the clatter of coaches and the tumult of the square that he trained himself not only to scorn noise but to make use of it in the service of his studies. Alcibiades once wondered how Socrates could bear the endless din of his wife's temper, and Socrates answered: "As those do who are used to the ordinary noise of wheels drawing water." I am quite the opposite. My mind is delicate and quick to take flight. When it is busy on its own, the slightest buzzing of a fly murders it.

Seneca in his youth eagerly took up the example of Sextius and ate nothing that had been killed. He did without it for a year, with pleasure, as he says, and gave it up only so as not to be suspected of borrowing this rule from certain new religions that were spreading it. At the same time he adopted Attalus's precept of no longer lying on mattresses that sink under you, and used, right into

FRENCH

faict compter à rudesse, le nostre, nous le faict tenir à mollesse.

3.13.26 Regardez la difference du viure de mes valets à bras, à la mienne: les Scythes et les Indes n'ont rien plus eslongné de ma force, et de ma forme. Ie sçay, auoir retiré de l'aumosne, des enfans pour m'en seruir, qui bien tost apres m'ont quicté et ma cuisine, et leur liurée: seulement, pour se rendre à leur premiere vie. Et en trouuay vn, amassant depuis, des moules, emmy la voirie, pour son disner, que par priere, ny par menasse, ie ne sçeu distraire de la saueur et douceur, qu'il trouuoit en l'indigence. Les gueux ont leurs magnificences, et leurs voluptez, comme les riches: et, dit-on, leurs dignitez et ordres politiques. Ce sont effects de l'accoustumance.

Elle nous peut duire, non seulement à telle forme qu'il luy plaist (pourtant, disent les sages, nous faut-il planter à la meilleure, qu'elle nous facilitera incontinent) mais aussi au changement et à la variation: qui est le plus noble, et le plus vtile de ses apprentissages. La meilleure de mes complexions corporelles, c'est d'estre flexible et peu opiniastre. I'ay des inclinations plus propres et ordinaires, et plus aggreables, que d'autres. Mais auec bien peu d'effort, ie m'en destourne, et me coule aiséement à la façon contraire. Vn ieune homme, doit troubler ses regles, pour esueiller sa vigueur: la garder de moisir et s'apoltronir. Et n'est train de vie, si sot et si debile, que celuy qui se conduict par ordonnance et discipline.

Ad primum lapidem vectari cùm placet, hora
Sumitur ex libro; si prurit frictus ocelli
Angulus, inspecta genesi collyria quærit. Il se reiettera souuent aux excez mesme, s'il m'en croit: autrement, la moindre desbauche le ruyne. Il se rend incommode et desaggreable en conuersation. La plus contraire qualité à vn honneste homme, c'est la delicatesse et obligation à certaine façon particuliere. Et elle est particuliere, si elle n'est ployable, et soupple. Il y a de la honte, de laisser à faire par impuissance, ou de n'oser, ce qu'on voit faire à ses compaignons. Que telles gens gardent leur cuisine. Par tout ailleurs, il est indecent: mais à vn homme de guerre, il est vitieux et insupportable.

ENGLISH

old age, the kind that do not yield to the body. What the usage of his time made him count as hardness, ours makes us consider softness.[30]

Look at the difference between my laborers' way of living and mine: the Scythians and the Indians have nothing further removed from my strength and my ways. I know that I have taken children off begging to serve me, who soon afterward left me, my kitchen and their livery, simply to go back to their former life. And later I found one of them gathering mussels in the refuse for his dinner, and neither by entreaty nor by threat could I draw him away from the savor and sweetness he found in poverty. Beggars have their magnificences and their pleasures, like the rich, and, they say, their dignities and political orders. These are the effects of habit.

Habit can shape us not only to whatever form it pleases (and that is why, say the wise, we must fix ourselves on the best, which habit will at once make easy for us), but also to change and variation, which is the noblest and most useful of its lessons. The best of my bodily qualities is that I am flexible and not very obstinate. I have inclinations that are more my own, more usual and more agreeable than others; but with very little effort I turn away from them and slip easily into the opposite way. A young man should upset his rules to rouse his vigor and keep it from going moldy and slack. And there is no way of life so foolish and so feeble as one conducted by prescription and discipline.

If he wants to ride out as far as the first milestone, the hour
is taken from his book; if the corner of his eye itches from rubbing,
he consults his horoscope before seeking eye-salve. He will often throw himself even into excess, if he takes my advice; otherwise the slightest indulgence will ruin him. He becomes awkward and disagreeable in company. The quality most contrary to a man of good breeding is fastidiousness and being tied to some particular way of doing things. And it is particular if it is not pliable and supple. It is shameful to leave undone, from incapacity or from not daring, what one sees one's

30 Attalus was a Stoic philosopher whose teaching Seneca followed.

FRENCH	ENGLISH
	companions doing. Let such people stay in their kitchens. Everywhere else this is unbecoming; but in a soldier it is a vice and intolerable.[31]
Lequel, comme disoit Philopœmen, se doit accoustumer à toute diuersité, et inegalité de vie.	For a soldier, as Philopoemen said, should accustom himself to every variety and unevenness of life.

THE HOLD OF HABIT

Habit has made him depend on certain comforts, though flexibility is the better rule.

FRENCH	ENGLISH
3.13.27 Quoy que i'aye esté dressé autant qu'on a peu, à la liberté et à l'indifference, si est-ce que par nonchalance, m'estant en vieillissant, plus arresté sur certaines formes (mon aage est hors d'institution, et n'a desormais dequoy regarder ailleurs qu'à se maintenir) la coustume a desia sans y penser, imprimé si bien en moy son charactere, en certaines choses, que i'appelle excez de m'en despartir.	I was trained as much as possible to freedom and indifference. Nevertheless, through carelessness, I have settled more on certain ways as I grew old (my age is past education and has nothing left to look to but keeping itself going), and custom has already, without my noticing, so stamped its character on me in certain things that I call it excess to depart from them.
Et sans m'essayer, ne puis, ny dormir sur iour, ny faire collation entre les repas, ny desieuner, ny m'aller coucher sans grand interualle, comme de trois heures, apres le soupper, ny faire des enfans, qu'auant le sommeil: ny les faire debout: ny porter ma sueur: ny m'abreuuer d'eau pure ou de vin pur: ny me tenir nud teste long temps: ny me faire tondre apres disner. Et me passerois autant mal-aisément de mes gans, que de ma chemise: et de me lauer à l'issuë de table, et à mon leuer: et de ciel et rideaux à mon lict, comme de choses bien necessaires. Ie disnerois sans nape: mais à l'Alemande sans seruiette blanche, tres-incommodéement.	And without an effort I cannot sleep by day, nor eat between meals, nor have breakfast, nor go to bed without a long interval, of some three hours, after supper, nor make children except before sleeping, nor make them standing up, nor bear my own sweat, nor quench my thirst with pure water or pure wine, nor stay bareheaded for long, nor have my hair cut after dinner. And I would do without my gloves as uneasily as without my shirt, and without washing when I leave the table and when I get up, and without a canopy and curtains on my bed, as things quite necessary. I could dine without a tablecloth; but without a clean napkin, in the German manner, very uncomfortably.
Ie les souïlle plus qu'eux et les Italiens ne font: et m'ayde peu de cullier, et de fourchete. Ie plains qu'on n'aye suyuy vn train, que i'ay veu commencer à l'exemple des Roys: Qu'on nous changeast de seruiette, selon les seruices, comme d'assiette. Nous tenons de ce laborieux soldat Marius, que vieillissant, il deuint delicat en son boire: et ne le prenoit qu'en vne sienne couppe particuliere. Moy ie me laisse aller de mesme à certaine forme de verres, et ne boy pas volontiers en verre commun. Non plus que d'vne main commune. Tout metail m'y desplaist au prix d'vne matiere claire et transparante. Que mes yeux y tastent aussi selon leur capacité. Ie dois plusieurs telles mollesses à l'vsage.	I soil napkins more than the Germans and the Italians do, and I make little use of spoon and fork. I regret that people have not kept up a practice I saw begun after the example of kings: that our napkins should be changed with each course, like our plates. We are told of that hardworking soldier Marius that as he grew old he became fastidious about his drink and would take it only from a particular cup of his own. I too let myself favor a certain shape of glass, and I do not like drinking from a common glass, any more than from a common hand. All metal displeases me compared with a clear, transparent material. Let my eyes taste as

31 Juvenal, Satires VI.

FRENCH

ENGLISH

well, as far as they can. I owe several such softnesses to habit.

Nature m'a aussi d'autre part apporté les siennes: comme de ne soustenir plus deux plains repas en vn iour, sans surcharger mon estomach: ny l'abstinence pure de l'vn des repas: sans me remplir de vents, assecher ma bouche, estonner mon appetit. De m'offenser d'vn long serein. Car depuis quelques années, aux couruées de la guerre, quand toute la nuict y court, comme il aduient communément, apres cinq ou six heures, l'estomach me commence à troubler, auec vehemente douleur de teste: et n'arriue point au iour, sans vomir. Comme les autres s'en vont desieuner, ie m'en vay dormir: et au partir de là, aussi gay qu'au parauant.

Nature, on the other hand, has also brought me her own: for instance, I can no longer stand two full meals in one day without overloading my stomach, nor go without one of the meals entirely without filling up with wind, drying my mouth and stunning my appetite. And I am harmed by long exposure to the night air. For some years now, on night expeditions in the wars, when they last all night, as commonly happens, after five or six hours my stomach begins to be upset, with a violent headache, and I do not reach daylight without vomiting. When the others go off to breakfast, I go off to sleep, and afterward I am as cheerful as before.

I'auois tousiours appris, que le serein ne s'espandoit qu'à la naissance de la nuict: mais hantant ces années passées familierement, et long temps, vn seigneur imbu de cette creance, que le serein est plus aspre et dangereux sur l'inclination du soleil, vne heure ou deux auant son coucher: lequel il euite songneusement, et mesprise celuy de la nuict: il a cuidé m'imprimer, non tant son discours, que son sentiment. Quoy, que le doubte mesme, et l'inquisition frappe nostre imagination, et nous change? Ceux qui cedent tout à coup à ces pentes, attirent l'entiere ruine sur eux. Et plains plusieurs Gentilshommes, qui par la sottise de leurs medecins, se sont mis en chartre tous ieunes et entiers.

I had always been taught that the evening damp spread only at nightfall. But in these past years I spent much time, and for a long while, with a lord imbued with the belief that the damp is harsher and more dangerous as the sun goes down, an hour or two before it sets. He carefully avoids it and scorns the damp of the night. He very nearly impressed on me not so much his reasoning as his feeling. What! Can mere doubt and inquiry strike our imagination and change us? Those who give in all at once to these tendencies bring complete ruin on themselves. And I pity several gentlemen who, through the folly of their physicians, have shut themselves up like prisoners while still young and sound.

Encores vaudroit-il mieux souffrir vn reume, que de perdre pour iamais, par desaccoustumance, le commerce de la vie commune, en action de si grand vsage. Fascheuse science: qui nous descrie les plus douces heures du iour. Estendons nostre possession iusques aux derniers moyens. Le plus souuent on s'y durcit, en s'opiniastrant, et corrige lon sa complexion: comme fit Cæsar le haut mal, à force de le mespriser et corrompre. On se doit adonner aux meilleures regles, mais non pas s'y asseruir: si ce n'est à celles, s'il y en a quelqu'vne, ausquelles l'obligation et seruitude soit vtile.

Even so, it would be better to suffer a cold than to lose forever, through disuse, the company of ordinary life in an activity of such common use. A troublesome science, that spoils for us the sweetest hours of the day! Let us stretch our hold on life to its very last means. Most often one hardens oneself by persisting, and corrects one's constitution, as Caesar did with his epilepsy, by dint of scorning and thwarting it. One should devote oneself to the best rules, but not enslave oneself to them, except to those, if there are any, to which obligation and servitude are useful.

3.13.28 Et les Roys et les philosophes fientent, et les dames aussi. Les vies publiques se doiuent à la ceremonie: la mienne obscure et priuée, iouït de toute dispence naturelle. Soldat et Gascon, sont qualitez aussi, vn peu subiettes à l'indiscretion. Parquoy, ie diray cecy de cette action: qu'il

Kings and philosophers defecate, and so do ladies. Public lives are owed to ceremony; mine, obscure and private, enjoys every natural dispensation. Soldier and Gascon are also qualities a little given to indiscretion. So I will say this of that function: it

FRENCH

est besoing de la renuoyer à certaines heures, prescriptes et nocturnes, et s'y forcer par coustume, et assubiectir, comme i'ay faict. Mais non s'assuiectir, comme i'ay faict en vieillissant, au soing de particuliere commodité de lieu, et de siege, pour ce seruice: et le rendre empeschant par longueur et mollesse. Toutesfois aux plus sales offices, est-il pas aucunement excusable, de requerir plus de soing et de netteté?

Naturâ homo mundum et elegans animal est. De toutes les actions naturelles, c'est celle, que ie souffre plus mal volontiers m'estre interrompue. I'ay veu beaucoup de gens de guerre, incommodez du desreiglement de leur ventre. Tandis que le mien et moy, ne nous faillions iamais au poinct de nostre assignation: qui est au sault du lict, si quelque violente occupation, ou maladie ne nous trouble.

3.13.29 Ie ne iuge donc point, comme ie disois, où les malades se puissent mettre mieux en seurté, qu'en se tenant coy, dans le train de vie, où ils se sont esleuez et nourris. Le changement, quel qu'il soit, estonne et blesse. Allez croire que les chastaignes nuisent à vn Perigourdin, ou à vn Lucquois: et le laict et le fromage aux gens de la montaigne. On leur va ordonnant, vne non seulement nouuelle, mais contraire forme de vie. Mutation qu'vn sain ne pourroit souffrir. Ordonnez de l'eau à vn Breton de soixante dix ans: enfermez dans vne estuue vn homme de marine: deffendez le promener à vn laquay Basque: ils les priuent de mouuement et en fin d'air et de lumiere. An viuere tanti est?

/ Cogimur à suetis animum suspendere rebus,
Atque, vt viuamus, viuere desinimus:
Hos superesse reor, quibus et spirabilis aer,
Et lux, qua regimur, redditur ipsa grauis. S'ils ne font autre bien, ils font aumoins cecy, qu'ils preparent de bonne heure les patiens à la mort, leur sapant peu à peu et retranchant l'vsage de la vie.

ENGLISH

should be put off to certain set hours, at night, and one should force and subject oneself to them by habit, as I have done. But one should not subject oneself, as I have done in growing old, to worrying about a particular comfort of place and seat for this service, and make it a nuisance by dawdling and softness. Still, in the dirtiest functions, is it not somewhat excusable to require more care and cleanliness?

By nature man is a clean and dainty animal. Of all natural functions, it is the one I least willingly allow to be interrupted. I have seen many soldiers inconvenienced by the irregularity of their bowels. Mine and I, on the other hand, never fail to keep our appointment, which is the moment I jump out of bed, unless some violent business or illness disturbs us.[32]

So I do not think, as I was saying, that sick people can put themselves anywhere safer than by keeping quietly to the way of life in which they were raised and brought up. Change of any kind stuns and wounds. Go and believe that chestnuts harm a man from Périgord or from Lucca, and milk and cheese the mountain people! They go about prescribing for them a way of life that is not just new but contrary—a change a healthy man could not bear. Prescribe water to a Breton of seventy, shut a sailor up in a steam room, forbid a Basque footman to walk: they deprive them of movement, and in the end of air and light. Is life worth so much?

/ We are forced to wean our minds from the things we are used to,
and to stay alive we cease to live.
Shall I count those still living for whom the air they breathe
and the very light that rules us have become a burden? If physicians do no other good, they at least do this: they prepare their patients for death in good time, undermining and cutting back, little by little, their enjoyment of life.[33]

32 Seneca, Letters 92.
33 Maximianus, Elegies I, then attributed to the Roman poet Cornelius Gallus.

TRUSTING APPETITE

He trusts his desires over physicians and finds pleasure the best medicine.

FRENCH

3.13.30 Et sain et malade, ie me suis volontiers laissé aller aux appetits qui me pressoient. Ie donne grande authorité à mes desirs et propensions. Ie n'ayme point à guarir le mal par le mal. Ie hay les remedes qui importunent plus que la maladie. D'estre subiect à la colique, et subiect à m'abstenir du plaisir de manger des huitres, ce sont deux maux pour vn. Le mal nous pinse d'vn costé, la regle de l'autre. Puis-qu'on est au hazard de se mesconter, hasardons nous plustost à la suitte du plaisir. Le monde faict au rebours, et ne pense rien vtile, qui ne soit penible. La facilité luy est suspecte.

Mon appetit en plusieurs choses, s'est assez heureusement accommodé par soy-mesme, et rangé à la santé de mon estomach. L'acrimonie et la pointe des sauces m'agréerent estant ieune: mon estomach s'en ennuyant depuis, le goust l'a incontinent suyuy. Le vin nuit aux malades: c'est la premiere chose, dequoy ma bouche se desgouste, et d'vn degoust inuincible. Quoy que ie reçoiue desagreablement, me nuyt; et rien ne me nuyt, que ie face auec faim, et allegresse. Ie n'ay iamais receu nuysance d'action, qui m'eust esté bien plaisante. Et si ay fait ceder à mon plaisir, bien largement, toute conclusion medicinalle.

Et me suis ieune, *Quem circumcursans huc atque huc sæpe Cupido / Fulgebat crocina splendidus in tunica,* presté autant licentieusement et inconsidérement qu'autre, au desir qui me tenoit saisi: *Et militaui non sine gloria.* Plus toutesfois en continuation et en durée, qu'en saillie. *Sex me vix memini sustinuisse vices.* Il y a du malheur certes, et du miracle, à confesser, en quelle foiblesse d'ans, ie me rencontray premierement en sa subiection. Ce fut bien rencontre: car ce fut long temps auant l'aage de choix et de cognoissance. Il ne me souuient point de moy de si loing. Et peut on marier ma fortune à celle de Quartilla, qui n'auoit point memoire de son fillage.

Inde tragus celerésque pili, mirandáque matri / Barba meæ. Les medecins ployent ordinairement auec vtilité, leurs regles, à la violence des enuies aspres, qui suruiennent

ENGLISH

Sick or well, I have readily let myself follow the appetites that pressed me. I give great authority to my desires and inclinations. I do not like to cure one ill with another. I hate remedies that are more troublesome than the illness. To be subject to the colic and subject to abstaining from the pleasure of eating oysters—that is two ills for one. The illness pinches us on one side, the rule on the other. Since we run the risk of getting it wrong, let us rather take the risk in pursuit of pleasure. The world does the opposite, and thinks nothing useful that is not painful. Ease is suspect to it.

My appetite has, in many things, adjusted itself quite happily on its own and fallen in with the health of my stomach. Sharp, pungent sauces pleased me when I was young; when my stomach later tired of them, my taste promptly followed suit. Wine harms the sick: it is the first thing my mouth loses its taste for, and with an invincible distaste. Whatever I take with displeasure harms me; and nothing harms me that I do with hunger and gusto. I have never been harmed by anything I did that was really pleasant to me. And yet I have made every medical conclusion give way, and very liberally, to my pleasure.

