

French, in *Flanders*, that *Campagne* took *Valencienne*, *Cambray*, and *St. Omer*, between the First of *March* and the Twenty first of *April*. But Affairs then stood upon a very different Foot from what they do now.

* Monsieur de *Lamoignon* died about this time, to the great Concern of Monsieur *Despreaux*, who had address'd a New Epistle to him some Months before. That Illustrious Magistrate was not only Valuable for his rare Virtue; but likewise for his Extraordinary Learning, and the Love he had for Men of Letters. He held Assemblies every Week in his own House, whither the most eminent Virtuofos resorted, and Discours'd upon all Manner of Subjects with great Learning and Politeness. Monsieur *Despreaux*, who was, as it were, the Bosom-Friend of Monsieur de *Lamoignon*, was extreamly afflicted at the Loss of him.

* This Year our new Historiographers Royal went to see the Army in *Flanders*. *Ipres* was then Besieging, and the Duke d'*Enghien*, (the last Prince of *Conde*) was pleas'd to carry them into the Trenches. The Duke, says Mademoiselle de *Scudery*, in a Letter to the Count de *Bussi Rabutin*, carried the King's Historians into the Trenches at *Ipres*, to give them a nearer Sight

*Sight of Danger; that they might the better know how to Describe it: But, adds she, I fancy Fear hinder'd them from seeing any Thing *. The Count de Bussi reflected thus upon it: When the Duke, says he, took the King's Historians in the Trenches, instead of causing them to conceive the Danger greater than they expected, it made them think it less: Fancy magnifies such Things more than Experience. ‡*

Monsieur Despreaux in 1683. publish'd a fuller and more Correct Edition of his Works than any before. 'The present Edition of my Works, 'says he in the Preface, is much more Exact 'and Correct than the preceeding, which were, 'all of them, very full of Faults. I have now 'added Five New Epistles †, written long before I was engag'd in the Glorious Employment which has drawn me from the Study of Poetry. They are of the same Style with my other Works, and I dare Flatter myself are not unworthy their Company. But the Reader is to Judge of them, and I shall not make use of a Preface here, any more than in my other Editions, to win him by Flatteries, or to Prepossess him with Arguments which ought to proceed from himself.

f 'Tis

* Lettres du Comte de Bussi, *ubi supra*, Lettre 372.

‡ Ibid. Lettre 373.

† That is, The Fifth to Monsieur de Guilleragues, the Sixth to Monsieur de Lamoignon, the Seventh to Monsieur Racine, the Eighth to the King, and the Ninth to Monsieur de Seignelay.

' I shall only acquaint the Reader with one
 ' Thing, which is, That when I attack'd
 ' the Errors of several Writers of our Age, I
 ' did not mean thereby to deprive them of the
 ' Merit and good Qualities which they may have
 ' in other Respects. I did not pretend to de-
 ' ny, but that *Chappelain*, for Example, tho'
 ' a very indifferent Poet, might be a pretty
 ' good Grammarian: Nor did I pretend to de-
 ' ny, that there's a great deal of Wit in
 ' Monsieur *Quinaut's* Works, tho' far from the
 ' Perfection of *Virgil*. [* And as to the latter,
 ' I shall add, That at the Time when I writ
 ' against him, we were both of us very Young;
 ' nor was he then the Author of a great many
 ' Pieces which have since gain'd him a just
 ' Reputation.] I do likewise own, That there
 ' is some Genius in the Writings of *St. Amand*,
 ' *Brebeuf*, *Scudery*, and even *Cotin*, and many
 ' others whom I have Criticis'd, and who in-
 ' deed do, as well as my self, deserve to be Cri-
 ' ticis'd: In a Word, with the same Sincerity
 ' which I have us'd in rallying their Faults,
 ' I am ready to allow of whatever Excellencies
 ' they may have. This I take to be doing
 ' them Justice, and to be a plain Proof, that
 ' it is not a Spirit of Envy and Detraction
 ' which put me upon Writing against them.

The

* What is contain'd between the two Crochets, was added in the Edition of 1685.

The Reasons which had oblig'd Monsieur Despreaux to Suppress the two last *Cantos* of the *Lutrin* being no longer in Force, he add'd thereto this Edition, and at the same time discover'd, what had induc'd him to write that Poem. To return, adds he, to my Edition, I have subjoyn'd to the *Lutrin* two New *Cantos*, which make the Conclusion of it. I do not think them worse than the other Four, and I perswade my self they will make the Reader amends for some Verses I have left out of the Episode of the *Clockmaker's* Wife, which I always thought too long. It were in vain now to deny, That the following Poem, was occasion'd by a petty Quarrel that happen'd in one of the most celebrated Churches of *Paris*, between the Treasurer, and the Master of the Choir. The Fact is true, and that's all. The rest is meer Fiction, from the Beginning to the End; and all the Actors in it are not only invented, but industriously drawn quite opposite to the true Characters of the Ministers of that Church.— It is not therefore to be wonder'd at that no Body took Offence at this Poem, since in Truth no Body is attack'd by it.