And when I was young, *When Cupid, darting about me this way and that, / shone radiant in his saffron tunic,* I gave myself up as licentiously and thoughtlessly as anyone to the desire that had me in its grip, *And I campaigned, not without glory,* more, however, in staying power and endurance than in sudden dashes: *I barely remember managing six bouts.* There is certainly something unfortunate, and something miraculous, in confessing how young I was when I first found myself in its subjection. It was indeed by chance, for it was long before the age of choice and knowledge. I do not remember myself so far back. And my fortune can be paired with that of Quartilla, who had no memory of her maidenhood.[34]

Hence the goatish smell, the early hair, and a beard / that amazed my mother. Physicians usually bend their rules, and usefully, to the violence of the

34 Quotations from Catullus, Horace (Odes III.26) and Ovid (Amores III.7); Quartilla is a character in Petronius' Satyricon.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
	aux malades. Ce grand desir ne se peut imaginer, si estranger et vicieux, que Nature ne s'y applique. Et puis, combien est-ce de contenter la fantasie? A mon opinion cette piece là importe de tout: au moins, au delà de toute autre. Les plus griefs et ordinaires maux, sont ceux que la fantasie nous charge. Ce mot Espagnol me plaist à plusieurs visages: *Defienda me Dios de my.* Ie plains estant malade, dequoy ie n'ay quelque desir qui me donne ce contentement de l'assouuir: à peine m'en destourneroit la medecine. Autant en fay-ie sain.	sharp cravings that come over the sick. This great desire cannot be imagined so strange and perverse that Nature is not at work in it. And then, what a thing it is to satisfy the fancy! In my opinion this part matters above all—at least more than any other. The most grievous and common ills are those that fancy loads on us. This Spanish saying pleases me from many angles: *God defend me from myself.* When I am sick, I regret not having some desire that would give me the satisfaction of fulfilling it; medicine would hardly turn me from it. I do as much when I am well.[35]
	Ie ne voy guere plus qu'esperer et vouloir. C'est pitié d'estre alanguy et affoibly, iusques au souhaiter.	I can see little more left to me than hoping and wishing. It is a pitiful thing to be so languid and weakened that it reaches even one's wishes.
3.13.31	L'art de medecine, n'est pas si resolue, que nous soyons sans authorité, quoy que nous facions. Elle change selon les climats, et selon les Lunes: selon Fernel et selon l'Escale. Si vostre medecin ne trouue bon, que vous dormez, que vous vsez de vin, ou de telle viande: ne vous chaille: ie vous en trouueray vn autre qui ne sera pas de son aduis. La diuersité des arguments et opinions medicinales, embrasse toute sorte de formes. Ie vis vn miserable malade, creuer et se pasmer d'alteration, pour se guarir: et estre moqué depuis par vn autre medecin: condamnant ce conseil comme nuisible. Auoit-il pas bien employé sa peine?	The art of medicine is not so settled that we cannot find some authority for whatever we do. It changes with climates and with moons, with Fernel and with Scaliger. If your physician does not think it good for you to sleep, to drink wine, or to eat a certain food, don't worry: I will find you another who will not agree with him. The diversity of medical arguments and opinions covers every possible form. I saw a wretched sick man bursting and fainting with thirst in order to be cured, and afterward mocked by another physician who condemned that advice as harmful. Had he not put his suffering to good use?[36]
	Il est mort freschement de la pierre, vn homme de ce mestier, qui s'estoit seruy d'extreme abstinence à combattre son mal: ses compagnons disent, qu'au rebours, ce ieusne l'auoit asseché, et luy auoit cuit le sable dans les rongnons.	A man of that profession recently died of the stone who had used extreme abstinence to fight his illness; his colleagues say that, on the contrary, the fasting had dried him out and baked the sand in his kidneys.
3.13.32	I'ay apperceu qu'aux blesseures, et aux maladies, le parler m'esmeut et me nuit, autant que desordre que ie face. La voix me couste, et me lasse: car ie l'ay haute et efforcée. Si que, quand ie suis venu à entretenir l'oreille des grands, d'affaires de poix, ie les ay mis souuent en soing de moderer ma voix.	I have noticed that when I am wounded or ill, talking excites me and harms me as much as any excess I might commit. My voice costs me effort and tires me, for it is loud and strained; so that when I have had occasion to hold the ear of the great on weighty matters, I have often made them anxious to get me to moderate my voice.
3.13.33	Ce compte merite de me diuertir. Quelqu'vn, en certaine eschole Grecque, parloit haut comme moy: le maistre des ceremonies luy manda qu'il parlast plus bas: Qu'il m'enuoye, fit-il, le ton auquel il veut que ie parle. L'autre luy repliqua, qu'il prinst son ton des oreilles de celuy à	This story deserves a digression. Someone in a certain Greek school spoke loudly, as I do; the master of ceremonies sent word to him to speak lower. "Let him send me," he said, "the pitch at

35 Martial, Epigrams.
36 Jean Fernel (1497–1558), physician to Henry II; Julius Caesar Scaliger (1484–1558), physician and scholar.

FRENCH

qui il parloit. C'estoit bien dit, pourueu qu'il s'entende: Parlez selon ce que vous auez affaire à vostre auditeur. Car si c'est à dire, suffise vous qu'il vous oye: ou, reglez vous par luy: ie ne trouue pas que ce fust raison. Le ton et mouuement de la voix, a quelque expression, et signification de mon sens: c'est à moy à le conduire, pour me representer.

Il y a voix pour instruire, voix pour flater, ou pour tancer. Ie veux que ma voix non seulement arriue à luy, mais à l'auanture qu'elle le frappe, et qu'elle le perse. Quand ie mastine mon laquay, d'vn ton aigre et poignant: il seroit bon qu'il vinst à me dire: Mon maistre parlez plus doux, ie vous oy bien. *Est quædam vox ad auditum accommodata, non magnitudine, sed proprietate.* La parole est moitié à celuy qui parle, moitié à celuy qui l'escoute. Cestuy-cy se doibt preparer à la receuoir, selon le branle qu'elle prend. Comme entre ceux qui ioüent à la paume, celuy qui soustient, se desmarche et s'appreste, selon qu'il voit remuer celuy qui luy iette le coup, et selon la forme du coup.

ENGLISH

which he wants me to speak." The other replied that he should take his pitch from the ears of the person he was speaking to. That was well said, provided it is understood to mean: "Speak according to what you have to do with your listener." For if it means "Be content that he hears you," or "Regulate yourself by him," I do not find that reasonable. The tone and movement of the voice carry some expression and signification of my meaning; it is up to me to direct it so as to represent myself.

There is a voice for instructing, a voice for flattering, or for scolding. I want my voice not only to reach him but, as it may be, to strike him and pierce him. When I am berating my footman in a sharp, cutting tone, it would be a fine thing if he were to come and tell me, "Master, speak more softly; I can hear you perfectly well." *There is a kind of voice suited to the hearing, not by its volume but by its quality.* Speech belongs half to the one who speaks, half to the one who listens. The listener must prepare to receive it according to the motion it takes. So among tennis players, the one who receives steps back and gets ready according to how he sees the one hitting the ball to him move, and according to the kind of stroke.[37]

LETTING ILLNESS RUN ITS COURSE

Diseases have their own life span, and impatience only prolongs them.

FRENCH

3.13.34 L'experience m'a encores appris cecy, que nous nous perdons d'impatience. Les maux ont leur vie, et leurs bornes, leurs maladies et leur santé. La constitution des maladies, est formée au patron de la constitution des animaux. Elles ont leur fortune limitée dès leur naissance: et leurs iours. Qui essaye de les abbreger imperieusement, par force, au trauers de leur course, il les allonge et multiplie: et les harselle, au lieu de les appaiser. Ie suis de l'aduis de Crantor, qu'il ne faut ny obstinéement s'opposer aux maux, et à l'estourdi: ny leur succomber de mollesse: mais qu'il leur faut ceder naturellement, selon leur condition et la nostre. On doit donner passage aux maladies: et ie trouue qu'elles arrestent moins chez moy, qui les laisse faire.

ENGLISH

Experience has also taught me this: that we ruin ourselves through impatience. Ills have their life and their limits, their sicknesses and their health. The constitution of diseases is formed on the pattern of the constitution of animals. Their fortune is limited from their birth, and so are their days. Whoever tries to cut them short imperiously, by force, in the middle of their course, lengthens and multiplies them, and harasses them instead of calming them. I agree with Crantor that we must neither oppose our ills obstinately and recklessly nor succumb to them from weakness, but give way to them naturally, according to their condition and ours. We must let diseases pass through; and I find they stay less long with me, because I let them run their course.[38]

37 Quintilian, Training of the Orator XI.3.
38 Crantor (c. 335–275 BC), philosopher of Plato's Academy, author of a famous work On Grief.

FRENCH

Et en ay perdu de celles qu'on estime plus opiniastres et tenaces, de leur propre decadence: sans ayde et sans art, et contre ses regles. Laissons faire vn peu à Nature: elle entend mieux ses affaires que nous. Mais vn tel en mourut. Si ferez vous: sinon de ce mal là, d'vn autre. Et combien n'ont pas laissé d'en mourir, ayants trois medecins à leur cul? L'exemple est vn miroüer vague, vniuersel et à tout sens. Si c'est vne medecine voluptueuse, acceptez la; c'est tousiours autant de bien present. Ie ne m'arresteray ny au nom ny à la couleur, si elle est delicieuse et appetissante. Le plaisir est des principales especes du profit.

I'ay laissé enuieillir et mourir en moy, de mort naturelle, des rheumes; defluxions goutteuses; relaxation; battement de cœur; micraines; et autres accidens, que i'ay perdu, quand ie m'estois à demy formé à les nourrir. On les coniure mieux par courtoisie, que par brauerie. Il faut souffrir doucement les loix de nostre condition. Nous sommes pour vieillir, pour affoiblir, pour estre malades, en despit de toute medecine. C'est la premiere leçon, que les Mexicains font à leurs enfans; quand au partir du ventre des meres, ils les vont saluant, ainsin: Enfant, tu és venu au monde pour endurer: endure, souffre, et tais toy. C'est iniustice de se douloir qu'il soit aduenu à quelqu'vn, ce qui peut aduenir à chacun.

Indignare si quid in te iniquè propriè constitutum est.

3.13.35 Voyez vn vieillart, qui demande à Dieu qu'il luy maintienne sa santé entiere et vigoureuse; c'est à dire qu'il le remette en ieunesse. *Stulte, quid hæc frustra votis puerilibus optas?* N'est-ce pas folie? Sa condition ne le porte pas. La goutte, la grauelle, l'indigestion, sont symptomes des longues années; comme des longs voyages, la chaleur, les pluyes, et les vents. Platon ne croit pas, qu'Æsculape se mist en peine, de prouuoir par regimes, à faire durer la vie, en vn corps gasté et imbecille: inutile à son pays, inutile à sa vacation: et à produire des enfants sains et robustes: et ne trouue pas ce soing conuenable à la iustice et prudence diuine, qui doit conduire toutes choses à l'vtilité.

ENGLISH

And I have lost some of those considered most stubborn and tenacious through their own decline, without help and without the art of medicine, and against its rules. Let us leave things a little to Nature: she understands her business better than we do. "But so-and-so died of it." So will you—if not of that illness, then of another. And how many have nonetheless died of it with three physicians at their backsides? Example is a hazy mirror, universal, reflecting every way. If it is a pleasant medicine, accept it; it is always so much present good. I will not dwell on the name or the color if it is delicious and appetizing. Pleasure is one of the chief kinds of profit.

I have let colds, gouty discharges, looseness, palpitations of the heart, migraines and other ailments grow old in me and die a natural death—ailments I lost just when I had half trained myself to nurse them. They are better conjured away by courtesy than by bravado. We must gently endure the laws of our condition. We are made to grow old, to grow weak, to be sick, in spite of all medicine. That is the first lesson the Mexicans give their children, when, as they come out of their mothers' wombs, they greet them thus: "Child, you have come into the world to endure: endure, suffer, and be quiet." It is unjust to lament that something has happened to someone which can happen to anyone.

Be indignant if any decree has been unjustly made against you alone.[39]

Look at an old man asking God to keep his health whole and vigorous—that is to say, to make him young again. *Fool, why do you vainly wish for these things with childish prayers?* Is it not folly? His condition does not allow it. Gout, gravel and indigestion are symptoms of long years, as heat, rain and wind are of long journeys. Plato does not believe that Aesculapius troubled to provide, by regimens, for prolonging life in a spoiled and feeble body, useless to its country, useless to its calling and to producing healthy and robust children; nor does he find such care fitting to divine justice and wisdom, which must guide all things toward what is useful.[40]

39 Seneca, Letters 91.
40 Ovid, Tristia III.8; Plato, Republic III.

FRENCH

Mon bon homme, c'est faict: on ne vous sçauroit redresser: on vous plastrera pour le plus, et estançonnera vn peu, et allongera-lon de quelque heure vostre misere. *Non secus instantem cupiens fulcire ruinam,*
Diuersis contrà nititur obijcibus,
Donec certa dies, omni compage soluta,
Ipsum cum rebus subruat auxilium. Il faut apprendre à souffrir, ce qu'on ne peut euiter. Nostre vie est composée, comme l'harmonie du monde, de choses contraires, aussi de diuers tons, doux et aspres, aigus et plats, mols et graues. Le musicien qui n'en aymeroit que les vns, que voudroit il dire? Il faut qu'il s'en sçache seruir en commun, et les mesler. Et nous aussi, les biens et les maux, qui sont consubstantiels à nostre vie.

ENGLISH

My good man, it's over: no one can set you straight again; at most they will plaster you up and prop you a little, and prolong your misery by an hour or so. *Just so, a man who wants to shore up a building about to fall*
sets various supports against it,
until the fixed day comes and, with every joint loosened,
brings down the props themselves along with the house. We must learn to endure what we cannot avoid. Our life is composed, like the harmony of the world, of contrary things, and also of different tones, sweet and harsh, sharp and flat, soft and deep. What would a musician mean who liked only some of them? He must know how to use them all together and blend them. And so must we with the goods and ills that are consubstantial with our life.

Nostre estre ne peut sans ce meslange; et y est l'vne bande non moins necessaire que l'autre. D'essayer à regimber contre la necessité naturelle, c'est representer la folie de Ctesiphon, qui entreprenoit de faire à coups de pied auec sa mule.

Our being cannot do without this mixture, and one side is no less necessary to it than the other. To try to kick against natural necessity is to reenact the folly of Ctesiphon, who took it upon himself to have a kicking match with his mule.[41]

CONSOLING MYSELF FOR THE STONE

His mind argues that the kidney stone is mild, deserved and a lesson in dying.

FRENCH

3.13.36 Ie consulte peu, des alterations, que ie sens. Car ces gens icy sont auantageux, quand ils vous tiennent à leur misericorde. Ils vous gourmandent les oreilles, de leurs prognostiques, et me surprenant autre fois affoibly du mal, m'ont iniurieusement traicté de leurs dogmes, et troigne magistrale: me menassant tantost de grandes douleurs, tantost de mort prochaine. Ie n'en estois abbatu, ny deslogé de ma place, mais i'en estois heurté et poussé. Si mon iugement n'en est ny changé, ny troublé: au moins il en estoit empesché. C'est tousiours agitation et combat. Or ie traicte mon imagination le plus doucement que ie puis; et la deschargerois si ie pouuois, de toute peine et contestation. Il la faut secourir, et flatter, et pipper qui peut.

Mon esprit est propre à cet office. Il n'a point faute d'apparences par tout. S'il persuadoit, comme il presche, il me secourroit heureusement. Vous en plaist-il vn exemple? Il dict, que c'est pour mon mieux, que i'ay la

ENGLISH

I seldom consult anyone about the changes I feel. For these people are overbearing when they have you at their mercy. They batter your ears with their prognoses; and once, catching me weakened by illness, they treated me insultingly with their dogmas and their magisterial frowns, threatening me now with great pains, now with approaching death. I was not knocked down by it or dislodged from my position, but I was jostled and pushed. If my judgment was neither changed nor troubled by it, at least it was hindered. It is always agitation and combat. Now, I treat my imagination as gently as I can, and would relieve it, if I could, of all pain and strife. One must help it, and flatter it, and fool it if one can.

My mind is well suited to this task. It never lacks plausible arguments about anything. If it persuaded as well as it preaches, it would help me ad-

41 Plutarch tells of Ctesiphon, a wrestler, who kicked back at his mule (On Controlling Anger).

FRENCH

grauele. Que les bastimens de mon aage, ont naturellement à souffrir quelque gouttiere. Il est temps qu'ils commencent à se lascher et desmentir. C'est vne commune necessité. Et n'eust on pas faict pour moy, vn nouueau miracle. Ie paye par là, le loyer deu à la vieillesse; et ne sçaurois en auoir meilleur comte. Que la compagnie me doit consoler; estant tombé en l'accident le plus ordinaire des hommes de mon temps. I'en vois par tout d'affligez de mesme nature de mal.

Et m'en est la societé honorable, d'autant qu'il se prend plus volontiers aux grands: son essence a de la noblesse et de la dignité. Que des hommes qui en sont frappez, il en est peu de quittes à meilleure raison: et si, il leur couste la peine d'vn facheux regime, et la prise ennuieuse, et quotidienne, des drogues medecinales. Là où, ie le doy purement à ma bonne fortune. Car quelques bouillons communs de l'eringium, et herbe du Turc, que deux ou trois fois i'ay aualé, en faueur des dames, qui plus gracieusement que mon mal n'est aigre, m'en offroyent la moitié du leur, m'ont semblé egalement faciles à prendre, et inutiles en operation.

Ils ont à payer mille vœux à Æsculape, et autant d'escus à leur medecin, de la profluuion de sable aisée et abondante, que ie reçoy souuent par le benefice de Nature. La decence mesme de ma contenance en compagnie, n'en est pas troublée: et porte mon eau dix heures, et aussi long temps qu'vn sain. La crainte de ce mal, dit-il, t'effrayoit autresfois, quand il t'estoit incogneu. Les cris et le desespoir, de ceux qui l'aigrissent par leur impatience, t'en engendroient l'horreur. C'est vn mal, qui te bat les membres, par lesquels tu as le plus failly. Tu és homme de conscience: *Quæ venit indignè pœna, dolenda venit.* Regarde ce chastiement; il est bien doux au prix d'autres, et d'vne faueur paternelle.

Regarde sa tardifueté: il n'incommode et occupe, que la saison de ta vie, qui ainsi comme ainsin est mes-huy perdue et sterile; ayant faict place à la licence et plaisirs de ta ieunesse, comme par composition. La crainte et pitié, que le peuple a de ce mal, te sert de matiere de gloire. Qualité, de laquelle si tu as le iugement purgé, et

ENGLISH

mirably. Would you like an example? It says that it is for my own good that I have the gravel; that buildings of my age naturally have to suffer some leaks; that it is time they began to loosen and give way. It is a common necessity, and no new miracle would have been worked for my sake. By this I pay the rent due to old age, and I could not get a better bargain. And the company, it says, ought to console me, since I have fallen into the most common ailment of men of my time. Everywhere I see men afflicted with the same kind of illness.[42]

And I find its fellowship honorable, all the more since it prefers to attack the great: its essence has nobility and dignity. Of the men who are stricken with it, few get off more cheaply; and even so it costs them the trouble of an irksome diet and the tedious daily taking of medicinal drugs, whereas I owe it purely to my good fortune. For a few ordinary broths of eryngo and Turkish herb, which I have swallowed two or three times to oblige the ladies—who, more graciously than my illness is bitter, offered me half of theirs—seemed to me as easy to take as they were useless in their effect.[43]

They have to pay a thousand vows to Aesculapius, and as many crowns to their physician, for the easy and abundant flow of sand that I often receive by the bounty of Nature. Even the decorum of my bearing in company is not disturbed by it, and I can hold my water for ten hours, as long as a healthy man. The fear of this illness, it says, used to frighten you when you did not know it. The cries and despair of those who make it worse by their impatience bred in you a horror of it. It is an illness that strikes you in the members through which you have sinned most. You are a man of conscience: *The punishment that comes undeserved is the one to grieve over.* Look at this chastisement: it is very mild compared with others, and shows a fatherly favor.[44]

Look at how late it came: it troubles and occupies only that season of your life which, one way or another, is by now lost and barren, having made way for the license and pleasures of your youth, as if by agreement. The fear and pity people feel for this illness give you matter for glory—a quality

42 The gravel: small kidney stones.
43 Eryngo (sea holly) and "Turkish herb" (rupturewort) were remedies for the stone.
44 Ovid, Heroides V.

FRENCH

en as guery ton discours, tes amis pourtant en recognoissent encore quelque teinture en ta complexion. Il y a plaisir à ouyr dire de soy: Voyla bien de la force: voila bien de la patience.

On te voit suer d'ahan, pallir, rougir, trembler, vomir iusques au sang, souffrir des contractions et conuulsions estranges, degoutter par fois de grosses larmes des yeux, rendre les vrines espesses, noires, et effroyables, ou les auoir arrestées par quelque pierre espineuse et herissée qui te poinct, et escorche cruellement le col de la verge, entretenant cependant les assistans, d'vne contenance commune; bouffonant à pauses auec tes gens: tenant ta partie en vn discours tendu: excusant de parolle ta douleur, et rabbatant de ta souffrance. Te souuient-il de ces gens du temps passé, qui recherchoyent les maux auec si grand faim, pour tenir leur vertu en haleine, et en exercice?

mets le cas que Nature te porte, et te pousse à cette glorieuse escole, en laquelle tu ne fusses iamais entré de ton gré. Si tu me dis, que c'est vn mal dangereux et mortel: quels autres ne le sont? Car c'est vne pipperie medecinale, d'en excepter aucuns; qu'ils disent n'aller point de droict fil à la mort. Qu'importe, s'ils y vont par accident; et s'ils glissent, et gauchissent aisément, vers la voye qui nous y meine? Mais tu ne meurs pas de ce que tu es malade: tu meurs de ce que tu es viuant. La mort te tue bien, sans le secours de la maladie.

Et à d'aucuns, les maladies ont esloigné la mort: qui ont plus vescu, de ce qu'il leur sembloit s'en aller mourants. Ioint qu'il est, comme des playes, aussi des maladies medecinales et salutaires. La colique est souuent non moins viuace que vous. Il se voit des hommes, ausquels elle a continué depuis leur enfance iusques à leur extreme vieillesse; et s'ils ne luy eussent failly de compagnie, elle estoit pour les assister plus outre. Vous la tuez plus souuent qu'elle ne vous tue. Et quand elle te presenteroit l'image de la mort voisine, seroit-ce pas vn bon office, à vn homme de tel aage, de le ramener aux cogitations de sa fin? Et qui pis est, tu n'as plus pour quoy guerir.

Ainsi comme ainsin, au premier jour la commune necessité t'appelle. Considere combien artificielement et doucement, elle te desgouste de la vie, et desprend du monde: non te forçant, d'vne subiection tyrannique,

ENGLISH

from which, even if you have purged your judgment and cured your reasoning of it, your friends still recognize some tinge in your temperament. There is pleasure in hearing people say of you: "What strength! What patience!"

You are seen sweating with strain, turning pale, turning red, trembling, vomiting until you bring up blood, suffering strange contractions and convulsions, sometimes letting great tears drip from your eyes, passing thick, black, frightful urine, or having it stopped by some sharp, bristling stone that pricks and cruelly flays the neck of your penis —while all the while you entertain those present with an ordinary countenance, joke now and then with your people, hold your own in a strenuous discussion, make excuses for your pain in words and play down your suffering. Do you remember those men of old who sought out ills with such hunger, to keep their virtue in breath and in practice?

Suppose that Nature is carrying and pushing you into that glorious school, which you would never have entered of your own accord. If you tell me that it is a dangerous and mortal illness, which others are not? For it is a medical trick to except some, which they say do not lead straight to death. What does it matter if they get there by accident, and slip and veer easily toward the road that leads us there? But you do not die because you are sick; you die because you are alive. Death kills you well enough without the help of illness.

And for some, illnesses have kept death at a distance: they have lived longer because they thought they were dying. Besides, just as with wounds, there are illnesses that are medicinal and wholesome. The colic often has as tenacious a life as you do. There are men in whom it has continued from childhood to extreme old age; and if they had not deserted its company, it was ready to keep them company longer still. You kill it more often than it kills you. And even if it showed you the image of approaching death, would it not be doing a good service to a man of such an age to bring him back to thoughts of his end? And what is worse, you no longer have anything to get well for.

One way or another, the common necessity will call you any day now. Consider how artfully and gently your illness gives you a distaste for life and detaches you from the world: not forcing you with

FRENCH

comme tant d'autres maux, que tu vois aux vieillards, qui les tiennent continuellement entrauez, et sans relasche de foiblesses et douleurs: mais par aduertissemens, et instructions reprises à interualles; entremeslant des longues pauses de repos, comme pour te donner moyen de mediter et repeter sa leçon à ton aise. Pour te donner moyen de iuger sainement, et prendre party en homme de cœur, elle te presente l'estat de ta condition entiere, et en bien et en mal; et en mesme iour, vne vie tres-alegre tantost, tantost insupportable.

Si tu n'accoles la mort, au moins tu luy touches en paume, vne fois le mois. Par où tu as de plus à esperer, qu'elle t'attrappera vn iour sans menace. Et qu'estant si souuent conduit iusques au port: te fiant d'estre encore aux termes accoustumez, on t'aura et ta fiance, passé l'eau vn matin, inopinément. On n'a point à se plaindre des maladies, qui partagent loyallement le temps auec la santé.

3.13.37 Ie suis obligé à la Fortune, dequoy elle m'assaut si souuent de mesme sorte d'armes. Elle m'y façonne, et m'y dresse par vsage, m'y durcit et habitue: ie sçay à peu pres mes-huy, en quoy i'en dois estre quitte. A faute de memoire naturelle, i'en forge de papier. Et comme quelque nouueau symptome suruient à mon mal, ie l'escris: d'où il aduient, qu'à cette heure, estant quasi passé par toute sorte d'exemples: si quelque estonnement me menace: feuilletant ces petits breuets descousus, comme des feuilles Sybillines, ie ne faux plus de trouuer où me consoler, de quelque prognostique fauorable, en mon experience passée. Me sert aussi l'accoustumance, à mieux esperer pour l'aduenir.

Car la conduicte de ce vuidange, ayant continué si long temps; il est à croire, que Nature ne changera point ce train, et n'en aduiendra autre pire accident, que celuy que ie sens. En outre; la condition de cette maladie n'est point mal aduenante à ma complexion prompte et soudaine. Quand elle m'assault mollement, elle me faict peur, car c'est pour long temps. Mais naturellement, elle a des excez vigoureux et gaillarts. Elle me secouë à outrance, pour vn iour ou deux. Mes reins ont duré vn aage, sans alteration; il y en a tantost vn autre, qu'ils ont changé d'estat. Les maux ont leur periode comme les biens: à l'aduanture est cet accident à sa fin.

ENGLISH

tyrannical subjection, like so many other ills you see in old men, which keep them continually shackled, with no respite from weakness and pain, but by warnings and instructions repeated at intervals, mingled with long pauses of rest, as if to give you the chance to meditate and rehearse its lesson at your leisure. To give you the chance to judge soundly and make up your mind like a man of courage, it shows you the state of your whole condition, both good and bad, and on the same day a life now very cheerful, now unbearable.

If you do not embrace death, at least you shake hands with it once a month. So you have the further hope that it will catch you one day without warning; and that, having been brought so often to the harbor, while you trust that you are still within the usual limits, you and your trust will one morning, unexpectedly, have been ferried across the water. We have no cause to complain of illnesses that share our time fairly with health.

I am obliged to Fortune for assailing me so often with the same kind of weapons. She shapes me and trains me to them by practice, hardens and accustoms me; by now I know more or less what it will cost me to get off. For lack of natural memory, I make myself one out of paper. And whenever some new symptom appears in my illness, I write it down; so that now, having been through almost every kind of example, if some alarm threatens me, I leaf through these little loose notes, like the Sibyl's leaves, and never fail to find some favorable prognosis in my past experience to console me. Being used to it also helps me hope for better in the future.[45]

For since this discharge has kept up its course for so long, it is likely that Nature will not change its pace and that no worse ailment will come of it than the one I feel. Moreover, the character of this illness is not ill-suited to my quick and sudden temperament. When it attacks me gently, it frightens me, for then it will last a long time. But by nature it has vigorous and lusty fits. It shakes me violently for a day or two. My kidneys lasted an age without change; it will soon be another since they changed their state. Ills have their cycles, like goods: perhaps this ailment is near its end.

45 The Sibyl of Cumae was said to write her prophecies on leaves (Virgil, Aeneid III).

FRENCH

L'aage affoiblit la chaleur de mon estomach; sa digestion en estant moins parfaicte, il renuoye cette matiere cruë à mes reins. Pourquoy ne pourra estre à certaine reuolution, affoiblie pareillement la chaleur de mes reins; si qu'ils ne puissent plus petrifier mon flegme; et Nature s'acheminer à prendre quelque autre voye de purgation? Les ans m'ont euidemment faict tarir aucuns rheumes. Pourquoy ces excremens, qui fournissent de matiere à la graue? Mais est-il rien doux, au prix de cette soudaine mutation; quand d'vne douleur extreme, ie viens par le vuidange de ma pierre, à recouurer, comme d'vn esclair, la belle lumiere de la santé: si libre, et si pleine: comme il aduient en noz soudaines et plus aspres coliques?

Y a il rien en cette douleur soufferte, qu'on puisse contrepoiser au plaisir d'vn si prompt amendement? De combien la santé me semble plus belle apres la maladie, si voisine et si contigue, que ie les puis recognoistre en presence l'vne de l'autre, en leur plus hault appareil: où elles se mettent à l'enuy, comme pour se faire teste et contrecarre! Tout ainsi que les Stoïciens disent, que les vices sont vtilement introduicts, pour donner prix et faire espaule à la vertu: nous pouuons dire, auec meilleure raison, et coniecture moins hardie, que Nature nous a presté la douleur, pour l'honneur et seruice de la volupté et indolence.

Lors que Socrates apres qu'on l'eust deschargé de ses fers, sentit la friandise de cette demangeaison, que leur pesanteur auoit causé en ses iambes: il se resiouit, à considerer l'estroitte alliance de la douleur à la volupté: comme elles sont associées d'vne liaison necessaire: si qu'à tours, elles se suyuent, et entr'engendrent: et s'escrioit au bon Esope, qu'il deust auoir pris, de cette consideration, vn corps propre à vne belle fable.

3.13.38 Le pis que ie voye aux autres maladies, c'est qu'elles ne sont pas si griefues en leur effect, comme elles sont en leur yssue. On est vn an à se rauoir, tousiours plein de foiblesse, et de crainte. Il y a tant de hazard, et tant de degrez, à se reconduire à sauueté, que ce n'est iamais faict. Auant qu'on vous aye deffublé d'vn couurechef, et puis d'vne calote, auant qu'on vous aye rendu l'vsage de l'air, et du vin, et de vostre femme, et des melons, c'est grand cas si vous n'estes recheu en quelque nouuelle misere. Cette-cy a ce priuilege, qu'elle s'emporte tout net.

ENGLISH

Age is weakening the heat of my stomach; since its digestion is less perfect, it sends this raw matter on to my kidneys. Why, at some turn of time, might not the heat of my kidneys be weakened likewise, so that they can no longer petrify my phlegm, and Nature set about finding some other way of purging? The years have plainly dried up certain catarrhs in me. Why not these excretions that supply the matter for the gravel? But is there anything as sweet as that sudden change, when from extreme pain I come, by voiding my stone, to recover as if in a flash the fair light of health, so free and so full, as happens in our sudden and sharpest attacks of colic?

Is there anything in the pain endured that can be weighed against the pleasure of so swift an improvement? How much more beautiful health seems to me after illness, when the two are so near and so close together that I can recognize them face to face, each in its finest array, where they vie with each other as if to stand up to and defy each other! Just as the Stoics say that vices were usefully introduced to give value and support to virtue, we can say, with better reason and less bold conjecture, that Nature has lent us pain for the honor and service of pleasure and freedom from pain.

When Socrates, after his chains had been taken off, felt the delicious itching that their weight had caused in his legs, he rejoiced to consider the close alliance between pain and pleasure, how they are bound together by a necessary link, so that they follow each other in turn and engender each other; and he exclaimed that good Aesop ought to have taken from this consideration the material for a fine fable.[46]

The worst thing I see in other illnesses is that they are not so grievous in their effect as in their aftermath. It takes a year to recover, always full of weakness and fear. There is so much risk, and there are so many steps in getting back to safety, that it is never over. Before they have stripped you of a kerchief and then of a skullcap, before they have given you back the use of fresh air, and wine, and your wife, and melons, it is a wonder if you

46 Plato, Phaedo, on the day of Socrates' execution.

FRENCH

Là où les autres laissent tousiours quelque impression, et alteration, qui rend le corps susceptible de nouueau mal, et se prestent la main les vns aux autres. Ceux là sont excusables, qui se contentent de leur possession sur nous, sans l'estendre, et sans introduire leur sequele. Mais courtois et gratieux sont ceux, de qui le passage nous apporte quelque vtile consequence. Depuis ma colique, ie me trouue deschargé d'autres accidens: plus ce me semble que ie n'estois auparauant, et n'ay point eu de fiebure depuis.

I'argumente, que les vomissemens extremes et frequens que ie souffre, me purgent: et d'autre costé, mes degoustemens, et les ieusnes estranges, que ie passe, digerent mes humeurs peccantes: et Nature vuide en ces pierres, ce qu'elle a de superflu et nuysible. Qu'on ne me die point, que c'est vne medecine trop cher vendue. Car quoy tant de puans breuuages, cauteres, incisions, suées, sedons, dietes, et tant de formes de guarir, qui nous apportent souuent la mort, pour ne pouuoir soustenir leur violence, et importunité? Par ainsi, quand ie suis attaint, ie le prens à medecine: quand ie suis exempt, ie le prens à constante et entiere deliurance.

3.13.39 Voicy encore vne faueur de mon mal, particuliere. C'est qu'à peu pres, il faict son ieu à part, et me laisse faire le mien; où il ne tient qu'à faute de courage. En sa plus grande esmotion, ie l'ay tenu dix heures à cheual. Souffrez seulement, vous n'auez que faire d'autre regime. Iouez, disnez, courez, faictes cecy, et faictes encore cela, si vous pouuez; vostre desbauche y seruira plus, qu'elle n'y nuira. Dictes en autant à vn verolé, à vn goutteux, à vn hernieux. Les autres maladies, ont des obligations plus vniuerselles; gehennent bien autrement noz actions; troublent tout nostre ordre, et engagent à leur consideration, tout l'estat de la vie.

Cette-cy ne faict que pinser la peau; elle vous laisse l'entendement, et la volonté en vostre disposition, et la langue, et les pieds, et les mains. Elle vous esueille plustost qu'elle ne vous assoupit. L'ame est frapée de l'ardeur d'vne fiebure, et atterrée d'vne epilepsie, et disloquée par vne aspre micraine, et en fin estonnée par toutes les maladies qui blessent la masse, et les plus nobles parties. Icy, on ne l'attaque point. S'il luy va mal, à sa coulpe. Elle se trahit elle mesme, s'abandonne, et se

ENGLISH

have not relapsed into some new misery. This one has the privilege of clearing out completely.

The others, by contrast, always leave some imprint and change that makes the body susceptible to new illness, and they lend each other a hand. Those are excusable that are content with their hold on us without extending it and without bringing their train in after them. But courteous and gracious are those whose passage brings us some useful consequence. Since my colic, I find myself relieved of other ailments, more so, it seems to me, than I was before, and I have not had a fever since.

I argue that the extreme and frequent vomiting I suffer purges me; that, on the other hand, my losses of appetite and the strange fasts I go through digest my morbid humors; and that Nature voids in these stones whatever she has that is superfluous and harmful. Let no one tell me that it is a medicine sold too dear. For what about so many stinking potions, cauteries, incisions, sweatings, setons, diets, and so many methods of cure that often bring us death because we cannot stand their violence and harassment? So when I am attacked, I take it as medicine; when I am free, I take it as a lasting and complete deliverance.

Here is yet another particular favor of my illness: it more or less plays its own game and lets me play mine, and if I do not, it is only for want of courage. At its most violent, I have stayed on horseback with it for ten hours. Just endure; you need no other regimen. Play, dine, run, do this, and do that too if you can; your excesses will help more than they harm. Say as much to a man with the pox, to a man with gout, to a man with a hernia. Other illnesses impose more universal obligations, constrain our actions in quite another way, disturb our whole order, and make the whole conduct of our life revolve around them.

This one only pinches the skin; it leaves your understanding and your will at your disposal, and your tongue, and your feet, and your hands. It wakes you up rather than putting you to sleep. The soul is struck by the burning of a fever, felled by epilepsy, dislocated by a sharp migraine, and in short stunned by all the illnesses that wound the whole mass and the noblest parts. Here it is not attacked. If things go badly with it, that is its own

FRENCH

desmonte. Il n'y a que les fols qui se laissent persuader, que ce corps dur et massif, qui se cuyt en noz rognons, se puisse dissoudre par breuuages.

Parquoy depuis qu'il est esbranlé, il n'est que de luy donner passage, aussi bien le prendra-il.

3.13.40 Ie remarque encore cette particuliere commodité, que c'est vn mal, auquel nous auons peu à deuiner. Nous sommes dispensez du trouble, auquel les autres maux nous iettent, par l'incertitude de leurs causes, et conditions, et progrez. Trouble infiniement penible. Nous n'auons que faire de consultations et interpretations doctorales: les sens nous montrent que c'est, et où c'est.

3.13.41 Par tels argumens, et forts et foibles, comme Cicero le mal de sa vieillesse, i'essaye d'endormir et amuser mon imagination, et graisser ses playes. Si elles s'empirent demain, demain nous y pouruoyrons d'autres eschappatoires. Qu'il soit vray. Voicy depuis de nouueau, que les plus legers mouuements espreignent le pur sang de mes reins. Quoy pour cela? ie ne laisse de me mouuoir comme deuant, et picquer apres mes chiens, d'vne iuuenile ardeur, et insolente. Et trouue que i'ay grand raison, d'vn si important accident: qui ne me couste qu'vne sourde poisanteur, et alteration en cette partie.

C'est quelque grosse pierre, qui foulle et consomme la substance de mes roignons: et ma vie, que ie vuide peu à peu: non sans quelque naturelle douceur, comme vn excrement hormais superflu et empeschant. Or sens-ie quelque chose qui crousle; ne vous attendez pas que i'aille m'amusant à recognoistre mon poux, et mes vrines, pour y prendre quelque preuoyance ennuyeuse. Ie seray assez à temps à sentir le mal, sans l'allonger par le mal de la peur. Qui craint de souffrir, il souffre desia de ce qu'il craint. Ioint que la dubitation et ignorance de ceux, qui se meslent d'expliquer les ressorts de Nature, et ses internes progrez: et tant de faux prognostiques de leur art: nous doit faire cognoistre, qu'ell'a ses moyens infiniment incognuz.

Il y a grande incertitude, varieté et obscurité, de ce qu'elle nous promet ou menace. Sauf la vieillesse, qui est vn signe indubitable de l'approche de la mort: de tous les autres accidents, ie voy peu de signes de l'aduenir, surquoy nous ayons à fonder nostre diuination. Ie ne me

ENGLISH

fault: it betrays itself, abandons itself and falls apart. Only fools let themselves be persuaded that this hard, massive body that is baked in our kidneys can be dissolved by potions.

So once it has been set moving, there is nothing to do but let it pass; it will take its passage anyway.

I note yet another particular advantage: it is an illness about which we have little to guess. We are spared the disturbance that other ills throw us into through the uncertainty of their causes, conditions and progress—an infinitely painful disturbance. We have no need of consultations and learned interpretations: our senses show us what it is and where it is.