What Monsieur Despreaux tells us here, That all the Actors in the *Lutrin* are invented, and that he has industriously drawn their Characters quite opposite to the true Characters of the Ministers of that

that Church, may be so in General; but it is certain, as some have very well observ'd, That many of the Characters in that Piece are Real and True. 'The *Lutrin* of Monsieur Despreaux, 'says the *Menagiana* *, is fill'd with a great. 'many Portraits from the Life. The Clock- 'maker *la Tour*, is a *Perukemaker* named *Damour* †.

'*Cet Horloger est l'effroi du Quartier:*

That Clockmaker the Terror of the Street.

'This *Perukemaker* had a Horse-Whip, with 'which he us'd to Part the Boys when they 'were Fighting in the Street.

'But the Abbot *Aubri*, Canon of the *Sainte Chappelle*, a famous *Molinist*, Brother to that 'Monsieur *Aubri*, who wrote the History of 'Cardinal *Mazarin*, is describ'd after a plainer 'and more obvious Manner than any of the 'rest:

'*Alain touffe & se leve, Alain ce savant homme*

'*Qui de Bauni vingt fois a lu toute la Somme.*

(Learned Head,

Then *Alain* Rose, and Cough'd; *Alain* that 'Who Twenty times had *Bauni's Summa* read.

Mon-

* Tom. 2. Pag. 8, 9. Second Edit. Holland. 1695.

† It shoud be *l'Amour*, and so Monsieur Despreaux puts it in the 1st Edition of his Works.

‘ Monsieur *Aubri*, whom he Shadows under
‘ the Name of *Alain*, never Spoke till he had
‘ Cough’d once or twice.

‘ *Mes yeux en sont témoins ; j’ai vu moi-meme hier,*
‘ *Entrer chez le Prelat le Chapelain Garnier.*

– It must be so ; We’re in the Prelate’s Snare ;
These Eyes saw Chaplain Garnier enter there.

‘ This Chaplain Garnier, whose true Name
‘ was *Fournier*, was a great *Jansenist*, and con-
‘ sequently not much in Favour with Monsieur
‘ *Aubri*. To proceed : So Blind are we in what
‘ Concerns our Selves, That Monsieur *Aubri* read
‘ over the *Lutrin* several times without knowing
‘ his own Picture. His Brother perceiv’d it soon
‘ enough.

Monsieur *Despreaux* informs us afterwards in
this Preface, what it was that occasion’d his
Writing the *Lutrin* : But this he does only *en*
passant, and that he may thereby have an Op-
portunity of letting the Reader know the Cor-
respondence he had with Monsieur *de Lamoignon*,
and of displaying the Excellent Qualities
that Great Man ; he proceeds thus : ‘ I shall
‘ not mention how I was engag’d in this Trifle
‘ upon a kind of a jocular Challenge made me
‘ by the late Monsieur *de Lamoignon*, whom I
f 3 ‘ Pains

Paint under the Name of *Aristus*. A particular Narration of this Matter does not seem to me to be at all Necessary. But I shou'd think I did my self a great deal of Wrong, to let slip this Opportunity of informing those who are ignorant of it, how much I was honour'd by that Great Man's Friendship during his Life. I began to be known to him at the Time when my Satires made the greatest Noise; and the obliging Access he gave me into his Illustrious Family, was a very advantageous Apology in my Behalf, against those who were minded to accuse me of Libertinism and Ill Morals. He was a Man of an amazing Knowledge; and a passionate Admirer of all the good Books of Antiquity, and this was what made my Works the more tolerable to him; fancying he perceived in them some Taste of the Ancients. As his Piety was unfeign'd, so it had nothing in it that was Stiff or Troublesome. He was not at all frighten'd at the Title of my Works, *Satires*; where in Truth he found only Verses and Authors expos'd. He was pleas'd often to commend me for having purg'd this Sort of Poetry from the Obscenity and Filth, which, till then, had been, as it were, peculiar to it. Thus I had the good Fortune not to be disagreeable to him.

Monfieur *Despreaux*, after this, proceeds to mention, what Pleasure he receiv'd from the Conversation of so valuable a Person as Monfieur

sieur de Lamoignon; and how he was daily afflicted with the Remembrance of so sensible a Loss. But the whole Piece being prefix'd to the *Lutrin* in the last Edition of Monsieur Despreaux's Works, and likewise in this Translation, under the Title of *Avis au Lecteur*, I need not transcribe any more of it.

I have already observ'd, Sir, That Monsieur Despreaux the better to explain what *Longinus* means by the Sublime, had quoted the Passage out of *Genesis*: God said, *Let there be Light, and there was Light.* I shall add here, That the famous Monsieur Huet, some time Bishop of *Avranches*, publish'd in 1679, a Book to prove the Truth of the Christian Religion, Intitul'd, *Demonstratio Evangelica*, and Dedicated it to the Dauphin, to whom he had the Honour to be Preceptor; wherein he maintains, That this Expression of *Moses* was perfectly Simple, and not Sublime and Figurative as *Longinus* had pretended. Three Years afterwards, viz. in 1682. Messieurs de Port Royal gave a French Translation of *Genesis*, with an Exposition of the Literal and Spiritual Sense thereof, drawn from the Holy Fathers and Ecclesiastical Authors; and in the Preface, after having produc'd the Authority of *Longinus*, to shew, that there is the Sublime and Grand, in the Style of that History, which being temper'd with a Divine Simplicity, is every where stamp'd with the Character of Truth, they report the Opinion of this able Rhetorician

f. 4 upon

upon the Passage I just now mention'd, to which they added the Remark, or, to Use their own Words, the *Wise Reflection* made thereupon by Monsieur *Despreaux* in his Preface.

• All this gave Occasion to Monsieur *Despreaux* to make an Addition to the Preface upon *Longinus*, wherein he seems mightily surpris'd that Monsieur *Huet* shou'd disown the Sublime in this Passage; and congratulates himself upon the Suffrage of the Messieurs de *Port Royal*, who had made a very different Judgment of it from that Prelate.

Monsieur *Huet*, having read that Passage of Monsieur *Despreaux*'s, thought it concern'd him to defend his Opinion, and thereupon wrote a Letter of some length, which he address'd to the Duke de *Montauzier*, the Dauphin's Governor, and who had a great Share of Learning. Give me leave, Sir, to produce some loose Pieces concerning the History of this Quarrel.

' You werè pleas'd, my Lord, says Monsieur *Huet*, that I shou'd engage in the Difference you had with the Abbot de *St. Luc*, concerning *Apollo* *: I have in my turn a Dispute with
' Mon-

* That Abbot maintain'd That *Apollo* and the Sun were not the same God.

‘ Monsieur *Despreaux*, of which I most humbly
‘ beg your Lordship wou’d please to be Judge.
‘ It is concerning a Passage of *Longinus*, which
‘ before I go any further, must be made known
‘ to you. It is *verbatim* thus: *The Jewish Le-*
‘ *gislator, who was a Man of no vulgar Under-*
‘ *standing, having a due Notion of the Power of*
‘ *God, did express it accordingly, when he writ in*
‘ *the beginning of his Laws, these Words:*
‘ GOD SAID: *What?* LET THE LIGHT BE
‘ MADE, LET THE EARTH BE MADE, AND IT
‘ WAS MADE.

‘ When first I read *Longinus* I was shock’d
‘ at this Remark, the said Passage out of *Moses*
‘ not seeming to me to be well chosen for an
‘ Example of the Sublime. I remember, *My*
‘ *Lord*, being one Day at your House, long
‘ before I had the Honour to be in the Dau-
‘ phin’s Family, I told you my Opinion of this
‘ Remark; and tho’ the Company was pretty
‘ numerous, there was but one single Per-
‘ son that thought otherwise. Since then, I
‘ have been oblig’d to make this Opinion
‘ public in the Book I wrote to prove the
‘ Truth of our Religion: For having under-
‘ taken to enumerate the prophane Authors,
‘ who have given Testimony to the Antiquity
‘ of *Moses’s* Books, I found *Longinus* among
‘ them, and because all that he says of him
‘ is only upon another’s Credit, I conceiv’d my
‘ self accountable to the Public for this Con-
‘ jecture,

‘ jecture, and to give them my principal Reason
‘ for it, which is this, That if he had seen what
‘ follows and what preceeds that Passage of
‘ *Moses*, he wou’d soon have been sensible that it
‘ had nothing of the Sublime. My Words are
‘ these: Longinus, *Prince of Critics*, in the Ex-
‘ cellent Book he writ touching the Sublime, gives
‘ a very great Commendation of *Moses*; for he
‘ says, That he had a due Notion of the Power
‘ of God, and express’d it accordingly by writ-
‘ ting in the Beginning of his Laws, That
‘ GOD SAID, LET THERE BE LIGHT MADE,
‘ AND IT WAS MADE; LET THE EARTH BE
‘ MADE, AND IT WAS MADE. However, what
‘ Longinus here alledges from *Moses* as a Sublime
‘ and Figurative Expression, seems to me to be per-
‘ fectly Simple. *Moses*, it is true, relates a
‘ Thing that is in it self great, but expresses it
‘ in a Manner which is by no means so. Which
‘ convinces me, that Longinus did not take these
‘ Words from the Original; for if he had gone to
‘ the Fountain Head, and perus’d the ~~very~~ Books
‘ of *Moses*, he wou’d have found a great Simpli-
‘ city running thro’ the Whole; and I believe
‘ *Moses* affected it, by reason of the Dignity of
‘ the Subject, which by being barely related, makes
‘ a sufficient Impression upon the Senses, without
‘ any need of study’d Ornaments to heighten it:
‘ tho’ indeed it’s manifest both from the Canticles
‘ and the Book of Job, which ’tis my Opinion *Moses*
‘ wrote, that he very well understood the Sublime.
‘ Now, tho’ I knew, that Monsieur Despreaux
‘ had