With such arguments, both strong and weak, as Cicero did with the ill of his old age, I try to lull and beguile my imagination and grease its wounds. If they get worse tomorrow, tomorrow we will find other ways out. And so it proves: here, lately, the slightest movements squeeze pure blood from my kidneys. What of it? I do not stop moving as before and riding after my hounds with youthful, insolent ardor. And I find I am getting off very well from so serious an accident, which costs me only a dull heaviness and discomfort in that part.[47]

It is some big stone crushing and consuming the substance of my kidneys, and my life, which I am voiding little by little, not without some natural pleasure, like an excrement now superfluous and in the way. Now, if I feel something crumbling, do not expect me to start amusing myself by checking my pulse and my urine so as to take some distressing precaution. I will be in time enough to feel the pain without prolonging it with the pain of fear. He who fears suffering already suffers from what he fears. Besides, the doubt and ignorance of those who take it upon themselves to explain the springs of Nature and her inner workings, and so many false prognoses of their art, should make us realize that her means are infinitely unknown.

There is great uncertainty, variety and obscurity in what she promises or threatens us with. Except for old age, which is an indubitable sign that death is approaching, I see in all other accidents few signs of the future on which we can base our

47 Cicero, On Old Age.

FRENCH	ENGLISH
iuge que par vray sentiment, non par discours. A quoy faire? puisque ie n'y veux apporter que l'attente et la patience. Voulez vous sçauoir combien ie gaigne à cela? Regardez ceux qui font autrement, et qui dependent de tant de diuerses persuasions et conseils: combien souuent l'imagination les presse sans le corps. I'ay maintesfois prins plaisir estant en seurté, et deliure de ces accidens dangereux, de les communiquer aux medecins, comme naissans lors en moy.	divination. I judge myself only by actual feeling, not by reasoning. What would be the point, since I mean to bring to it nothing but waiting and patience? Do you want to know how much I gain by this? Look at those who do otherwise and who depend on so many different opinions and counsels: how often their imagination oppresses them when their body does not. I have many times taken pleasure, when I was safe and free of these dangerous symptoms, in describing them to the physicians as if they were just starting in me.
Ie souffrois l'arrest de leurs horribles conclusions, bien à mon aise; et en demeurois de tant plus obligé à Dieu de sa grace, et mieux instruict de la vanité de cet art.	I heard the sentence of their horrible conclusions quite at my ease, and came away all the more obliged to God for his grace, and better instructed in the vanity of that art.

SLEEP, FOOD AND DAILY HABITS

A portrait of how he sleeps, eats, drinks and dresses as he grows old.

FRENCH	ENGLISH
3.13.42 Il n'est rien qu'on doiue tant recommander à la ieunesse, que l'actiueté et la vigilance. Nostre vie, n'est que mouuement. Ie m'esbransle difficilement, et suis tardif par tout: à me leuer, à me coucher, et mes repas. C'est matin pour moy que sept heures: et où ie gouuerne, ie ne disne, ny auant onze, ny ne souppe, qu'apres six heures. I'ay autrefois attribué la cause des fiebures, et maladies où ie suis tombé, à la pesanteur et assoupissement, que le long sommeil m'auoit apporté. Et me suis tousiours repenty de me rendormir le matin. Platon veut plus de mal à l'excés du dormir, qu'à l'excés du boire. I'ayme à coucher dur, et seul; voire sans femme, à la royalle: vn peu bien couuert.	There is nothing we should recommend so strongly to the young as activity and wakefulness. Our life is nothing but movement. I am hard to get moving, and slow in everything: getting up, going to bed, and at my meals. Seven o'clock is early morning for me; and where I am in charge, I do not dine before eleven or sup until after six. I used to attribute the fevers and illnesses I fell into to the heaviness and drowsiness that long sleep had brought on me; and I have always regretted going back to sleep in the morning. Plato condemns excess in sleeping more than excess in drinking. I like to sleep on a hard bed, and alone—even without a wife, in royal fashion—and fairly well covered.[48]
On ne bassine iamais mon lict; mais depuis la vieillesse, on me donne quand i'en ay besoing, des draps, à eschauffer les pieds et l'estomach. On trouuoit à redire au grand Scipion, d'estre dormart, non à mon aduis pour autre raison, sinon qu'il faschoit aux hommes, qu'en luy seul, il n'y eust aucune chose à redire. Si i'ay quelque curiosité en mon traictement, c'est plustost au coucher qu'à autre chose; mais ie cede et m'accommode en general, autant que tout autre, à la necessité. Le dormir a occupé vne grande partie de ma vie: et le continuë encores en cet aage, huict ou neuf heures, d'vne haleine.	My bed is never warmed with a warming pan; but since I have grown old, I am given warm cloths when I need them for my feet and stomach. The great Scipio was criticized for being a sleepyhead —for no other reason, in my opinion, than that it annoyed people that in him alone there was nothing to criticize. If I am at all fussy about how I am looked after, it is about my bed more than anything else; but in general I yield and adapt to necessity as well as anyone. Sleep has taken up a large part of my life, and at this age I still sleep eight or nine hours at a stretch. I am usefully

48 Plato, Laws VII.

FRENCH

Ie me retire auec vtilité, de cette propension paresseuse: et en vaulx euidemment mieux.

Ie sens vn peu le coup de la mutation: mais c'est faict en trois iours. Et n'en voy gueres, qui viue à moins, quand il est besoin: et qui s'exerce plus constamment, ny à qui les coruées poisent moins. Mon corps est capable d'vne agitation ferme; mais non pas vehemente et soudaine. Ie fuis meshuy, les exercices violents, et qui me meinent à la sueur: mes membres se lassent auant qu'ils s'eschauffent. Ie me tiens debout, tout le long d'vn iour, et ne m'ennuye point à me promener. Mais sur le paué, depuis mon premier aage, ie n'ay aymé d'aller qu'à cheual.

A pied, ie me crotte iusques aux fesses: et les petites gens, sont subiects par ces ruës, à estre chocquez et coudoyez à faute d'apparence. Et ay aymé à me reposer, soit couché, soit assis, les iambes autant ou plus haultes que le siege.

3.13.43 Il n'est occupation plaisante comme la militaire: occupation et noble en execution (car la plus forte, genereuse, et superbe de toutes les vertus, est la vaillance) et noble en sa cause. Il n'est point d'vtilité, ny plus iuste, ny plus vniuerselle, que la protection du repos, et grandeur de son pays.

La compagnie de tant d'hommes vous plaist, nobles, ieunes, actifs: la veuë ordinaire de tant de spectacles tragiques: la liberté de cette conuersation, sans art, et vne façon de vie, masle et sans ceremonie: la varieté de mille actions diuerses: cette courageuse harmonie de la musique guerriere, qui vous entretient et eschauffe, et les oreilles, et l'ame: l'honneur de cet exercice: son aspreté mesme et sa difficulté, que Platon estime si peu, qu'en sa republique il en faict part aux femmes et aux enfants.

Vous vous conuiez aux rolles, et hazards particuliers, selon que vous iugez de leur esclat, et de leur importance: soldat volontaire: et voyez quand la vie mesme y est excusablement employée, *Pulchrùmque mori succurrit in armis.* De craindre les hazards communs, qui regardent vne si grande presse; de n'oser ce que tant de sortes d'ames osent, et tout vn peuple, c'est à faire à vn cœur mol, et bas outre mesure. La compagnie asseure iusques aux enfans. Si d'autres vous surpassent en science, en grace, en force, en fortune; vous auez des causes tierces, à

ENGLISH

weaning myself from this lazy propensity, and I am plainly the better for it.

I feel the shock of the change a little, but it is over in three days. And I hardly see anyone who can live on less when need be, or who exercises more steadily, or on whom hard duties weigh less. My body is capable of steady exertion, but not of violent and sudden exertion. I now avoid violent exercise that makes me sweat: my limbs tire before they warm up. I can stay on my feet all day long, and I do not tire of walking. But on paved streets, since my earliest years, I have liked to go only on horseback.

On foot I get muddy up to my buttocks; and short people are liable, in these streets, to be jostled and elbowed for lack of an imposing presence. And I have liked to rest, lying or sitting, with my legs as high as the seat or higher.

There is no occupation as pleasant as soldiering—an occupation noble in its execution (for the strongest, most generous and proudest of all the virtues is valor) and noble in its cause. There is no service more just or more universal than protecting the peace and greatness of one's country.

You enjoy the company of so many men, noble, young, active; the daily sight of so many tragic spectacles; the freedom of that artless conversation, and a manly way of life without ceremony; the variety of a thousand different actions; that courageous harmony of martial music, which sustains you and warms both your ears and your soul; the honor of this occupation; its very harshness and difficulty, which Plato thinks so little of that in his Republic he gives women and children a share in it.[49]

You volunteer for particular roles and risks according to your judgment of their brilliance and importance, as a volunteer soldier; and you see when life itself can be excusably spent there: *And it comes to mind how fine it is to die in arms.* To fear the common dangers that concern so great a crowd, not to dare what so many kinds of souls dare, and a whole people, is for a heart soft and base beyond measure. Company reassures even children. If others surpass you in knowledge, in grace, in strength, in fortune, you have outside

49 Plato, Republic V.

FRENCH

qui vous en prendre; mais de leur ceder en fermeté d'ame, vous n'auez à vous en prendre qu'à vous.

La mort est plus abiecte, plus languissante, et penible dans vn lict, qu'en vn combat: les fiebures et les caterrhes, autant douloureux et mortels, qu'vne harquebuzade. Qui seroit faict, à porter valeureusement, les accidens de la vie commune, n'auroit point à grossir son courage, pour se rendre gendarme. *Viuere, mi Lucilli, militare est.*

3.13.44 Il ne me souuient point de m'estre iamais veu galleux. Si est la gratterie, des gratifications de Nature les plus douces, et autant à main. Mais ell'a la penitence trop importunément voisine. Ie l'exerce plus aux oreilles, que i'ay au dedans pruantes, par secousses.

3.13.45 Ie suis nay de tous les sens, entiers quasi à la perfection. Mon estomach est commodément bon, comme est ma teste: et le plus souuent, se maintiennent au trauers de mes fiebures, et aussi mon haleine. I'ay outrepassé l'aage auquel des nations, non sans occasion, auoient prescript vne si iuste fin à la vie, qu'elles ne permettoyent point qu'on l'excedast. Si ay-ie encore des remises: quoy qu'inconstantes et courtes, si nettes, qu'il y a peu à dire de la santé et indolence de ma ieunesse. Ie ne parle pas de la vigueur et allegresse: ce n'est pas raison qu'elle me suyue hors ses limites: *Non hoc amplius est liminis, aut aquæ / Cœlestis, patiens latus.* Mon visage et mes yeux me descouurent incontinent.

Tous mes changemens commencent par là: et vn peu plus aigres, qu'ils ne sont en effect. Ie fais souuent pitié à mes amis, auant que i'en sente la cause. Mon miroüer ne m'estonne pas: car en la ieunesse mesme, il m'est aduenu plus d'vne fois, de chausser ainsin vn teinct, et vn port trouble, et de mauuais prognostique, sans grand accident: en maniere que les medecins, qui ne trouuoyent au dedans cause qui respondist à cette alteration externe, l'attribuoient à l'esprit, et à quelque passion secrette, qui me rongeast au dedans. Ils se trompoyent. Si le corps se gouuernoit autant selon moy, que faict l'ame, nous marcherions vn peu plus à nostre aise.

Ie l'auois lors, non seulement exempte de trouble, mais encore pleine de satisfaction, et de feste: comme elle est

ENGLISH

causes to blame; but if you yield to them in firmness of soul, you have only yourself to blame.[50]

Death is more abject, more lingering and painful in bed than in battle; fevers and catarrhs are as painful and deadly as a arquebus shot. Anyone trained to bear the accidents of ordinary life valiantly would not need to swell his courage to become a man-at-arms. *To live, my Lucilius, is to be a soldier.*[51]

I do not remember ever having had the itch. Yet scratching is among the sweetest of Nature's gratifications, and as handy as any. But its penance follows too annoyingly close behind. I practice it most on my ears, which itch inside from time to time.

I was born with all my senses sound, almost to perfection. My stomach is comfortably good, as is my head; and most of the time they hold up through my fevers, and so does my breath. I have passed the age at which certain nations, not without reason, had prescribed so fitting an end to life that they did not allow anyone to exceed it. Yet I still have remissions, irregular and short though they are, so clear that they fall little short of the health and painlessness of my youth. I do not speak of vigor and sprightliness; it is not reasonable that they should follow me beyond their limits: *No longer can this body bear lying at a threshold / or the rain from heaven.* My face and eyes give me away at once.[52]

All my changes begin there, and look somewhat worse than they really are. My friends often pity me before I feel the cause. My mirror does not alarm me, for even in my youth it happened more than once that I took on a murky complexion and bearing, of bad omen, without any serious ailment; so that the physicians, finding no cause within to account for this outward change, attributed it to the mind and to some secret passion gnawing at me inside. They were wrong. If the body governed itself according to my will as much as my soul does, we would get along a little more comfortably.

My soul at that time was not only free from trouble but full of satisfaction and gaiety, as it

50 Virgil, Aeneid II.
51 Seneca, Letters 96.

FRENCH

le plus ordinairement: moytié de sa complexion, moytié de son dessein: *Nec vitiant artus ægræ contagia mentis.* Ie tiens, que cette sienne temperature, a releué maintesfois le corps de ses cheutes. Il est souuent abbatu; que si elle n'est enioüée, elle est au moins en estat tranquille et reposé. I'euz la fiebure quarte, quatre ou cinq mois, qui m'auoit tout desuisagé: l'esprit alla tousiours non paisiblement, mais plaisamment. Si la douleur est hors de moy, l'affoiblissement et langueur ne m'attristent guere. Ie vois plusieurs deffaillances corporelles, qui font horreur seulement à nommer, que ie craindrois moins que mille passions d'esprit que ie vois en vsage.

Ie prens party de ne plus courre, c'est assez que ie me traine; ny ne me plains de la decadance naturelle qui me tient, *Quis tumidum guttur miratur in Alpibus?* Non plus, que ie ne regrette, que ma durée ne soit aussi longue et entiere que celle d'vn chesne.

3.13.46 Ie n'ay point à me plaindre de mon imagination: i'ay eu peu de pensées en ma vie qui m'ayent seulement interrompu le cours de mon sommeil, si elles n'ont esté du desir, qui m'esueillast sans m'affliger. Ie songe peu souuent; et lors c'est des choses fantastiques et des chimeres, produictes communément de pensées plaisantes: plutost ridicules que tristes. Et tiens qu'il est vray, que les songes sont loyaux interpretes de noz inclinations; mais il y a de l'art à les assortir et entendre. *Res quæ in vita vsurpant homines, cogitant, curant, vident, Quæque agunt vigilantes, agitántque, ea sicut in somno accidunt,*
Minus mirandum est. Platon dit dauantage, que c'est l'office de la prudence d'en tirer des instructions diuinatrices pour l'aduenir.

Ie ne voy rien à cela, sinon les merueilleuses experiences, que Socrates, Xenophon, Aristote en recitent, personnages d'authorité irreprochable. Les histoires disent, que les Atlantes ne songent iamais: qui ne mangent aussi rien, qui aye prins mort. Ce que i'adiouste, d'autant que c'est à l'aduenture l'occasion, pourquoy ils ne songent point. Car Pythagoras ordonnoit certaine

ENGLISH

most usually is, half by its nature, half by its design: *Nor does the contagion of a sick mind infect my limbs.* I believe that this temper of my soul has many times lifted my body up from its falls. The body is often low; and if the soul is not merry, it is at least in a tranquil and restful state. I had a quartan fever for four or five months, which had quite disfigured me; my mind kept going all the while, not just peacefully but pleasantly. If the pain is outside me, weakness and languor hardly sadden me. I see many bodily failings, horrible merely to name, which I would fear less than a thousand passions of the mind that I see in common use.[53]

I have made up my mind to run no longer—it is enough that I can drag myself along; nor do I complain of the natural decline that has hold of me—*Who is surprised at a swollen throat in the Alps?*—any more than I regret that my lifespan is not as long and sound as an oak's.[54]

I have no complaint about my imagination: I have had few thoughts in my life that have so much as interrupted the course of my sleep, unless they were thoughts of desire, which woke me without distressing me. I seldom dream, and then it is of fantastic things and chimeras, usually produced by pleasant thoughts, more ridiculous than sad. And I hold it true that dreams are faithful interpreters of our inclinations; but there is skill in sorting and understanding them. *What men busy themselves with in life, what they think of, care for and see,*
what they do and pursue when awake—if this happens to them in sleep,
it is less to be wondered at. Plato says, moreover, that it is the office of wisdom to draw from them prophetic instructions for the future.[55]

I see nothing in that, except the marvelous experiences that Socrates, Xenophon and Aristotle relate of it, persons of irreproachable authority. The histories say that the Atlantes never dream; they also never eat anything that has been killed. I add this because it is perhaps the reason why they do not dream. For Pythagoras prescribed a certain pre-

52 Horace, Odes III.10, a lover's complaint at his mistress's door.
53 Ovid, Tristia III.8.
54 Juvenal, Satires XIII; goiter was common in Alpine regions.
55 Accius, quoted by Cicero, On Divination I; Plato, Timaeus.

FRENCH

preparation de nourriture, pour faire les songes à propos. Les miens sont tendres: et ne m'apportent aucune agitation de corps, ny expression de voix. I'ay veu plusieurs de mon temps, en estre merueilleusement agitez. Theon le philosophe, se promenoit, en songeant: et le valet de Pericles sur les tuilles mesmes et faiste de la maison.

3.13.47 Ie ne choisis guere à table; et me prens à la premiere chose et plus voisine: et me remue mal volontiers d'vn goust à vn autre. La presse des plats, et des seruices me desplaist, autant qu'autre presse. Ie me contente aisément de peu de mets; et hay l'opinion de Fauorinus, qu'en vn festin, il faut qu'on vous desrobe la viande où vous prenez appetit, et qu'on vous en substitue tousiours vne nouuelle: et que c'est vn miserable soupper, si on n'a saoullé les assistans de crouppions de diuers oyseaux; et que le seul bequefigue merite qu'on le mange entier. I'vse familierement de viandes sallées; si ayme-ie mieux le pain sans sel.

Et mon boulanger chez moy, n'en sert pas d'autre pour ma table, contre l'vsage du pays. On a eu en mon enfance principalement à corriger, le refus, que ie faisois des choses que communément on ayme le mieux, en cet aage; succres, confitures, pieces de four. Mon gouuerneur combatit cette hayne de viandes delicates, comme vne espece de delicatesse. Aussi n'est elle autre chose, que difficulté de goust, où qu'il s'applique. Qui oste à vn enfant, certaine particuliere et obstinée affection au pain bis, et au lard, ou à l'ail, il luy oste la friandise. Il en est, qui font les laborieux, et les patiens pour regretter le bœuf, et le iambon, parmy les perdris.

Ils ont bon temps: c'est la delicatesse des delicats; c'est le goust d'vne molle fortune, qui s'affadit aux choses ordinaires et accoustumées, *Per quæ luxuria diuitiarum tædio ludit*. Laisser à faire bonne chere de ce qu'vn autre la faict; auoir vn soing curieux de son traictement; c'est l'essence de ce vice; *Si modica cœnare times olus omne patella.* Il y a bien vrayement cette difference, qu'il vaut mieux obliger son desir, aux choses plus aisées à recouurer; mais c'est tousiours vice de s'obliger. I'appellois autresfois, delicat vn mien parent, qui auoit

ENGLISH

paration of food so as to have dreams to the purpose. Mine are mild, and bring me no agitation of body or utterance of voice. I have seen several people in my time wonderfully agitated by theirs. Theon the philosopher walked about while dreaming, and Pericles' servant did so even on the tiles and the ridge of the house.[56]

I am not very choosy at table. I take the first thing and the nearest, and I am reluctant to move from one taste to another. A crowd of dishes and courses displeases me as much as any other crowd. I am easily content with few dishes, and I hate the opinion of Favorinus that at a feast they should snatch away the dish you are getting an appetite for and always put a new one in its place; that it is a wretched supper if the guests have not been glutted with the rumps of various birds; and that the beccafico alone deserves to be eaten whole. I regularly eat salted meats; yet I prefer bread without salt.[57]

My baker at home serves no other kind for my table, against the custom of the region. In my childhood, the main thing they had to correct was my refusal of the things children of that age usually like best: sugar, preserves, pastries. My tutor fought this dislike of dainty foods as a kind of daintiness in itself. And indeed it is nothing else but fussiness of taste, wherever it is applied. Whoever cures a child of a particular, stubborn fondness for brown bread and bacon, or garlic, cures him of being finicky about food. There are some who play the long-sufferers and make a show of patience by pining for beef and ham among the partridges.

They have it easy. It is the daintiness of the dainty; it is the taste of a soft fortune that grows jaded with ordinary, everyday things, *By which luxury beguiles its weariness of riches*. To stop relishing what another man relishes, to take fastidious care over one's fare: that is the essence of this vice. *If you are afraid to dine on a plain dish of greens.* There is indeed this difference: it is better to bind one's desire to things that are easier to come by. But it is always a vice to bind oneself. I used to call a kinsman of mine dainty because in our galleys he had

56 The Atlantes, a people of North Africa, are described by Herodotus (IV.184).
57 Favorinus of Arles, a 2nd-century AD orator and philosopher whose table talk is reported by Aulus Gellius. The beccafico ("fig-pecker") is a small songbird prized as a delicacy.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
	desapris en noz galeres, à se seruir de noz licts, et se despouiller pour se coucher.	unlearned how to use our beds and to undress before lying down.[58]
3.13.48	Si i'auois des enfans masles, ie leur desirasse volontiers ma fortune. Le bon pere que Dieu me donna (qui n'a de moy que la recognoissance de sa bonté, mais certes bien gaillarde) m'enuoya dés le berceau, nourrir à vn pauure village des siens, et m'y tint autant que ie fus en nourrisse, et encores au delà: me dressant à la plus basse et commune façon de viure: *Magna pars libertatis est benè moratus venter*. Ne prenez iamais, et donnez encore moins à vos femmes, la charge de leur nourriture: laissez les former à la fortune, souz des loix populaires et naturelles: laissez à la coustume, de les dresser à la frugalité et à l'austerité; qu'ils ayent plustot à descendre de l'aspreté, qu'à monter vers elle.	If I had sons, I would gladly wish them my own lot. The good father God gave me (who has nothing from me but my gratitude for his goodness—though a very hearty gratitude) sent me from the cradle to be nursed in a poor village of his. He kept me there as long as I was at nurse, and even longer, training me to the lowliest and commonest way of living: *A well-disciplined belly is a large part of freedom*. Never take on yourselves, and still less give to your wives, the charge of bringing up your children. Let them be shaped by fortune, under the laws of the common people and of nature. Let custom train them to frugality and austerity, so that they have to come down from hardship rather than climb up to it.[59]
	Son humeur visoit encore à vne autre fin. De me rallier auec le peuple, et cette condition d'hommes, qui a besoin de nostre ayde: et estimoit que ie fusse tenu de regarder plustost, vers celuy qui me tend les bras, que vers celuy, qui me tourne le dos. Et fut cette raison, pourquoy aussi il me donna à tenir sur les fons, à des personnes de la plus abiecte fortune, pour m'y obliger et attacher.	His temperament aimed at yet another end: to bind me to the people and to that class of men who need our help. He thought I ought to look toward the man who holds out his arms to me rather than toward the man who turns his back on me. And this was why he also had me held at the font by people of the humblest station: to oblige and attach me to them.
3.13.49	Son dessein n'a pas du tout mal succedé. Ie m'adonne volontiers aux petits; soit pour ce qu'il y a plus de gloire: soit par naturelle compassion, qui peut infiniement en moy. Le party que ie condemneray en noz guerres, ie le condemneray plus asprement, fleurissant et prospere. Il sera pour me concilier aucunement à soy quand ie le verray miserable et accablé. Combien volontiers ie considere la belle humeur de Chelonis, fille et femme de Roys de Sparte! Pendant que Cleombrotus son mary, aux desordres de sa ville, eut auantage sur Leonidas son pere, elle fit la bonne fille: se r'allie auec son pere, en son exil, en sa misere, s'opposant au victorieux. La chance vint elle à tourner?	His plan has not altogether failed. I readily take the side of the little people, whether because there is more glory in it or out of a natural compassion that has infinite power over me. The party I condemn in our wars I shall condemn more harshly when it is flourishing and prosperous; it will go some way toward winning me over when I see it wretched and crushed. How gladly I contemplate the fine disposition of Chelonis, daughter and wife of kings of Sparta! While Cleombrotus, her husband, had the upper hand over Leonidas, her father, in the disorders of her city, she played the good daughter: she joined her father in his exile and his misery, opposing the victor. Did luck happen to turn?[60]
	la voila changée de vouloir avec la fortune, se rangeant courageusement à son mary: lequel elle suiuit par tout, où sa ruine le porta: n'ayant ce me semble autre choix, que de se ietter au party, où elle faisoit le plus de besoin,	There she is, changing her will along with fortune, bravely taking her husband's side, and following him wherever his ruin carried him. She had no other choice, it seems to me, than to throw herself

58 The first quotation is from Seneca's Letters; the second adapts Horace, Epistles.
59 The quotation is from Seneca's Letters.
60 The story is told in Plutarch's Life of Agis; it took place in the 3rd century BC.

FRENCH

et où elle se montroit plus pitoyable. Ie me laisse plus naturellement aller apres l'exemple de Flaminius, qui se prestoit à ceux qui auoyent besoin de luy, plus qu'à ceux qui luy pouuoient bien-faire: que ie ne fais à celuy de Pyrrhus, propre à s'abaisser soubs les grands, et à s'enorgueillir sur les petits.

3.13.50 Les longues tables m'ennuyent, et me nuisent: car soit pour m'y estre accoustumé enfant, à faute de meilleure contenance, ie mange autant que i'y suis. Pourtant chez moy, quoy qu'elle soit des courtes, ie m'y mets volontiers vn peu apres les autres; sur la forme d'Auguste: mais ie ne l'imite pas, en ce qu'il en sortoit aussi auant les autres. Au rebours, i'ayme à me reposer long temps apres, et en ouyr comter: pourueu que ie ne m'y mesle point; car ie me lasse et me blesse de parler, l'estomach plain: autant comme ie trouue l'exercice de crier, et contester, auant le repas, tressalubre et plaisant.

3.13.51 Les anciens Grecs et Romains auoyent meilleure raison que nous, assignans à la nourriture, qui est vne action principale de la vie, si autre extraordinaire occupation ne les en diuertissoit, plusieurs heures, et la meilleure partie de la nuict: mangeans et beuuans moins hastiuement que nous, qui passons en poste toutes noz actions: et estendans ce plaisir naturel, à plus de loisir et d'vsage, y entresemans diuers offices de conuersation, vtiles et aggreables.

3.13.52 Ceux qui doiuent auoir soing de moy, pourroyent à bon marché me desrober ce qu'ils pensent m'estre nuisible: car en telles choses, ie ne desire iamais, ny ne trouue à dire, ce que ie ne vois pas: mais aussi de celles qui se presentent, ils perdent leur temps de m'en prescher l'abstinence. Si que quand ie veux ieusner, il me faut mettre à part des souppeurs; et qu'on me presente iustement, autant qu'il est besoin pour vne reglée collation: car si ie me mets à table, i'oublie ma resolution. Quand i'ordonne qu'on change d'apprest à quelque viande; mes gens sçauent, que c'est à dire, que mon appetit est allanguy, et que ie n'y toucheray point.

En toutes celles qui le peuuent souffrir, ie les ayme peu cuittes. Et les ayme fort mortifiées: et iusques à l'alteration de la senteur, en plusieurs. Il n'y a que la dureté qui generalement me fasche (de toute autre qualité, ie suis aussi nonchalant et souffrant qu'homme que i'aye cogneu) si que contre l'humeur commune, entre

ENGLISH

into the party where she was most needed and where she could show the most compassion. I am more naturally inclined to follow the example of Flamininus, who gave himself to those who needed him rather than to those who could do him good, than that of Pyrrhus, who was apt to stoop before the great and swagger over the small.

Long meals weary me and do me harm. For, perhaps because I got used to it as a child for lack of anything better to do with myself, I eat as long as I am at table. So at home, though my table is one of the short ones, I like to sit down a little after the others, in the manner of Augustus; but I do not imitate him in leaving before the others as well. On the contrary, I like to sit on for a long while afterward and listen to the talk, provided I take no part in it. For talking on a full stomach tires me and does me harm, just as I find the exercise of shouting and arguing before a meal very healthy and pleasant.

The ancient Greeks and Romans were wiser than we are. Unless some other extraordinary occupation diverted them, they gave several hours and the better part of the night to eating, which is one of the principal actions of life. They ate and drank less hurriedly than we do, who rush through all our actions post-haste. They stretched out this natural pleasure with more leisure and enjoyment, interspersing it with various kinds of useful and agreeable conversation.

Those who have to look after me could easily steal from me whatever they think is bad for me, for in such matters I never want or miss what I do not see. But as for things that are set before me, they waste their time preaching abstinence to me. So when I want to fast, I must be kept apart from the supper-eaters and served exactly as much as a measured light meal requires; for if I sit down at table, I forget my resolution. When I order a dish to be prepared some other way, my people know that this means my appetite has flagged and I shall not touch it.

I like all meats that can stand it underdone. And I like them well hung, in many cases even to the point where the smell changes. Only toughness generally bothers me (about every other quality I am as indifferent and tolerant as any man I have

FRENCH	ENGLISH
les poissons mesme, il m'aduient d'en trouuer, et de trop frais, et de trop fermes. Ce n'est pas la faute de mes dents, que i'ay eu tousiours bonnes iusques à l'excellence; et que l'aage ne commence de menasser qu'à cette heure. I'ay apprins dés l'enfance, à les frotter de ma seruiette, et le matin, et à l'entrée et issuë de la table.	known), so that, contrary to the common taste, I find even some fish both too fresh and too firm. It is not the fault of my teeth. They have always been good, to the point of excellence, and age is only now beginning to threaten them. I learned in childhood to rub them with my napkin, both in the morning and on sitting down to table and rising from it.

DYING BY DEGREES

Losing a tooth, he welcomes a death that comes piece by piece.

FRENCH	ENGLISH
3.13.53 Dieu faict grace à ceux à qui il soustrait la vie par le menu. C'est le seul benefice de la vieillesse. La derniere mort en sera d'autant moins plaine et nuisible: elle ne tuera plus qu'vn demy, ou vn quart d'homme. Voila vne dent qui me vient de choir, sans douleur, sans effort: c'estoit le terme naturel de sa durée. Et cette partie de mon estre, et plusieurs autres, sont desia mortes, autres demy mortes, des plus actiues, et qui tenoyent le premier rang pendant la vigueur de mon aage. C'est ainsi que ie fons, et eschappe à moy. Quelle bestise sera-ce à mon entendement, de sentir le sault de cette cheute, desia si auancée, comme si elle estoit entiere? Ie ne l'espere pas.	God shows favor to those from whom he takes life away bit by bit. That is the only benefit of old age. The final death will be all the less complete and harmful for it: it will kill no more than half a man, or a quarter. Here is a tooth that has just fallen out, without pain, without effort: it had reached the natural term of its life. And that part of my being, and several others, are already dead, and others half dead—some of the most active ones, which held first rank in the vigor of my prime. That is how I melt away and slip from myself. What stupidity it would be in my understanding to feel the final drop of this fall, already so far advanced, as if it were the whole fall! I hope it will not.
A la verité, ie reçoy vne principale consolation aux pensées de ma mort, qu'elle soit des iustes et naturelles: et que mes-huy ie ne puisse en cela, requerir ni esperer de la destinée, faueur qu'illegitime. Les hommes se font accroire, qu'ils ont eu autres-fois, comme la stature, la vie aussi plus grande. Mais ils se trompent: et Solon, qui est de ces vieux temps-là, en taille pourtant l'extreme durée à soixante et dix ans. Moy qui ay tant adoré et si vniuersellement cet αριστον μετρον, du temps passé: et qui ay tant pris pour la plus parfaicte, la moyenne mesure: pretendray-ie vne desmesurée et prodigieuse vieillesse?	In truth, my chief consolation when I think of my death is that it will be of the just and natural kind, and that from now on I cannot ask or hope from destiny for any favor in this matter that would not be illegitimate. Men persuade themselves that in former times they had longer lives, as they had greater stature. But they are mistaken: Solon, who belongs to those old times, nevertheless sets the extreme limit of life at seventy years. I, who have so worshiped, and in all things, that *measure is best* of ancient times, and who have taken the middle measure as the most perfect—am I to aspire to an immoderate and prodigious old age?[61]
Tout ce qui vient au reuers du cours de nature, peut estre fascheux: mais ce, qui vient selon elle, doibt estre tousiours plaisant. *Omnia, quæ secundum naturam fiunt, sunt habenda in bonis.* Par ainsi, dit Platon, la mort, que les playes ou maladies apportent, soit violente: mais celle, qui nous surprend, la vieillesse nous y conduisant, est de toutes la plus legere, et aucunement delicieuse. *Vitam*	Whatever goes against the course of nature may be unpleasant, but what comes in accordance with it should always be pleasant. *All things that happen according to nature are to be counted among goods.* Thus, says Plato, the death brought by wounds or illness may be violent; but the death that comes upon us with old age leading us to it is the lightest

61 "Measure is best" was the motto of Cleobulus, one of the Seven Sages.

FRENCH

adolescentibus vis aufert, senibus maturitas. La mort se mesle et confond par tout à nostre vie: le declin præoccupe son heure, et s'ingere au cours de nostre auancement mesme. I'ay des portraits de ma forme de vingt et cinq, et de trente cinq ans: ie les compare auec celuy d'asteure.

Combien de fois, ce n'est plus moy: combien est mon image presente plus eslongnée de celles là, que de celle de mon trespas. C'est trop abusé de nature, de la tracasser si loing, qu'elle soit contrainte de nous quitter: et abandonner nostre conduite, nos yeux, nos dens, nos iambes, et le reste, à la mercy d'vn secours estranger et mandié: et nous resigner entre les mains de l'art, las de nous suyure.

3.13.54 Ie ne suis excessiuement desireux, ny de salades, ny de fruits: sauf les melons. Mon pere haïssoit toute sorte de sauces, ie les ayme toutes. Le trop manger m'empesche: mais par sa qualité, ie n'ay encore cognoissance bien certaine, qu'aucune viande me nuise: comme aussi ie ne remarque, ny lune plaine, ny basse, ny l'automne du printemps. Il y a des mouuemens en nous, inconstans et incognuz. Car des refors, pour exemple, ie les ay trouuez premierement commodes, depuis fascheux, à present de rechef commodes. En plusieurs choses, ie sens mon estomach et mon appetit aller ainsi diuersifiant. I'ay rechangé du blanc au clairet, et puis du clairet au blanc.

3.13.55 Ie suis friand de poisson, et fais mes iours gras des maigres: et mes festes des iours de ieusne. Ie croy ce qu'aucuns disent, qu'il est de plus aisée digestion que la chair. Comme ie fais conscience de manger de la viande, le iour de poisson: aussi fait mon goust, de mesler le poisson à la chair. Cette diuersité me semble trop eslongnée.

3.13.56 Dés ma ieunesse, ie desrobois par fois quelque repas: ou à fin d'esguiser mon appetit au lendemain (car comme Epicurus ieusnoit et faisoit des repas maigres, pour accoustumer sa volupté à se passer de l'abondance: moy au rebours, pour dresser ma volupté, à faire mieux son profit, et se seruir plus alaigrement, de l'abondance) ou ie ieusnois, pour conseruer ma vigueur au seruice de quelque action de corps ou d'esprit: car et l'vn et l'autre, s'apparesse cruellement en moy, par la repletion: (et sur tout, ie hay ce sot accouplage, d'vne Deesse si saine et si alegre, auec ce petit Dieu indigest et roteur, tout bouffy

ENGLISH

of all, and in a way delightful. *Violence takes life from the young, ripeness from the old.* Death mingles and blends everywhere with our life. Decline anticipates its hour and thrusts itself into the very course of our growth. I have portraits of myself at twenty-five and at thirty-five; I compare them with the one of today.[62]

How many times over it is no longer I! How much farther my present image is from those than from the image of my death! It is abusing nature too much to drag her so far that she is forced to leave us, to abandon our guidance—our eyes, our teeth, our legs, and the rest—to the mercy of outside help we have to beg for, and, weary of following us, to hand us over to the hands of art.

I am not excessively fond of salads or of fruit, except melons. My father hated every kind of sauce; I like them all. Eating too much bothers me; but as for the nature of foods, I do not yet know for certain that any food harms me. Nor do I notice full moon or waning moon, or autumn as against spring. There are movements in us that are inconstant and unknown. Radishes, for example: first I found them agreeable, then troublesome, and now agreeable again. In several things I feel my stomach and my appetite varying like this. I have switched from white wine to claret, and then from claret back to white.

I am fond of fish, and I make my meat days of the lean days and my feasts of the fast days. I believe what some say, that it is easier to digest than meat. Just as my conscience balks at eating meat on a fish day, so my taste balks at mixing fish with meat. The gap between them seems to me too wide.

Since my youth I have sometimes skipped a meal. Sometimes it was to sharpen my appetite for the next day: for as Epicurus fasted and ate lean meals to accustom his pleasure to do without abundance, I did the opposite, to train my pleasure to make better profit and more cheerful use of abundance. Sometimes I fasted to keep my vigor for some action of body or mind, for both grow cruelly sluggish in me from a full stomach (and above all I hate that foolish coupling of so healthy

62 Both quotations are from Cicero, On Old Age.

FRENCH

de la fumée de sa liqueur) ou pour guarir mon estomach malade: ou pour estre sans compaignie propre.

Car ie dy comme ce mesme Epicurus, qu'il ne faut pas tant regarder ce qu'on mange, qu'auec qui on mange. Et louë Chilon, de n'auoir voulu promettre de se trouuer au festin de Periander, auant que d'estre informé, qui estoyent les autres conuiez. Il n'est point de si doux apprest pour moy, ny de sauce si appetissante, que celle qui se tire de la societé. Ie croys qu'il est plus sain, de manger plus bellement et moins: et de manger plus souuent. Mais ie veux faire valoir l'appetit et la faim: ie n'aurois nul plaisir à trainer à la medecinale, trois ou quatre chetifs repas par iour, ainsi contrains. Qui m'asseureroit que le goust ouuert, que i'ay ce matin, ie le retrouuasse encore à souper?

Prenons, sur tout les vieillards: le premier temps opportun qui nous vient. Laissons aux faiseurs d'almanachs les esperances et les prognostiques. L'extreme fruict de ma santé, c'est la volupté: tenons nous à la premiere presente et cognuë. I'euite la constance en ces loix de ieusne. Qui veut qu'vne forme luy serue, fuye à la continuer: nous nous y durcissons, nos forces s'y endorment: six mois apres, vous y aurez si bien acoquiné vostre estomach, que vostre proffit, ce ne sera que d'auoir perdu la liberté d'en vser autrement sans dommage.

3.13.57 Ie ne porte les iambes, et les cuisses, non plus couuertes en hyuer qu'en esté, vn bas de soye tout simple. Ie me suis laissé aller pour le secours de mes reumes, à tenir la teste plus chaude, et le ventre, pour ma colique. Mes maux s'y habituerent en peu de iours, et desdaignerent mes ordinaires prouisions. I'estois monté d'vne coiffe à vn couurechef, et d'vn bonnet à vn chapeau double. Les embourreures de mon pourpoint, ne me seruent plus que de galbe: ce n'est rien: si ie n'y adiouste vne peau de lieure ou de vautour: vne calote à ma teste. Suyuez cette gradation, vous irez beau train. Ie n'en feray rien. Et me dedirois volontiers du commencement que i'y ay donné, si i'osois.