Monsieur Boileau Despreaux. lxxix

‘ had translated *Longinus*, tho’ I had even read
‘ his Work, and, after a careful Examination,
‘ I gave that Judgment upon it which it de-
‘ serves; yet I did not believe he had taken
‘ that Author into his Protection, and enter’d
‘ into so strict a Participation of Interests with
‘ him, that to find Fault with *Longinus* was
‘ doing an Affront to Monsieur *Despreaux*; any
‘ more than to some other Learned Men who
‘ had translated that Author before him. God
‘ forbid I shou’d go about to Espouse all the
‘ Quarrels of *Origen*, and to undertake to plead
‘ his Cause, when he is treated every Day as a
‘ Heretic and Idolater! And yet, my Lord, you
‘ know I have enter’d into Engagements with
‘ him of as high a Nature at least as Mon-
‘ sieur *Despreaux* has done with *Longinus* *.

‘ And therefore, to speak Truth, I was some-
‘ what surpris’d, when finding the other Day
‘ upon your Table, the new Edition of his
‘ Works, in opening the Book I fell upon these
‘ Words: *What then shall we say of one of the*
‘ *most Learned Men of our Age, who, tho’ he*
‘ *had the Advantage of the Gospel Light, yet*
‘ *did not find out the Beauty of this Passage, (he*
‘ *is speaking of the Passage of Moses reported*
‘ *by Longinus) but has presum’d to advance in a*
‘ *Book he wrote in Demonstration of the Christian*
‘ *Reli-*

* Monsieur Huët publish’d in 1668. *Origenis in sacras Scripturas Commen-
taria quæcunque Græce reperiri poterunt, cum Latina Interpretatione,
Notis & Observationibus.* In Fol. 2 Vol.

' Religion, That Longinus was mistaken in think-
 ' ing these Words **SUBLIME**? However, I have
 ' the Satisfaction to find there are Persons no less
 ' considerable for their Piety than for their Learn-
 ' ing, who are of another Opinion. The Transla-
 ' tors of the Book of Genesis, in their Preface,
 ' among several other excellent Proofs that that
 ' Book was dictated by the Holy Ghost, have men-
 ' tion'd this Passage of Longinus, to shew how
 ' much Christians ought to be convinc'd of a Truth
 ' so clear, that a Pagan himself cou'd not help
 ' being sensible of it's Power by the Light of
 ' **REASON** only. I was surpris'd, I say, at
 ' these Words, my Lord, for Monsieur Despreaux
 ' and I have taken such different Paths in the
 ' Country of Letters, that I never thought to
 ' have met him in my Way, but fancy'd my
 ' self out of the Reach of his terrible Pen. Nei-
 ' ther did I any more believe that all Longi-
 ' nus says is Gospel, and may not be contra-
 ' dicted without incurring the Guilt of Pre-
 ' sumption; or that we were oblig'd to believe,
 ' as if it were an Article of Faith, that these
 ' Words of Moses are Sublime, and that not
 ' consenting to it, was as good as questioning
 ' whether the Books of Moses were Inspir'd by
 ' the Holy Ghost.

' To conclude, I did not expect to see Lon-
 ' ginus Canoniz'd, and my self in a manner
 ' Excommunicated, as I am by Monsieur Des-
 ' preaux.

' And

‘ And yet, as Whimsical as that Censure is,
‘ he might have express’d it, in more genteel
‘ and softer Terms. As for my Part, *my Lord*,
‘ I mean to let you see, in my own Justifica-
‘ tion, that not only there is not any Thing
‘ a-kin to the Sublime in this Passage of *Moses*,
‘ but likewise if there was any such Thing as
‘ *Longinus* wou’d have it, the Sublime were
‘ very ill employ’d, if it be permitted to speak
‘ in those Terms of a Holy Book.

Monsieur Huet proceeds to the Merits of the Cause, and after having back’d his Opinion with whatever cou’d be said that was Home and Convincing, he concludes thus :

‘ It is now easie to see, whether *Monsieur Despreaux’s* Censure be well grounded. It is, in short, making the Difference between us a Point of Religion, and accusing me of a kind of Impiety for denying, That *Moses* made use of the Sublime in the Passage now under Dispute. But this is asserted without Proof, and is begging the Question. If it be contrary to good Sense to say that this Passage is Sublime, as I think I have demonstrated ; it is ridiculous to say, that not to speak against good Sense is to wound Religion. The Second Proof turns upon the new Translators of *Genesis*, who have confirm’d his Opinion.
‘ But