Tombez vous en quelque inconuenient nouueau? cette reformation ne vous sert plus: vous y estes accoustumé, cherchez en vne autre. Ainsi se ruinent ceux qui se

ENGLISH

and lively a goddess with that little indigestible, belching god, all bloated with the fumes of his liquor). Sometimes it was to cure my sick stomach, or because I lacked suitable company.[63]

For I say, like that same Epicurus, that we should look not so much at what we eat as at whom we eat with. And I praise Chilon for refusing to promise to attend Periander's feast before he had been told who the other guests were. For me there is no dressing so sweet, no sauce so appetizing, as the one that comes from company. I believe it is healthier to eat more gently and less, and to eat more often. But I want to give appetite and hunger their due. I would get no pleasure from dragging out three or four meager meals a day, medicinally, under such constraint. Who could assure me that I would find the keen appetite I have this morning again at supper?

Let us seize—old men above all—the first opportune moment that comes our way. Let us leave hopes and forecasts to the almanac-makers. The ultimate fruit of my health is pleasure: let us hold on to the first pleasure that is present and known. I avoid constancy in these laws of fasting. Whoever wants a regimen to serve him should avoid keeping it up. We grow hardened to it, and our powers fall asleep in it. Six months later you will have got your stomach so used to it that your only profit will be to have lost the freedom to do otherwise without harm.

I keep my legs and thighs no more covered in winter than in summer: a single plain silk stocking. To help with my colds I let myself keep my head warmer, and my belly for my colic. My ailments got used to it in a few days and scorned my ordinary provisions. I had moved up from a cap to a kerchief, and from a bonnet to a double hat. The padding of my doublet now serves only for show. That is nothing, unless I add a hare's skin or a vulture's skin, and a skullcap on my head. Follow this progression and you will go at a fine pace. I shall do nothing of the sort. And I would gladly take back the start I gave it, if I dared.

Do you fall into some new trouble? This adjustment is no use to you anymore; you are used to it; look for another. That is how those people ruin

63 The goddess and the god are Venus and Bacchus.

FRENCH

laissent empestrer à des regimes contraincts, et s'y astreignent superstitieusement: il leur en faut encore, et encore apres, d'autres au delà: ce n'est iamais fait.

3.13.58 Pour nos occupations, et le plaisir: il est beaucoup plus commode, comme faisoyent les anciens, de perdre le disner, et remettre à faire bonne chere à l'heure de la retraicte et du repos, sans rompre le iour: ainsi le faisois-ie autresfois. Pour la santé, ie trouue depuis par experience au contraire, qu'il vaut mieux disner, et que la digestion se faict mieux en veillant. Ie ne suis guere subiect à estre alteré ny sain ny malade: i'ay bien volontiers lors la bouche seche, mais sans soif. Et communement, ie ne bois que du desir qui m'en vient en mangeant, et bien auant dans le repas. Ie bois assez bien, pour vn homme de commune façon.

En esté, et en vn repas appetissant, ie n'outrepasse point seulement les limites d'Auguste, qui ne beuuoit que trois fois precisement: mais pour n'offenser la regle de Democritus, qui deffendoit de s'arrester à quattre, comme à vn nombre mal fortuné, ie coule à vn besoing, iusques à cinq: trois demysetiers, enuiron. Car les petis verres sont les miens fauoris: et me plaist de les vuider, ce que d'autres euitent comme chose mal seante. Ie trempe mon vin plus souuent à moitié, par fois au tiers d'eau. Et quand ie suis en ma maison, d'vn ancien vsage que son medecin ordonnoit à mon pere, et à soy, on mesle celuy qu'il me faut, des la sommelerie, deux ou trois heures auant qu'on serue.

Ils disent, que Cranaus Roy des Atheniens fut inuenteur de cet vsage, de tremper le vin: vtilement ou non, i'en ay veu debattre. I'estime plus decent et plus sain, que les enfans n'en vsent qu'apres seize ou dix-huict ans. La forme de viure plus vsitée et commune, est la plus belle. Toute particularité, m'y semble à euiter: et haïrois autant vn Aleman qui mist de l'eau au vin, qu'vn François qui le buroit pur. L'vsage publiq donne loy à telles choses.

3.13.59 Ie crains vn air empesché, et fuys mortellement la fumée: (la premiere reparation où ie courus chez moy, ce fut aux cheminées, et aux retraicts, vice commun des vieux bastimens, et insupportable) et entre les difficultez de la guerre, comte ces espaisses poussieres, dans lesquelles on nous tient enterrez au chault, tout le long d'vne iournée.

ENGLISH

themselves who let themselves get entangled in strict regimens and bind themselves to them superstitiously. They need more, and more again after that, and still others beyond: it is never done.

For our occupations, and for pleasure, it is much more convenient to skip the midday meal, as the ancients did, and put off feasting until the hour of retirement and rest, without breaking up the day. That is what I used to do. For health, on the contrary, I have since found by experience that it is better to eat at midday, and that digestion goes better when one is awake. I am hardly ever thirsty, sick or well. At such times I do often have a dry mouth, but without thirst. As a rule I drink only from the desire that comes to me while eating, and well into the meal. I drink fairly well for a man of ordinary make.

In summer, and at an appetizing meal, I not only exceed the limit of Augustus, who drank precisely three times and no more, but, so as not to break the rule of Democritus, who forbade stopping at four as an unlucky number, I slip on when need be to five: about three half-pints. For small glasses are my favorites, and I like to empty them, which others avoid as unseemly. Most often I dilute my wine half with water, sometimes with a third. And when I am at home, following an old practice that his physician prescribed for my father and for himself, the wine I need is mixed in the pantry two or three hours before it is served.

They say that Cranaus, king of the Athenians, invented this practice of watering wine; whether usefully or not, I have heard it debated. I think it more seemly and healthier for children not to drink wine until after sixteen or eighteen. The most usual and common way of life is the finest. All singularity seems to me something to avoid in it; and I would hate a German who put water in his wine as much as a Frenchman who drank it neat. Public usage lays down the law in such things.[64]

I dread stuffy air and avoid smoke like death (the first repairs I rushed to make in my house were to the chimneys and privies, a common and unbearable fault of old buildings). And among the hardships of war I count those thick clouds of dust in which they keep us buried in the heat all day long.

64 Cranaus, a legendary early king of Athens.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
	I'ay la respiration libre et aysée: et se passent mes morfondements le plus souuent sans offence du poulmon, et sans toux.	My breathing is free and easy, and my colds usually pass without affecting the lungs and without a cough.
3.13.60	L'aspreté de l'esté m'est plus ennemie que celle de l'hyuer: car outre l'incommodité de la chaleur, moins remediable que celle du froid, et outre le coup que les rayons du soleil donnent à la teste: mes yeux s'offencent de toute lueur esclatante: ie ne sçaurois à cette heure disner assiz, vis à vis d'vn feu ardent, et lumineux.	The harshness of summer is more hostile to me than that of winter. For besides the discomfort of heat, which is harder to remedy than that of cold, and besides the blow the sun's rays deal to the head, my eyes are hurt by any glaring light. I could not now dine sitting opposite a bright, blazing fire.
3.13.61	Pour amortir la blancheur du papier, au temps que i'auois plus accoustumé de lire, ie couchois sur mon liure, vne piece de verre, et m'en trouuois fort soulagé. I'ignore iusques à present, l'vsage des lunettes: et vois aussi loing, que ie fis onques, et que tout autre. Il est vray, que sur le declin du iour, ie commence à sentir du trouble, et de la foiblesse à lire: dequoy l'exercice a tousiours trauaillé mes yeux: mais sur tout nocturne. Voyla vn pas en arriere: à toute peine sensible. Ie reculeray d'vn autre; du second au tiers, du tiers au quart, si coïement qu'il me faudra estre aueugle formé, auant que ie sente la decadence et vieillesse de ma veuë.	To dull the whiteness of the paper, when I was more in the habit of reading, I used to lay a piece of glass over my book, and found it a great relief. To this day I know nothing of the use of spectacles, and I see as far as I ever did, and as far as anyone. It is true that as the day declines I begin to feel some blurring and weakness when I read—an exercise that has always strained my eyes, but especially at night. That is one step backward, barely perceptible. I shall go back another, from the second to the third, from the third to the fourth, so quietly that I shall have to be fully blind before I feel the decline and aging of my sight.
	Tant les Parques destordent artificiellement nostre vie. Si suis-ie en doubte, que mon ouïe marchande à s'espaissir: et verrez que ie l'auray demy perdue, que ie m'en prendray encore à la voix de ceux qui parlent à moy. Il faut bien bander l'ame, pour luy faire sentir, comme elle s'escoule.	So artfully do the Fates unwind our life. And yet I suspect that my hearing is beginning to grow dull; and you will see that when I have half lost it I shall still be blaming the voices of the people speaking to me. One must strain the soul hard indeed to make it feel how it is ebbing away.
3.13.62	Mon marcher est prompt et ferme: et ne sçay lequel des deux, ou l'esprit ou le corps, i'ay arresté plus malaisément, en mesme poinct. Le prescheur est bien de mes amys, qui oblige mon attention, tout vn sermon. Aux lieux de ceremonie, où chacun est si bandé en contenance, où i'ay veu les dames tenir leurs yeux mesmes si certains, ie ne suis iamais venu à bout, que quelque piece des miennes n'extrauague tousiours: encore que i'y sois assis, i'y suis peu rassis.	My walk is quick and firm; and I do not know which of the two, mind or body, I have found harder to keep fixed on one spot. The preacher who holds my attention through a whole sermon is a good friend of mine indeed. At ceremonies, where everyone keeps his countenance so stiff, where I have seen ladies hold even their eyes so steady, I have never managed to stop some part of me from forever wandering off. Though I am seated, I am hardly settled.
	Comme la chambriere du Philosophe Chrysippus, disoit de son maistre, qu'il n'estoit yure que par les iambes: car il auoit cette coustume de les remuer, en quelque assiette qu'il fust: et elle le disoit, lors que le vin esmouuant ses compaignons, luy n'en sentoit aucune alteration. On a peu dire aussi dés mon enfance, que i'auoy de la follie aux pieds, ou de l'argent vif: tant i'y ay de remuement et d'inconstance naturelle, en quelque lieu, que ie les place.	The maidservant of the philosopher Chrysippus said of her master that he was drunk only in his legs, for he had the habit of moving them whatever position he was in; and she said it at times when the wine was stirring his companions and he felt no change from it. In the same way it could have been said of me since childhood that I had folly in my feet, or quicksilver, so much fidget-

FRENCH

ENGLISH

ing and natural restlessness do I have in them, wherever I put them.

3.13.63 C'est indecence, outre ce qu'il nuit à la santé, voire et au plaisir, de manger gouluement, comme ie fais. Ie mors souuent ma langue, par fois mes doigts, de hastiueté. Diogenes, rencontrant vn enfant qui mangeoit ainsin, en donna vn soufflet à son precepteur. Il y auoit des hommes à Rome, qui enseignoyent à mascher, comme à marcher, de bonne grace. I'en pers le loisir de parler, qui est vn si doux assaisonnement des tables, pourueu que ce soyent des propos de mesme, plaisans et courts.

It is unseemly, besides being bad for one's health and even for one's pleasure, to eat greedily, as I do. I often bite my tongue, and sometimes my fingers, in my haste. Diogenes, meeting a boy who was eating like that, gave his tutor a slap. There were men in Rome who taught people to chew gracefully, as they taught them to walk. Eating this way I lose the leisure to talk, which is such a sweet seasoning to a meal, provided the talk is of the same sort, pleasant and short.

3.13.64 Il y a de la ialousie et enuie entre nos plaisirs, ils se choquent et empeschent l'vn l'autre. Alcibiades, homme bien entendu à faire bonne chere, chassoit la musique mesme des tables, pour qu'elle ne troublast la douceur des deuis, par la raison, que Platon luy preste. Que c'est vn vsage d'hommes populaires, d'appeller des ioüeurs d'instruments et des chantres aux festins, à faute de bons discours et aggreables entretiens, dequoy les gens d'entendement sçauent s'entrefestoyer. Varro demande cecy au conuiue: l'assemblée de personnes belles de presence, et aggreables de conuersation, qui ne soyent ny muets ny bauarts: netteté et delicatesse aux viures, et au lieu: et le temps serein. Ce n'est pas vne feste peu artificielle, et peu voluptueuse, qu'vn bon traittement de table.

There is jealousy and envy among our pleasures: they clash and get in each other's way. Alcibiades, a man who well understood good living, banished even music from the table, so that it would not disturb the sweetness of conversation, for the reason Plato gives him: that it is a custom of common men to call in instrument players and singers to their feasts, for lack of the good talk and pleasant conversation with which people of understanding know how to regale one another. Varro asks this of a banquet: a gathering of people handsome in appearance and agreeable in conversation, who are neither mute nor chatterboxes; cleanliness and delicacy in the food and the place; and fine weather. A good table is no small work of art and no small pleasure.[65]

Ny les grands chefs de guerre, ny les grands philosophes, n'en ont desdaigné l'vsage et la science. Mon imagination en a donné trois en garde à ma memoire, que la fortune me rendit de souueraine douceur, en diuers temps de mon aage plus fleurissant. Mon estat present m'en forclost. Car chacun pour soy y fournit de grace principale, et de saueur, selon la bonne trampe de corps et d'ame, en quoy lors il se trouue. Moy qui ne manie que terre à terre, hay cette inhumaine sapience, qui nous veut rendre desdaigneux et ennemis de la culture du corps. I'estime pareille iniustice, de prendre à contre cœur les voluptez naturelles, que de les prendre trop à cœur.

Neither great generals nor great philosophers have disdained its practice and its science. My imagination has entrusted to my memory three such meals, which fortune made supremely sweet for me at various times in the flower of my life. My present state shuts me out of them, for each person supplies the chief charm and savor according to the good temper of body and soul he finds himself in at the time. I, who deal only in things down to earth, hate that inhuman wisdom that would make us disdainful of the care of the body and hostile to it. I think it equally unjust to set our hearts against natural pleasures as to set our hearts on them too much.

65 Varro's rules for a dinner party are reported by Aulus Gellius.

ACCEPTING PLEASURE

Natural pleasures should be received, neither chased nor fled; when I dance, I dance.

FRENCH

Xerxes estoit un fat, qui enueloppé en toutes les voluptez humaines, alloit proposer prix à qui luy en trouueroit d'autres. Mais non guere moins fat est celuy, qui retranche celles, que nature luy a trouuées. Il ne les faut ny suyure ny fuyr: il les faut receuoir. Ie les reçois vn peu plus grassement et gratieusement, et me laisse plus volontiers aller vers la pente naturelle. Nous n'auons que faire d'exaggerer leur inanité: elle se faict assez sentir, et se produit assez. Mercy à nostre esprit maladif, rabat-ioye, qui nous desgouste d'elles, comme de soy-mesme.

Il traitte et soy, et tout ce qu'il reçoit, tantost auant, tantost arriere, selon son estre insatiable, vagabond et versatile: *Sincerum est nisi vas, quodcunque infundis, acescit.* Moy, qui me vente d'embrasser si curieusement les commoditez de la vie, et si particulierement: n'y trouue, quand i'y regarde ainsi finement, à peu pres que du vent. Mais quoy? nous sommes par tout vent. Et le vent encore, plus sagement que nous s'ayme à bruire, à s'agiter: et se contente en ses propres offices: sans desirer la stabilité, la solidité, qualitez non siennes.

3.13.65 Les plaisirs purs de l'imagination, ainsi que les desplaisirs, disent aucuns, sont les plus grands: comme l'exprimoit la balance de Critolaüs. Ce n'est pas merueille. Elle les compose à sa poste, et se les taille en plein drap. I'en voy tous les iours, des exemples insignes, et à l'aduenture desirables. Mais moy, d'vne condition mixte, grossier, ne puis mordre si à faict, à ce seul obiect, si simple: que ie ne me laisse tout lourdement aller aux plaisirs presents, de la loy humaine et generale. Intellectuellement sensibles, sensiblement intellectuels. Les philosophes Cyrenaïques veulent, que comme les douleurs, aussi les plaisirs corporels soyent plus puissants: et comme doubles, et comme plus iustes. Il en est, comme dit Aristote, qui d'vne farouche stupidité, en font les desgoustez.

I'en cognoy d'autres qui par ambition le font. Que ne renoncent ils encore au respirer? que ne viuent-ils du

ENGLISH

Xerxes was a fool: wrapped in every human pleasure, he went and offered a prize to whoever could find him others. But hardly less a fool is the man who cuts off those that nature has found for him. We should neither pursue them nor flee them; we should accept them. I accept them a little more amply and graciously, and more readily let myself follow the natural slope. We have no need to exaggerate their emptiness: it makes itself felt enough and shows itself enough. Thanks to our sickly, killjoy mind, which puts us off them as it puts us off itself.

It treats both itself and everything it receives now well, now badly, according to its insatiable, wandering, and fickle nature: *Unless the vessel is clean, whatever you pour into it turns sour.* I, who boast of embracing the comforts of life so carefully and so particularly, find in them, when I look at them that closely, little more than wind. But what of it? We are wind through and through. And even the wind, more wisely than we, likes to make a noise and move about, and is content with its own functions, without wishing for stability and solidity, qualities that are not its own.[66]

The pure pleasures of the imagination, some say, like its displeasures, are the greatest, as the scales of Critolaus expressed. No wonder: the imagination composes them as it pleases and cuts them out of whole cloth. Every day I see striking examples of this, and perhaps enviable ones. But I, being of a mixed condition and coarse, cannot bite so wholly into this single, simple object that I do not let myself go, quite heavily, to the present pleasures of the general human law—intellectually sensual, sensually intellectual. The Cyrenaic philosophers hold that bodily pleasures, like bodily pains, are the more powerful, both as being double and as being more just. There are some, as Aristotle says, who out of a fierce insensibility make a show of disdaining them.[67]

I know others who do it out of ambition. Why don't they give up breathing too? Why don't they live on

66 Horace, Epistles.

FRENCH

leur, et ne refusent la lumiere, de ce qu'elle est gratuite: ne leur coutant ny inuention ny vigueur? Que Mars, ou Pallas, ou Mercure, les substantent pour voir, au lieu de Venus, de Cerez, et de Bacchus. Chercheront ils pas la quadrature du cercle, iuchez sur leurs femmes? Ie hay, qu'on nous ordonne d'auoir l'esprit aux nues, pendant que nous auons le corps à table. Ie ne veux pas que l'esprit s'y clouë, ny qu'il s'y veautre: mais ie veux qu'il s'y applique: qu'il s'y see, non qu'il s'y couche.

Aristippus ne defendoit que le corps, comme si nous n'auions pas d'ame: Zenon n'embrassoit que l'ame, comme si nous n'auions pas de corps. Touts deux vicieusement. Pythagoras, disent-ils, a suiuy vne philosophie toute en contemplation: Socrates, toute en mœurs et en action: Platon en a trouué le temperament entre les deux. Mais ils le disent, pour en conter. Et le vray temperament se trouue en Socrates; et Platon est plus Socratique, que Pythagorique: et luy sied mieux. Quand ie dance, ie dance: quand ie dors, ie dors.

Voire, et quand ie me promeine solitairement en vn beau verger, si mes pensees se sont entretenuës des occurrences estrangeres quelque partie du temps: quelque autre partie, ie les rameine à la promenade, au verger, à la douceur de cette solitude, et à moy.