' But it is visible, That Monsieur Despreaux
 ' does not vouch them so much for the Weight
 ' he thought their Opinion might carry, in this
 ' Case, as to pay the Debt of Compliments
 ' they had laid upon him by their reporting that
 ' Passage. Since therefore this Censure is found-
 ' ed upon nothing but the Magisterial Air with
 ' which it is deliver'd; I fancy I have a right
 ' to ask in my turn, What shall we say of a
 ' Man, who, tho' he had the Advantage of the
 ' Gospel Light, has presum'd to represent Moses
 ' as a wretched Rhetorician, and maintain'd,
 ' that he made use of unnecessary Figures in
 ' his History, and disguis'd under superfluous
 ' Ornaments, a Matter excellently Beautiful and
 ' Rich of it self? What shall we say of that
 ' Man, who is ignorant, That the Excellence,
 ' the Energy, and the Valuableness of the Holy
 ' Scripture does not consist in the Richness of
 ' it's Figures, nor in the Sublimity of it's Lan-
 ' guage? *Non in Sublimitate Sermonis aut Sapi-*
 ' *entiae, non in persuasibilibus humanæ Sapientiae*
 ' *Verbis; sed in Ostensione Spiritus & Virtutis; ut*
 ' *fides nostra non sit in Sapientia Hominum sed*
 ' *in Virtute Dei;* and knows not, that nei-
 ' ther the Elevation, nor Simplicity of the Sa-
 ' cred Volumes are the Badges which discover
 ' their being dictated by the Holy Ghost,
 ' since St. Austin was of Opinion, That it
 ' was indifferent whether the Scripture Lan-
 ' guage were Polite or Barbarous; who is
 ' so ignorant, as not to know; That St. Paul
 ' was

‘ was no Master in the Artifices of Rhetoric,
‘ and that he was *imperitus Sermonis* *; that
‘ *Moses* had an Impediment in explaining him-
‘ self; that the Prophet *Amos* was Rude and
‘ Unpolite; and that all the Holy Personages,
‘ tho’ speaking different Languages, were how-
‘ ever inspir’d with the same Spirit?

‘ In fine, *my Lord*, I appeal to your Lord-
‘ ship for Judgment, &c.

Tho’ there’s no doubt to be made, but that
the Duke *de Montauzier* soon communicated
this Piece to *Monsieur Despreaux*, yet it is not
likely he was convinc’d by *Monsieur Huet*’s
Arguments, since in all the following Editions
of his Works, he never alter’d that Passage of
his Preface which had occasion’d that Com-
plaint of the Bishops. Neither did he make
any Answer to that Dissertation of *Monsieur*
Huet’s, by reason, as I suppose, the same
was not made Public: For *Monsieur le Clerc*
having insert’d it (in 1706.) in his *Bibliothèque*
Choisie †, together with very Judicious Re-
marks, wherein he confirms the Opinion of
Monsieur Huet; *Monsieur Despreaux* did, at
last, oppose an Answer to it, which his Friends,
’tis hop’d, will not fail to let us have.

I

* 2 Epist. Corinth. Chap. 11. Ver. 6.

† Tome X. Pag. 211. &c.

I had almost forgot to tell you, Sir, That Monsieur *Dacier*, so famous for the French Translations he has publish'd of divers Ancient Authors, understanding that Monsieur *Despreaux* was about to reprint his Works, he visited him and communicated the Remarks he had made upon the Translation of *Longinus*. Having, says he himself, study'd this Rhetorician with Care; I made some Discoveries by reading him again with the Translation, and found out some New Meanings in several Places, which the Interpreters had not thought of. I cou'd do no less than communicate them to Monsieur *Despreaux*; and therefore I waited upon him, tho' I had not the Honour of knowing him. He did not recieve my Criticisms like an Author, but as a Man of Wit and a Gentleman; he agreed with me in some Places; we had long Disputes upon others; but even on those which we did not agree about, he shew'd a Value for my Remarks, and told me, if I pleas'd, he wou'd Print them with his ~~own~~ a Second Edition*.

Monsieur *Despreaux* inserted in the Edition which was then preparing of his Works, Monsieur *Dacier*'s Remarks, as he had promis'd he would, and because Monsieur *Dacier* had not therein nam'd himself, he tells the Public in
his

* Preface of M. *Dacier* before his Remarks upon the Translation of *Longinus*.

his Preface to *Longinus*, who it was they were oblig'd to for that Piece. 'To Conclude, 'ſays he, when this laſt Edition of my Book 'was at the Preſs, Monſieur *Dacier*, who has 'lately giv'n us *Horace's* Odes in *French*, com- 'municated to me ſome ſhort Notes of his on 'Longinus, which are very Learned, and in 'which he has endeavour'd to find out New 'Meanings unknown to all the Interpreters that 'went before. I have follow'd him in ſome 'Places, and as I may be miſtaken in thoſe 'wherein I am not of his Opinion, I thought 'I cou'd not do better than make the Reader 'the Judge. 'Twas with this View that I put 'em at the end of my Remarks; Monſieur *Dacier* being not only a Man of very great Learning and a Nice Critic, but alſo very Polite, 'a Quality by ſo much the more Valuable, as 'it is rarely attended with great Erudition. He 'was a Diſciple of the famous Monſieur *le Fevre*, Father of that Learned Gentlewoman to whom we are Indebted for the firſt 'Translation of *Anacraon* into *French*, and who 'has very lately given us three of the beſt 'Comedies of *Plautus*, and is about translating 'Sophocles and Euripides into our Language.