3.13.66 Nature a maternellement obserué cela, que les actions qu'elle nous a enioinctes pour nostre besoing, nous fussent aussi voluptueuses. Et nous y conuie, non seulement par la raison: mais aussi par l'appetit: c'est iniustice de corrompre ses regles. Quand ie vois, et Cæsar, et Alexandre, au plus espaiz de sa grande besongne, iouïr si plainement des plaisirs humains et corporels, ie ne dis pas que ce soit relascher son ame, ie dis que c'est la roidir: sousmettant par vigueur de courage, à l'vsage de la vie ordinaire, ces violentes occupations et laborieuses pensées. Sages, s'ils eussent creu, que c'estoit là leur ordinaire vocation, cette-cy, l'extraordinaire. Nous sommes de grands fols. Il a passé sa vie en oisiueté, disons-nous: ie n'ay rien faict d'auiourd'huy. Quoy?

auez-vous pas vescu? C'est non seulement la fondamentale, mais la plus illustre de vos occupations. Si on m'eust mis au propre des grands maniements, i'eusse montré ce que ie sçauoy faire. Auez vous sceu mediter et manier vostre vie? vous auez faict la plus grande

ENGLISH

their own resources, and refuse the light because it is free and costs them neither invention nor vigor? Let Mars or Pallas or Mercury feed them, just to see, instead of Venus, Ceres, and Bacchus. Won't they be seeking to square the circle while perched on their wives? I hate being told to keep our minds in the clouds while our bodies are at table. I do not want the mind to be nailed to the table or to wallow there, but I want it to attend to it: to sit at it, not lie down at it.

Aristippus defended only the body, as if we had no soul; Zeno embraced only the soul, as if we had no body. Both were at fault. Pythagoras, they say, followed a philosophy that was all contemplation, Socrates one that was all morals and action; Plato found the balance between the two. But they say this just to tell a story. The true balance is found in Socrates; and Plato is more Socratic than Pythagorean, and it suits him better. When I dance, I dance; when I sleep, I sleep.

Yes, and when I walk alone in a beautiful orchard, if my thoughts have been occupied with outside matters for part of the time, for another part I bring them back to the walk, to the orchard, to the sweetness of this solitude, and to myself.

Nature has seen to it, like a mother, that the actions she has enjoined on us for our needs should also give us pleasure. She invites us to them not only through reason but also through appetite: it is wrong to corrupt her rules. When I see both Caesar and Alexander, in the thick of their great task, enjoying human and bodily pleasures so fully, I do not say that they are relaxing their souls; I say they are toughening them, by strength of spirit subjecting those violent occupations and laborious thoughts to the practice of ordinary life. Wise men they would have been, had they believed that ordinary life was their regular calling and the other their extraordinary one. We are great fools. "He has spent his life in idleness," we say; "I have done nothing today." What?

Have you not lived? That is not only the most fundamental of your occupations but the most illustrious. "If I had been put in charge of great affairs, I would have shown what I could do." Have you

67 Critolaus, a Peripatetic philosopher of the 2nd century BC, held that goods of the soul would outweigh in a balance all goods of the body and of fortune.

FRENCH	ENGLISH
besoigne de toutes. Pour se montrer et exploicter, nature n'a que faire de fortune. Elle se montre egallement en tous estages: et derriere, comme sans rideau. Auez-vous sceu composer vos mœurs: vous auez bien plus faict que celuy qui a composé des liures. Auez-vous sceu prendre du repos: vous auez plus faict, que celuy qui a pris des Empires et des villes.	known how to think over and manage your life? You have done the greatest task of all. To show and exert herself, nature has no need of fortune. She shows herself equally at every level, and behind a curtain as well as without one. Have you known how to compose your character? You have done much more than the man who has composed books. Have you known how to take rest? You have done more than the man who has taken empires and cities.

LIVING FITTINGLY

To live well is man's masterpiece, and Socrates is its model.

FRENCH	ENGLISH
3.13.67 Le glorieux chef-d'œuure de l'homme, c'est viure à propos. Toutes autres choses: regner, thesauriser, bastir, n'en sont qu'appendicules et adminicules, pour le plus. Ie prens plaisir de voir vn general d'armée au pied d'vne breche qu'il veut tantost attaquer, se prestant tout entier et deliure, à son disner, au deuis, entre ses amis. Et Brutus, ayant le ciel et la terre conspirez à l'encontre de luy, et de la liberté Romaine, desrober à ses rondes, quelque heure de nuict, pour lire et breueter Polybe en toute securité. C'est aux petites ames enseuelies du poix des affaires, de ne s'en sçauoir purement desmesler: de ne les sçauoir et laisser et reprendre.	The glorious masterpiece of man is to live fittingly. All other things—ruling, hoarding, building—are only little appendages and props, at most. I enjoy seeing a general at the foot of a breach he is about to attack, giving himself wholly and freely to his dinner and to conversation among his friends. And Brutus, with heaven and earth conspiring against him and against Roman liberty, stealing an hour of the night from his rounds to read and summarize Polybius in perfect calm. It is for little souls, buried under the weight of business, not to know how to disentangle themselves from it cleanly, not to know how to set it aside and take it up again.[68]
O fortes peioràque passi *Mecum sæpe viri, nunc vino pellite curas,* *Cras ingens iterabimus æquor.*	*O brave men, who have often suffered worse things with me, now drive away your cares with wine; tomorrow we shall set out again on the vast sea.*[69]
3.13.68 Soit par gosserie, soit à certes, que le vin theologal et Sorbonique est passé en prouerbe, et leurs festins: ie trouue que c'est raison, qu'ils en disnent d'autant plus commodément et plaisamment, qu'ils ont vtilement et serieusement employé la matinée à l'exercice de leur eschole. La conscience d'auoir bien dispensé les autres heures, est vn iuste et sauoureux condiment des tables. Ainsin ont vescu les sages. Et cette inimitable contention à la vertu, qui nous estonne en l'vn et l'autre Caton, cette humeur seuere iusques à l'importunité, s'est ainsi mollement submise, et pleuë aux loix de l'humaine condition, et de Venus et de Bacchus.	Whether in jest or in earnest, the wine of the theologians and the Sorbonne has become proverbial, and their feasts too. I think it only right that they dine all the more comfortably and pleasantly for having spent the morning usefully and seriously in the work of their school. The consciousness of having spent the other hours well is a just and savory condiment at table. That is how the sages lived. And that inimitable striving for virtue which astounds us in both Catos, that disposition severe to the point of being tiresome, submitted thus gently and yielded to the laws of the human condition, and of Venus and Bacchus.[70]

68 Plutarch tells how Brutus spent the night before the battle of Pharsalus (48 BC) making a summary of the historian Polybius.
69 Horace, Odes; Teucer is speaking to his companions.
70 The Sorbonne was the theology faculty of Paris.

FRENCH

Suiuant les preceptes de leur secte, qui demandent le sage parfaict, autant expert et entendu à l'vsage des voluptez qu'en tout autre deuoir de la vie. *Cui cor sapiat, ei et sapiat palatus.*

3.13.69 Le relaschement et facilité honore ce semble à merueilles, et sied mieux à vne ame forte et genereuse. Epaminondas n'estimoit pas que de se mesler à la dance des garçons de sa ville, de chanter, de sonner, et s'y embesongner auec attention, fust chose qui derogeast à l'honneur de ses glorieuses victoires, et à la parfaicte reformation des mœurs qui estoit en luy. Et parmy tant d'admirables actions de Scipion l'ayeul, personnage digne de l'opinion d'vne geniture celeste, il n'est rien qui luy donne plus de grace, que de le voir nonchalamment et puerilement baguenaudant à amasser et choisir des coquilles, et ioüer à cornichon va deuant, le long de la marine auec Lælius.

Et s'il faisoit mauuais temps, s'amusant et se chatouillant, à representer par escript en comedies, les plus populaires et basses actions des hommes. Et la teste pleine de cette merueilleuse entreprinse d'Annibal et d'Afrique; visitant les escholes en Sicile, et se trouuant aux leçons de la philosophie, iusques à en auoir armé les dents de l'aueugle enuie de ses ennemis à Rome. Ny chose plus remarquable en Socrates, que ce que tout vieil, il trouue le temps de se faire instruire à baller, et iouër des instrumens: et le tient pour bien employé. Cettuy-cy, s'est veu en ecstase debout, vn iour entier et vne nuict, en presence de toute l'armée Grecque, surpris et rauy par quelque profonde pensée.

Il s'est veu le premier parmy tant de vaillants hommes de l'armée, courir au secours d'Alcibiades, accablé des ennemis: le couurir de son corps, et le descharger de la presse, à viue force d'armes. En la bataille Delienne, releuer et sauuer Xenophon, renuersé de son cheual. Et emmy tout le peuple d'Athenes, outré, comme luy, d'vn si indigne spectacle, se presenter le premier à recourir Theramenes, que les trente tyrans faisoient mener à la mort par leurs satellites: et ne desista cette hardie entreprinse, qu'à la remontrance de Theramenes mesme: quoy qu'il ne fust suiuy que de deux, en tout. Il s'est veu, recherché par vne beauté, de laquelle il estoit esprins, maintenir au besoing vne seuere abstinence.

ENGLISH

They were following the precepts of their sect, which require the perfect sage to be as expert and skilled in the enjoyment of pleasures as in every other duty of life. *Let him whose heart is discerning have a discerning palate too.*[71]

Ease and relaxation, it seems, do a strong and generous soul wonderful honor and suit it best. Epaminondas did not think that joining in the dance of the young men of his city, singing, playing music, and giving his whole attention to it, in any way detracted from the honor of his glorious victories or from the perfect reform of morals that was in him. And among so many admirable actions of Scipio the grandfather, a man worthy of being thought of heavenly birth, nothing gives him more charm than to see him idly and childishly fooling about, gathering and choosing shells and playing ducks and drakes along the seashore with Laelius.

And in bad weather he amused and tickled himself by portraying in writing, in comedies, the most common and lowly actions of men. And with his head full of that marvelous enterprise against Hannibal and Africa, he visited the schools in Sicily and attended lectures in philosophy, so much so that he armed the blind envy of his enemies in Rome with teeth. Nor is there anything more remarkable in Socrates than that, quite old, he found time to have himself taught dancing and playing instruments, and thought it time well spent. This same man was seen in an ecstasy, standing, for a whole day and a night, in the presence of the whole Greek army, overtaken and enraptured by some profound thought.

He was seen, first among so many valiant men in the army, running to rescue Alcibiades when he was overwhelmed by the enemy, covering him with his body, and freeing him from the throng by sheer force of arms. In the battle of Delium he was seen lifting up and saving Xenophon, who had been thrown from his horse. And amid all the people of Athens, outraged as he was by so shameful a spectacle, he was the first to come forward to rescue Theramenes, whom the Thirty Tyrants were having their henchmen lead to his death; and he gave up this bold attempt only at the ur-

71 Cicero, On Ends, playing on the Latin sapere, "to be wise" and "to taste".

FRENCH

ENGLISH

ging of Theramenes himself, though only two men in all had followed him. He was seen, when courted by a beauty with whom he was smitten, to keep, when need be, a strict abstinence.[72]

Il s'est veu continuellement marcher à la guerre, et fouler la glace les pieds nuds; porter mesme robbe en hyuer et en esté: surmonter tous ses compaignons en patience de trauail, ne manger point autrement en festin qu'en son ordinaire. Il s'est veu vingt et sept ans, de pareil visage, porter la faim, la pauureté, l'indocilité de ses enfants, les griffes de sa femme. Et en fin la calomnie, la tyrannie, la prison, les fers, et le venin. Mais cet homme là estoit-il conuié de boire à lut par deuoir de ciuilité? c'estoit aussi celuy de l'armée, à qui en demeuroit l'aduantage.

He was seen continually marching to war and treading the ice barefoot, wearing the same robe in winter and summer, surpassing all his companions in endurance of toil, and eating no differently at a feast than at his ordinary meals. He was seen for twenty-seven years, with the same countenance, bearing hunger, poverty, the unruliness of his children, the claws of his wife; and in the end calumny, tyranny, prison, fetters, and poison. But was this man invited by the duty of civility to a drinking contest? He was also the one in the army who came off best.

Et ne refusoit ny à iouër aux noisettes auec les enfans, ny à courir auec eux sur vn cheual de bois, et y auoit bonne grace: car toutes actions, dit la philosophie, sieent egallement bien et honnorent egallement le sage. On a dequoy, et ne doit-on iamais se lasser de presenter l'image de ce personnage à tous patrons et formes de perfection. Il est fort peu d'exemples de vie, pleins et purs. Et faict-on tort à nostre instruction, de nous en proposer tous les iours, d'imbecilles et manques: à peine bons à vn seul ply: qui nous tirent arriere plustost: corrupteurs plustost que correcteurs.

And he did not refuse to play at nuts with the children, or to ride a hobbyhorse with them, and he did it gracefully; for all actions, says philosophy, equally become and equally honor the wise man. We have every reason, and we should never tire, to present the image of this man as the pattern and model of every kind of perfection. There are very few examples of a life that is full and pure. And it harms our instruction to be offered every day examples that are feeble and defective, barely good for a single purpose, which pull us backward instead—corrupters rather than correctors.

Le peuple se trompe: on va bien plus facilement par les bouts, où l'extremité sert de borne, d'arrest et de guide, que par la voye du milieu large et ouuerte, et selon l'art, que selon nature; mais bien moins noblement aussi, et moins recommendablement.

People are mistaken. It is much easier to travel along the edges, where the outer limit serves as boundary, stop, and guide, than by the broad, open middle way; and according to art than according to nature. But it is also much less noble and less commendable.

3.13.70 La grandeur de l'ame n'est pas tant, tirer à mont, et tirer auant, comme sçauoir se ranger et circonscrire. Elle tient pour grand, tout ce qui est assez. Et montre sa hauteur, à aimer mieux les choses moyennes, que les eminentes. Il n'est rien si beau et legitime, que de faire bien l'homme et deuëment. Ny science si arduë que de bien sçauoir viure cette vie. Et de nos maladies la plus sauuage, c'est mespriser nostre estre.

Greatness of soul lies not so much in pressing upward and forward as in knowing how to order and limit oneself. It regards as great whatever is enough, and shows its height by preferring moderate things to eminent ones. There is nothing so fine and legitimate as to play the man well and properly, nor any knowledge so hard as knowing how to live this life well. And the wildest of our maladies is to despise our own being.

3.13.71 Qui veut escarter son ame, le face hardiment s'il peut, lors que le corps se portera mal, pour la descharger de cette contagion. Ailleurs au contraire: qu'elle l'assiste et

Whoever wants to send his soul elsewhere, let him do it boldly if he can, when the body is ailing, to free it from that contagion. At other times, on the

72 The beauty is Alcibiades.

FRENCH	ENGLISH
fauorise, et ne refuse point de participer à ses naturels plaisirs, et de s'y complaire coniugalement: y apportant, si elle est plus sage, la moderation, de peur que par indiscretion, ils ne se confondent auec le desplaisir. L'intemperance, est peste de la volupté: et la temperance n'est pas son fleau: c'est son assaisonnement. Eudoxus, qui en establissoit le souuerain bien, et ses compaignons, qui la monterent à si haut prix, la sauourerent en sa plus gracieuse douceur, par le moyen de la temperance, qui fut en eux singuliere et exemplaire.	contrary, let the soul assist and favor the body, and not refuse to share in its natural pleasures and to delight in them as a spouse would, bringing to them moderation, if it is the wiser of the two, for fear that through lack of discretion they may become mixed up with displeasure. Intemperance is the plague of pleasure; and temperance is not its scourge but its seasoning. Eudoxus, who made pleasure the sovereign good, and his companions, who set so high a value on it, savored it in its most gracious sweetness by means of temperance, which was singular and exemplary in them.
3.13.72 I'ordonne à mon ame, de regarder et la douleur, et la volupté, de veuë pareillement reglée: *eodem enim vitio est effusio animi in lætitia, quo in dolore contractio*: et pareillement ferme: mais gayement l'vne, l'autre seuerement. Et selon ce qu'elle y peut apporter, autant soigneuse d'en esteindre l'vne, que d'estendre l'autre. Le voir sainement les biens, tire apres soy le voir sainement les maux. Et la douleur a quelque chose de non euitable, en son tendre commencement: et la volupté quelque chose d'euitable en sa fin excessiue. Platon les accouple: et veut, que ce soit pareillement l'office de la fortitude combattre à l'encontre de la douleur, et à l'encontre des immoderées et charmeresses blandices de la volupté.	I order my soul to look upon both pain and pleasure with an equally regulated gaze—*for it is as much a fault for the soul to overflow in joy as to contract in grief*—and an equally firm one: but upon the one cheerfully, upon the other sternly. And, as far as it can contribute, it is to be as careful to extinguish the one as to extend the other. Seeing good things sanely brings with it seeing bad things sanely. Pain has something unavoidable in its tender beginning, and pleasure something avoidable in its excessive end. Plato couples them together, and holds that it is equally the function of fortitude to fight against pain and against the immoderate and bewitching blandishments of pleasure.[73]
Ce sont deux fontaines, ausquelles, qui puise, d'où, quand et combien il faut, soit cité, soit homme, soit beste, il est bien heureux. La premiere, il la faut prendre par medecine et par necessité, plus escharsement: l'autre par soif, mais non iusques à l'yuresse. La douleur, la volupté, l'amour, la haine, sont les premieres choses, que sent vn enfant: si la raison suruenant elles s'appliquent à elle: cela c'est vertu.	These are two fountains: whoever draws from them where, when, and as much as he should, be it a city, a man, or a beast, is very fortunate. The first must be taken as medicine and of necessity, more sparingly; the other for thirst, but not to the point of drunkenness. Pain, pleasure, love, and hatred are the first things a child feels; if, when reason arrives, they fall in with it, that is virtue.

PASSING THE TIME

He savors life all the more closely as it grows short.

FRENCH	ENGLISH
3.13.73 I'ay vn dictionaire tout à part moy: ie passe le temps, quand il est mauuais et incommode; quand il est bon, ie ne le veux pas passer, ie le retaste, ie m'y tiens. Il faut courir le mauuais, et se rassoir au bon. Cette fraze ordinaire de passe-temps, et de passer le temps, represente l'vsage de ces prudentes gens, qui ne pensent	I have a dictionary all my own. I "pass the time" when it is bad and disagreeable; when it is good I do not want to pass it, I taste it again, I hold on to it. We must run through the bad and settle down in the good. This ordinary phrase "pastime" and "passing the time" reflects the habit of those

73 Cicero, Tusculan Disputations.

FRENCH

point auoir meilleur conte de leur vie, que de la couler et eschaper: de la passer, gauchir, et autant qu'il est en eux, ignorer et fuir; comme chose de qualité ennuyeuse et desdaignable. Mais ie la cognois autre: et la trouue, et prisable et commode, voire en son dernier decours, où ie la tiens.

Et nous l'a nature mise en main, garnie de telles circonstances et si fauorables, que nous n'auons à nous plaindre qu'à nous, si elle nous presse; et si elle nous eschappe inutilement. *Stulti vita ingrata est, trepida est, tota in futurum fertur.* Ie me compose pourtant à la perdre sans regret: mais comme perdable de sa condition, non comme moleste et importune. Aussi ne sied-il proprement bien, de ne se desplaire à mourir qu'à ceux, qui se plaisent à viure. Il y a du mesnage à la iouyr: ie la iouis au double des autres: car la mesure en la iouissance, depend du plus ou moins d'application, que nous y prestons.

Principalement à cette heure, que i'apperçoy la mienne si briefue en temps, ie la veux estendre en poix. Ie veux arrester la promptitude de sa fuite par la promptitude de ma saisie: et par la vigueur de l'vsage, compenser la hastiueté de son escoulement. A mesure que la possession du viure est plus courte, il me la faut rendre plus profonde, et plus pleine.

3.13.74 Les autres sentent la douceur d'vn contentement, et de la prosperité: ie la sens ainsi qu'eux: mais ce n'est pas en passant et glissant. Si la faut-il estudier, sauourer et ruminer, pour en rendre graces condignes à celuy qui nous l'ottroye. Ils iouyssent les autres plaisirs, comme ils font celuy du sommeil, sans les cognoistre. A celle fin que le dormir mesme ne m'eschappast ainsi stupidement, i'ay autresfois trouué bon qu'on me le troublast, afin que ie l'entreuisse. Ie consulte d'vn contentement auec moy: ie ne l'escume pas, ie le sonde, et plie ma raison à le recueillir, deuenuë chagrigne et desgoustée.

Me trouué-ie en quelque assiette tranquille, y a il quelque volupté qui me chatouille, ie ne la laisse pas friponner aux sens; i'y associe mon ame. Non pas pour s'y engager, mais pour s'y agreer; non pas pour s'y perdre, mais pour s'y trouuer. Et l'employe de sa part, à se mirer dans ce prospere estat, à en poiser et estimer le bon heur, et l'amplifier. Elle mesure combien c'est qu'elle doit à Dieu,

ENGLISH

prudent people who think they can make no better use of their life than to let it slip by and escape it, to pass it, sidestep it, and, as far as they can, ignore it and flee it, as something irksome and contemptible. But I know it to be otherwise, and find it both worth prizing and agreeable, even in its last decline, where I now hold it.

And nature has put it into our hands furnished with such favorable circumstances that we have only ourselves to blame if it weighs on us and if it slips away from us uselessly. *The fool's life is joyless and anxious, wholly borne toward the future.* Even so, I am preparing myself to lose it without regret, but as something by its nature losable, not as something burdensome and troublesome. Besides, not minding death is truly fitting only for those who take pleasure in living. There is husbandry in enjoying it. I enjoy it twice as much as others, for the measure of enjoyment depends on the greater or lesser attention we give to it.[74]

Especially now that I see mine so short in time, I want to extend it in weight. I want to check the speed of its flight by the speed of my grasp, and by the vigor of my use of it to make up for the haste of its ebbing away. The shorter my possession of life, the deeper and fuller I must make it.

Others feel the sweetness of contentment and prosperity; I feel it as they do, but not in passing and gliding by. Rather, it must be studied, savored, and ruminated, so as to give due thanks for it to him who grants it to us. They enjoy their other pleasures as they enjoy that of sleep, without being aware of them. So that even sleep should not escape me so stupidly, I once thought it a good idea to have it disturbed, so that I might catch a glimpse of it. I deliberate with myself about a contentment; I do not skim it, I sound its depths, and I bend my reason, which has grown peevish and fastidious, to gather it in.

Do I find myself in some tranquil state? Is there some pleasure tickling me? I do not let my senses filch it; I bring my soul into it—not to bind itself to it, but to enjoy it; not to lose itself in it, but to find itself there. And I set it, for its part, to see itself mirrored in this prosperous state, to weigh and ap-

74 Seneca, Letters.

FRENCH

d'estre en repos de sa conscience et d'autres passions intestines; d'auoir le corps en sa disposition naturelle: iouissant ordonnément et competemment, des functions molles et flatteuses, par lesquelles il luy plaist compenser de sa grace, les douleurs, dequoy sa iustice nous bat à son tour.

Combien luy vaut d'estre logee en tel poinct, que où qu'elle iette sa veuë, le ciel est calme autour d'elle: nul desir, nulle crainte ou doubte, qui luy trouble l'air: aucune difficulté passée, presente, future, par dessus laquelle son imagination ne passe sans offence. Cette consideration prend grand lustre de la comparaison des conditions differentes. Ainsi, ie me propose en mille visages, ceux que la fortune, ou que leur propre erreur emporte et tempeste. Et encores ceux cy plus pres de moy, qui reçoiuent si laschement, et incurieusement leur bonne fortune.

Ce sont gens qui passent voirement leur temps; ils outrepassent le present, et ce qu'ils possedent, pour seruir à l'esperance, et pour des ombrages et vaines images, que la fantasie leur met au deuant, *Morte obita quales fama est volitare figuras, / Aut quæ sopitos deludunt somnia sensus;* lesquelles hastent et allongent leur fuitte, à mesme qu'on les suit. Le fruict et but de leur poursuitte, c'est poursuiure: comme Alexandre disoit que la fin de son trauail, c'estoit trauailler. *Nihil actum credens, cùm quid superesset agendum.*

3.13.75 Pour moy donc, i'ayme la vie, et la cultiue, telle qu'il a pleu à Dieu nous l'octroyer. Ie ne vay pas desirant, qu'elle eust à dire la necessité de boire et de manger. Et me sembleroit faillir non moins excusablement, de desirer qu'elle l'eust double. *Sapiens diuitiarum naturalium quæsitor acerrimus.* Ny que nous nous substantassions, mettans seulement en la bouche vn peu de cette drogue par laquelle Epimenides se priuoit d'appetit, et se maintenoit. Ny qu'on produisist stupidement des enfans, par les doigts, ou par les talons, ains parlant en reuerence, que plustost encores, on les produisist voluptueusement, par les doigts, et par les talons. Ny que le corps fust sans desir et sans chatouillement. Ce sont plaintes ingrates et iniques.

ENGLISH

praise its happiness, and to amplify it. It measures how much it owes to God for being at peace with its conscience and free from other inner passions, and for having the body in its natural condition, enjoying in an orderly and fitting way the soft and pleasing functions with which he is pleased, by his grace, to compensate for the pains with which his justice in its turn chastises us.

How much it is worth to it to be lodged in such a place that, wherever it casts its eyes, the sky is calm around it: no desire, no fear or doubt to trouble its air, no difficulty past, present, or future over which its imagination cannot pass without harm! This reflection gains great luster from comparison with different conditions. So I set before me, in a thousand guises, those whom fortune or their own error carries away and buffets with storms; and also those, closer to me, who receive their good fortune so slackly and incuriously.

These are people who really do "pass their time." They overleap the present and what they possess, to serve hope, and for the sake of shadows and vain images that fancy sets before them, *Like the shapes that, rumor says, flit about after death, / Or the dreams that delude our slumbering senses*; and these images hasten and lengthen their flight the more they are pursued. The fruit and goal of their pursuit is to pursue, as Alexander said that the end of his labor was to labor. *Thinking nothing done while anything remained to do.*[75]

As for me, then, I love life and cultivate it just as it has pleased God to grant it to us. I do not go around wishing that it lacked the need to eat and drink; and it would seem to me no less excusable an error to wish that need doubled. *The wise man is the keenest seeker after natural riches.* Nor do I wish that we could sustain ourselves just by putting into our mouths a little of that drug by which Epimenides took away his appetite and kept himself alive. Nor that we should produce children insensibly, through our fingers or our heels—but rather, saving your reverence, that we might also produce them with pleasure through our fingers and our heels. Nor that the body should be without desire and without titillation. These are ungrateful and unjust complaints.[76]

75 The first quotation is from Virgil, Aeneid; the second from Lucan, Pharsalia.
76 Seneca, Letters.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
	I'accepte de bon cœur et recognoissant, ce que nature a faict pour moy: et m'en aggree et m'en loue. On faict tort à ce grand et tout puissant donneur, de refuser son don, l'annuller et desfigurer, tout bon, il a faict tout bon. *Omnia, quæ secundum naturam sunt, æstimatione digna sunt.*	I accept with a glad and grateful heart what nature has done for me, and I am pleased with it and proud of it. We wrong that great and all-powerful giver by refusing his gift, nullifying it, and disfiguring it. All good himself, he has made all things good. *All things that are according to nature are worthy of esteem.*[77]

BODY AND MIND TOGETHER

Mind and body belong together; those who would rise above man sink below him.

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
3.13.76	Des opinions de la philosophie, i'embrasse plus volontiers celles qui sont les plus solides: c'est à dire les plus humaines, et nostres. Mes discours sont conformément à mes mœurs, bas et humbles. Elle faict bien l'enfant à mon gré, quand elle se met sur ses ergots, pour nous prescher. Que c'est vne farrouche alliance, de marier le diuin auec le terrestre, le raisonnable auec le desraisonnable, le seuere à l'indulgent, l'honneste au des-honneste. Que la volupté, est qualité brutale, indigne que le sage la gouste. Le seul plaisir, qu'il tire de la iouyssance d'vne belle ieune espouse, que c'est le plaisir de sa conscience, de faire vne action selon l'ordre. Comme de chausser ses bottes pour vne vtile cheuauchee.	Among the opinions of philosophy, I more readily embrace those that are most solid, that is to say, the most human and most our own. My reasonings, in keeping with my ways, are low and humble. To my mind philosophy is being very childish when she struts up on her spurs to preach to us: that it is an uncouth alliance to marry the divine with the earthly, the reasonable with the unreasonable, the severe with the indulgent, the honorable with the dishonorable; that pleasure is a brutish quality, unworthy of being tasted by the wise man; that the only pleasure he draws from the enjoyment of a beautiful young wife is the pleasure of his conscience at performing an action according to order, like pulling on his boots for a useful ride.
	N'eussent ses suyuans, non plus de droit, et de nerfs, et de suc, au despucelage de leurs femmes, qu'en a sa leçon.	May her followers have no more right, nerve, and sap for deflowering their wives than her lesson has!
3.13.77	Ce n'est pas ce que dit Socrates, son precepteur et le nostre. Il prise, comme il doit, la volupté corporelle: mais il prefere celle de l'esprit, comme ayant plus de force, de constance, de facilité, de varieté, de dignité. Cette cy ne va nullement seule, selon luy; il n'est pas si fantastique: mais seulement, premiere. Pour luy, la temperance est moderatrice, non aduersaire des voluptez. Nature est vn doux guide: mais non pas plus doux, que prudent et iuste. *Intrandum est in rerum naturam, et penitus quid ea postulet, peruidendum.* Ie queste par tout sa piste: nous l'auons confondüe de traces artificielles. Et ce souuerain bien Academique, et Peripatetique, qui est viure selon icelle: deuient à cette cause difficile à borner et expliquer.	That is not what Socrates says, her tutor and ours. He values bodily pleasure as he should, but he prefers that of the mind, as having more force, constancy, ease, variety, and dignity. According to him, the pleasure of the mind by no means goes alone—he is not so fanciful—but only first. For him temperance is the moderator of pleasures, not their adversary. Nature is a gentle guide, but no more gentle than prudent and just. *We must penetrate into the nature of things and see thoroughly what it demands.* I seek her track everywhere; we have muddled it with artificial tracks. And for this reason that sovereign good of the Academics and Peripatetics, which is to live according to nature, becomes hard to define and explain.[78]

77 Cicero, On Ends.

FRENCH

Et celuy des Stoïciens, voisin à celuy-là, qui est, consentir à nature. Est-ce pas erreur, d'estimer aucunes actions moins dignes de ce qu'elles sont necessaires? Si ne m'osteront-ils pas de la teste, que ce ne soit vn tres-conuenable mariage, du plaisir auec la necessité, auec laquelle, dit vn ancien, les Dieux complottent tousiours. A quoy faire desmembrons nous en diuorce, vn bastiment tissu d'vne si ioincte et fraternelle correspondance? Au rebours, renouons le par mutuels offices: que l'esprit esueille et viuifie la pesanteur du corps, le corps arreste la legereté de l'esprit, et la fixe, *Qui velut summum bonum laudat animæ naturam, et tanquam malum naturam carnis accusat, profectò et animam carnaliter appetit et carnem carnaliter fugit, quoniam id vanitate sentit humana, non veritate diuina.*

Il n'y a piece indigne de nostre soing, en ce present que Dieu nous a faict: nous en deuons comte iusques à vn poil. Et n'est pas vne commission par acquit à l'homme, de conduire l'homme selon sa condition. Elle est expresse, naïfue et tres-principale: et nous l'a le Createur donnee serieusement et seuerement. L'authorité peut seule enuers les communs entendemens: et poise plus en langage peregrin. Reschargeons en ce lieu. *Stultitiæ proprium quis non dixerit, ignauè et contumaciter facere quæ facienda sunt: et alio corpus impellere, alio animum: distrahique inter diuersissimos motus?*

3.13.78 Or sus pour voir, faictes vous dire vn iour, les amusemens et imaginations, que celuy-là met en sa teste, et pour lesquelles il destourne sa pensee d'vn bon repas, et plainct l'heure qu'il employe à se nourrir: vous trouuerez qu'il n'y a rien si fade, en tous les mets de vostre table, que ce bel entretien de son ame (le plus souuent il nous vaudroit mieux dormir tout à faict, que de veiller à ce, à quoy nous veillons) et trouuerez que son discours et intentions, ne valent pas vostre capirotade. Quand ce seroient les rauissemens d'Archimedes mesme, que seroit-ce?

Ie ne touche pas icy, et ne mesle point à cette marmaille d'hommes que nous sommes, et à cette vanité de desirs et

ENGLISH

So does that of the Stoics, close to it, which is to consent to nature. Is it not an error to consider some actions less worthy because they are necessary? They will never get it out of my head that the marriage of pleasure with necessity is a most fitting one—necessity, with whom, says an ancient, the gods always conspire. Why do we tear apart in divorce a structure woven of so close and brotherly a correspondence? On the contrary, let us bind it together again by mutual services. Let the mind awaken and quicken the heaviness of the body, and the body check the lightness of the mind and steady it. *He who praises the nature of the soul as the sovereign good and condemns the nature of the flesh as evil, assuredly both desires the soul carnally and flees the flesh carnally, since he feels this from human vanity, not from divine truth.*[79]

There is no part of this present God has given us that is unworthy of our care; we must account for it down to a single hair. And the commission given to man to guide man according to his condition is no perfunctory one. It is express, plain, and of the first importance, and the Creator gave it to us seriously and sternly. Authority alone carries weight with common minds, and it weighs more in a foreign language. Let us charge again here. *Who would not say that it is the mark of folly to do lazily and rebelliously what has to be done, to push the body one way and the mind another, and to be torn between the most contrary motions?*[80]

Come now, just to see, have such a man tell you one day the amusements and imaginings he fills his head with, for whose sake he turns his thoughts away from a good meal and begrudges the hour he spends feeding himself. You will find that there is nothing so insipid among all the dishes on your table as this fine entertainment of his soul (most often we would do better to be sound asleep than awake for the things we stay awake for). And you will find that his reasonings and intentions are not worth your stew. Even if they were the raptures of Archimedes himself, what would they amount to?

I am not touching here, nor mixing in with this rabble of men that we are and this vanity of de-

78 Cicero, On Ends.
79 Saint Augustine, The City of God.
80 Seneca, Letters.

FRENCH

cogitations, qui nous diuertissent, ces ames venerables, esleuees par ardeur de deuotion et religion, à vne constante et conscientieuse meditation des choses diuines, lesquelles preoccupans par l'effort d'vne viue et vehemente esperance, l'vsage de la nourriture eternelle, but final, et dernier arrest des Chrestiens desirs: seul plaisir constant, incorruptible: desdaignent de s'attendre à nos necessiteuses commoditez, fluides et ambigues: et resignent facilement au corps, le soin et l'vsage, de la pasture sensuelle et temporelle. C'est vn estude priuilegé. Entre nous, ce sont choses, que i'ay tousiours veuës de singulier accord: les opinions supercelestes, et les mœurs sousterraines.

3.13.79 Esope ce grand homme vid son maistre qui pissoit en se promenant, Quoy donq, fit-il, nous faudra-il chier en courant? Mesnageons le temps, encore nous en reste-il beaucoup d'oisif, et mal employé. Nostre esprit n'a volontiers pas assez d'autres heures, à faire ses besongnes, sans se desassocier du corps en ce peu d'espace qu'il luy faut pour sa necessité. Ils veulent se mettre hors d'eux, et eschapper à l'homme. C'est folie: au lieu de se transformer en Anges, ils se transforment en bestes: au lieu de se hausser, ils s'abbattent. Ces humeurs transcendentes m'effrayent, comme les lieux hautains et inaccessibles. Et rien ne m'est facheux à digerer en la vie de Socrates, que ses ecstases et ses demoneries.

Rien si humain en Platon, que ce pourquoy ils disent, qu'on l'appelle diuin. Et de nos sciences, celles-là me semblent plus terrestres et basses, qui sont les plus haut montees. Et ie ne trouue rien si humble et si mortel en la vie d'Alexandre, que ses fantasies autour de son immortalisation. Philotas le mordit plaisamment par sa responce. Il s'estoit coniouy auec luy par lettre, de l'oracle de Iupiter Hammon, qui l'auoit logé entre les Dieux. Pour ta consideration, i'en suis bien ayse: mais il y a dequoy plaindre les hommes, qui auront à viure auec vn homme, et luy obeyr, lequel outrepasse, et ne se contente de la mesure d'vn homme.

Diis te minorem quòd geris, imperas. La gentille inscription, dequoy les Atheniens honnorerent la venue de Pompeius en leur ville, se conforme à mon sens: *D'autant es tu Dieu, comme / Tu te recognois homme.*

ENGLISH

sires and musings that distract us, those venerable souls raised by the ardor of devotion and religion to a constant and conscientious meditation on divine things. By the force of a lively and vehement hope they anticipate the enjoyment of eternal nourishment, the final goal and last resting place of Christian desires, the only constant and incorruptible pleasure; and so they disdain to concern themselves with our needy comforts, fluid and uncertain, and readily leave to the body the care and use of sensual and temporal fodder. That is a privileged study. Between ourselves, there are two things I have always seen in singular agreement: supercelestial opinions and subterranean morals.

Aesop, that great man, saw his master pissing as he walked. "What," he said, "are we to shit as we run?" Let us husband our time; even so, a great deal of it remains to us idle and ill spent. Does our mind not have enough other hours to do its business without dissociating itself from the body in the little space the body needs for its necessities? They want to get outside themselves and escape from the man. That is folly: instead of changing into angels, they change into beasts; instead of raising themselves, they bring themselves down. These transcendent humors frighten me, like high and inaccessible places. And nothing in the life of Socrates is so hard for me to digest as his ecstasies and his dealings with his daemon.[81]

Nothing in Plato is so human as the very things for which, they say, he is called divine. And of our sciences, those that have climbed highest seem to me the most earthly and low. And I find nothing so humble and mortal in the life of Alexander as his fancies about his immortalization. Philotas stung him wittily with his reply. He had congratulated him by letter on the oracle of Jupiter Ammon that had placed him among the gods: "For your sake I am very glad of it; but there is reason to pity the men who will have to live with, and obey, a man who exceeds the measure of a man and is not content with it."[82]

It is because you hold yourself lesser than the gods that you rule. The fine inscription with which the Athenians honored Pompey's arrival in their city

81 Aesop's master was the philosopher Xanthus, in the legendary Life of Aesop.
82 The oracle of Ammon was at the Siwa oasis in Egypt.

FRENCH

ENGLISH

agrees with my view: *You are a god just so far / As you know yourself a man.*[83]

3.13.80 C'est vne absoluë perfection, et comme diuine, de sçauoir iouyr loyallement de son estre. Nous cherchons d'autres conditions, pour n'entendre l'vsage des nostres: et sortons hors de nous, pour ne sçauoir quel il y faict. Si auons nous beau monter sur des eschasses, car sur des eschasses encores faut-il marcher de nos iambes. Et au plus esleué throne du monde, si ne sommes nous assis, que sus nostre cul. Les plus belles vies, sont à mon gré celles, qui se rangent au modelle commun et humain auec ordre: mais sans miracle, sans extrauagance. Or la vieillesse a vn peu besoin d'estre traictee plus tendrement.

It is an absolute perfection, and as it were divine, to know how to enjoy our being rightly. We seek other conditions because we do not understand the use of our own, and go outside ourselves because we do not know what it is like within. Yet it is no use our mounting on stilts, for on stilts we must still walk with our own legs. And on the loftiest throne in the world we are still sitting on our own backside. The finest lives, to my mind, are those that conform to the common human pattern, with order, but without miracle and without extravagance. Now old age needs to be treated a little more tenderly.

Recommandons la à ce Dieu protecteur de santé et de sagesse: mais gaye et sociale: *Frui paratis et valido mihi, Latoe, dones; et precor, integra*
Cum mente, nec turpem senectam
Degere, nec Cythara carentem.

Let us commend it to that god who is protector of health and wisdom—but a cheerful and sociable wisdom: *Grant me, son of Latona, to enjoy what I have*
in good health, and, I pray, with my mind unimpaired, to pass an old age not shameful, nor lacking the lyre.[84]

83 The Latin line is from Horace, Odes; the inscription is reported by Plutarch in his Life of Pompey.
84 Horace, Odes, addressed to Apollo, son of Latona.