Monſieur *Dacier*, about that time, marry'd Mademoiſelle *le Fevre*, and theſe Two celebrated Perſons have given us either in Conjunction or apart, many valuable Translations.

* I have already mention'd to you, *Sir*, the generous Protection given by the most Christian King to Men of Letters; I shou'd add, that herein he was strenuously Seconded by his Prime Minister Monsieur *Colbert*, who spared nothing to bring from Foreign Countries, such Persons as were Eminent in any Art or Science, whatsoever: The Royal Academy of Sciences; that of Inscriptions and Medals; and that of Sculpture and Painting, were erected chiefly by his Means. The Academy of Inscriptions consisted at first but of Four Persons; But Monsieur *de Louvois* succeeding Monsieur *Colbert* in the Office of *Surintendant des Batimens du Rôy*; he added more Members to that Society, and Monsieur *Despreaux* was one of the Persons so chosen. These Gentlemen began then to Assemble at the *Louvre* every Week, and employ'd themselves upon Designs for Inscriptions and Medals for his Majesty. This Academy receiv'd a New Lustre in 1701. by the Means of the Abbot *Bignon*, who is no less distinguish'd by his Merit than his Birth. This Illustrious Protector of the Sciences and Noble Arts, has made it more Numerous, procur'd to it a fix'd Settlement, caus'd a Regular Form to be given it, and enlarg'd the Object of it's Studies; so that now, all Sorts of Philology and Literature, *Greek* and *Latin*, come within it's Cognizance.

Mou-

Monsieur *Despreaux* was likewise receiv'd into the *French Academy*. Monsieur *Bayle* informs us of divers curious Particulars concerning his Admission, in his incomparable *Journal* *, and gives at the same time the Substance of the Speech made by Monsieur *Despreaux* upon this Occasion, according to Custom. Monsieur de la Fontaine, says he, was receiv'd by the *Academy* the 2d of May, (1684.) and Monsieur Boileau wou'd have been admitted the same Day had he been at Paris. But he was then in Flanders with the King, whom he attends in all his Expeditions, that he may be able to give an Account of them as an Eye-witness. So he was not admitted till the first of this Month (July.) He made a Speech about a quarter of an Hour long, that was heard with a great deal of Attention and Pleasure by the whole Assembly, which was very numerous on that Day. He began with expressing the Amazement he was in to see himself a Member of a Society from whence he ought to have been excluded upon so many several Accounts. He proceeded, That he cou'd attribute that Honour to nothing but the Desire the King had signify'd for that Purpose; and that his Majesty having made Choice of him to write his History, in Conjunction with another of the Members of their Society, was of Opinion he cou'd not acquit himself of it as he ought to do, without being instructed

in their School. He added, with a Confidence which was not unbecoming, That the King had some Reason to make Choice of him for such an Employ, because he every Day performs so many Things, which tho' true in themselves, hardly seem probable, that his Majesty therefore did not think it amiss they shou'd be written by a Man who was accus'd rather of too much Sincerity than Flattery.

' Monsieur Boileau's Speech, continues Monsieur Bayle, was thought worthy of his Wit and Character; the greater Part of those who mention it, praise it extremely; and those who speak of it with the greatest Indifference, do only insinuate, that there was nothing very Extraordinary in it. A plain Sign that he came off very well. That Part wherein he says, *He ought to have been excluded from the Academy upon so many several Accounts*, reviv'd the Memory of that Multitude of Academicians dead and living whom he had maul'd in his Satires. The Chapelains, the Cassagnés, the Cotins, the Demarêts, the Scuderys, and the Quinauts, presently came into every Body's Mind; and, 'tis thought, that if the King, who is Superior to the Laws, had not interpos'd, the Academy wou'd have stuck to their Statutes, whereby, as 'tis said, they are oblig'd to resent all Affronts done to them in the Persons of their Members, even to a perpetual Exclusion from their Society. But their

their Complaisance for their Sovereign caus'd them to observe a Conduct perfectly Christian. Those who are Friends to this Academy commend them for this generous Proceeding, in forgetting the Injuries they had receiv'd. Monsieur *Boileau's* Enemies are mighty glad that he courted as a Favour to be admitted into a Body, which they say, he had so much abus'd, and make Comparisons upon it, which there is no Occasion for me to repeat here. Be it as it will, Monsieur *Boileau* is a Person of so distinguish'd a Merit, that the Gentlemen of the *French Academy* wou'd have found it no easie Matter to have fill'd the Place of Monsieur *de Bezons*, so worthily as they have done in chusing him,

† In 1685. Monsieur *Despreaux* publish'd a new Edition of his Works, which he enlarg'd with his Speech of *Thanks* to the *French Academy*, Two *Epigrams* against the Abbot *Kautin*, (or rather *Cotin*) one of which turns upon a Paultry Satire which that Abbot had made, and handed about under the Name of Monsieur *Despreaux*; an *Epigram* Against an Atheist; and Two other *Epigrams* against *Desmarais*, who had writ against Messieurs *De Port Royal*, as well as against Monsieur *Despreaux*.

* The Comparison hinted at by Monsieur Bayle, turn, it is likely, upon a Man's being oblig'd to Marry the Woman he has Dishonour'd, &c.
† 1685.

* Two Years afterwards, Monsieur Perrault writ a Poem, Intituled, *The Age of Louis the Great*, which gave Occasion to the famous Dispute about the Preference of the Ancients and Moderns; wherein Monsieur Despreaux had so great a Share. But the Name of Perrault being common to many Authors, and they being oftentimes confounded, it will not perhaps be amiss, Sir, to give some short Account of them in this Place, that you may the better know Monsieur Despreaux's Adversaries.

There have been Four Messieurs Perrault, all Brothers, who have made themselves esteem'd in the Republic of Letters.

I. PETER PERRAULT, Receiver of the Finances of the Generality of *Paris*, who publish'd in 1674. a Treatise *de l'Origine des Fontaines*; and in 1678. a Translation of Tassoni's Poem, Intituled, *La Secchia Rapita*.

II. NICHOLAS PERRAULT, Doctor of the *Sorbonne*, who died in 1661. He was the Author of a Treatise *De la Theologie Morale*, &c. Printed in 1667.

III. CLAUDE PERRAULT, Physician of the Faculty of *Paris*, and of the Royal Academy

Academy of Sciences. He has publiſh'd, *Effais de Phyſique*, in Four Volumes; ſome *Memoirs* to ſerve for a Natural Hiſtory of Animals, grounded upon the Diſſections made in the Royal Academy of Sciences; a French Tranſlation of *Vitruvius*, undertaken by the King's Order, with very learned Notes: It appear'd firſt in 1673; and the ſecond time in 1684; *An Abridgment of Vitruvius*; a Work, Intituled, *Ordonnance des cinq Eſpeces de Colomnes ſelon la Methode des Anciens*. He died in 1688. You will find his Elogium in the laſt Paris Edition of *Morery*.

IV. CHARLES PERRAULT, Author of the Poem I have already mention'd, ſtudy'd the *Belles Lettres* from his Youth; and began to make himſelf known to Advantage, by *A Dialogue of Love and Friendſhip*, which was ſoon follow'd by Two Odes, one upon the Peace of the Pyrennees, the other upon the King's Marriage. His Skill in the Arts, and his Integrity, ſupported by a Spirit of Equity, procur'd him the Eſteem and Confidence of Monſieur Colbert, who made him Firſt Clerk of the Works of which himſelf was the Supervisor. Monſieur Perrault was afterwards Comptroller-General of the Works, which gave him the Inſpection into every Thing relating to the King's Buildings and the Ornamental Part of them. But he made no other Uſe of the Credit this Employment gave him, but to cauſe the Sciences and Arts to flouriſh, and to ſolicit Rewards or

Pensions for those who excell'd therein, or who had a promising Genius. It was upon the Memoires which he gives to Monsieur Colbert, that the Academies of Painting, Sculpture, and Architecture, were form'd, and he had the Honour of being one of the first admitted into that of the Sciences and Inscriptions. After the Death of Chancellor Seguier *, he procur'd to the French Academy the Honour of an Apartment in the Louvre to hold their Assemblies in, and obtain'd a Donative to every Academician of a Piece of Silver, value 20 d. every Day they met, not so much to encourage and fix their Affiduity, which till then was Gratuitous, as to regulate the Time and Continuance of their Application. The Death of Monsieur Colbert † setting him at Liberty, and finding himself Master of his own Time, he devoted it entirely to the Muses. The Poem upon Painting, which appear'd in 1688. and the Epistle which he address'd to Monsieur de la Quintinie, had the Approbation of all that were Judges; the Poem of St. Paulin, Bishop of Nola, which he publish'd in 1686. confirms the Opinion of those who believe that a Subject taken from the Christian Religion cannot be successful in an Heroic Poem. Almost the same Thing may be said of a Christian Poem, which he publish'd in 1697. Intituled, *Adam, ou la Creation de l'Homme, sa chute & sa Reparation*. He also publish'd some Tales.

* In 1672.

† He died in 1683.

‘In all theſe Works, the Exactneſs of his
 ‘Deſcriptions was Amazing. Never did Poet
 ‘dive ſo deep into Nature, or make more live-
 ‘ly and more natural Portraits, even of
 ‘Things which ſeem’d moſt Ungrateful. He
 ‘might be look’d upon as an Original this Way.
 ‘There hardly paſt any extraordinary Day of the
 ‘Academy, wherein he did not read ſomething
 ‘or other of his own Compoſing; with which
 ‘the Aſſembly was always pleas’d *. *The Age of*
 ‘Louis the Great was read in 1687. the Day
 that the Academy had an extraordinary Meet-
 ing to teſtify their Joy for the moſt Chriſtian
 King’s Recovery.

*The Subject of this Poem was to ſhew †, That
 the Moderns are by no Means inferior to the An-
 cients in any of the noble Arts, but even excel
 them in many Things; this divided the Academy
 into two oppoſite Parties. The Poem was applauded
 by all who prefer the Moderns to the Ancients, and
 the Favourers of Antiquity reſented that Preſe-
 rence, and ſaid, the Ancients wou’d find Defenders
 who wou’d redreſs the Injuries that were done them.
 The Spectators of this Diſpute form’d a third Par-
 ty, conſiſting of ſuch as believ’d, that the Ancients
 excell’d the Moderns in ſome Things, as they did
 them in others; and this Party ſuſpended their
 Judg-*

* Morey, Edit. 1707. Artic. of Meſſ. Perrault.

† The Hiſtory of the Poetical War lately declar’d between the Ancients and
 Moderns, Pag. 2, 3.

Judgments till the Reasons pro and con were produc'd. In this Disposition it was, that the Author from whom I borrow these Words, wrote at that time, a Book, Intituled, *Histoire Poetique de la Guerre nouvellement declarée entre les Anciens & les Modernes*, wherein he feigns, that Monsieur Perrault's Poem having been read upon Parnassus, occasion'd a War there between the Ancients and Moderns, that is to say, the Greeks and Latins, and the French, Italians and Spaniards, wherein the Ancients obtain'd almost all the Advantage. In this Piece is contain'd, a delicate and judicious Criticism upon both Parties, nor is Monsieur Perrault's Poem forgot. The Truth is, this warm Defender of the Moderns was not sufficiently acquainted with the Greek Tongue to make a right Judgment of the Authors who wrote in it. And this gave Occasion to the Historian of the Poetical War, to tell us, That *Apollo* coming to Parnassus to appease them, and having call'd *Homer*, who was the General of the Ancients; Father, says he to him, *These young Men, pointing to the Moderns, have undertaken to make War against you; you must forgive them if they do not allow you what is your Due; it is because they do not understand you, and to my Knowledge the greater Part of them speak of you without knowing you; but I will take Care and do you Justice. They shall be brought to a Sense of the Duty they owe you.*

* Monsieur de Fontenelle having publish'd in 1688. a Volume of *Pastoral Poems, with a Treatise concerning the Nature of Eclogue*, he added thereto a *Digression upon the Ancients and Moderns*, wherein he examines the Eclogues of the Ancients, and dexterously insinuates, that if any of the Moderns shou'd Attempt to write the like, they wou'd not have many Approvers. This was giving the Preference to the Ancients as to Pastoral Writing.

† Monsieur Perrault was not contented with delivering his Opinion in the Poem I just now mention'd, but endeavour'd to prove it in a Work written by Way of Dialogue, and Intituled, *A Parallel of the Ancients and Moderns*. The First Volume, relating to the *Arts and Sciences*, appear'd in 1688. The Second, concerning *Eloquence*, was publish'd in 1690; and the Third, which treats of *Poetry*, appear'd in 1692. In this Third Volume, Monsieur Perrault not only placed the Modern Poets, and especially Monsieur Despreaux, upon the same Level with the Ancients, but likewise made himself in some sort a Defender of Chappelain, Quinault, Cotin, and some other French Poets, who had been very little spar'd in Monsieur Despreaux's Satires; and pretty openly declar'd, that he did not approve of the Treatment they had met with.

Mon-

* 1688.

† 1690. 1692.

Monſieur *Despreaux*, who was always a paſſionate Admirer of the Ancients, cou'd not bear a Compariſon ſo much to their Diſadvantage; and looking upon himſelf as Perſonally concern'd in this Diſpute, he at firſt made ſome very ſharp Epigrams againſt Monſieur *Perrault*, notwithſtanding the Praises the latter had given him. He afterwards compos'd an ODE upon the Taking of Namur, in Imitation of thoſe of *Pindar*, to give an Idea of that ancient Poet's Way of Writing, which had been cenſur'd by Monſieur *Perrault*, and to ſhew the Beauty of his Poetry to ſuch as cou'd not read him in his own Tongue. 'The following ODE, ſays he, 'in the ſhort Diſcourſe that precedes it, was compos'd upon Occaſion of ſome ſtrange Dialogues lately publiſh'd, wherein all the greateſt Writers of Antiquity are treated as Perſons of mean Genius, Fellows of the ſame Pitch with the *Chappelains* and the *Cotins*; and wherein the Author pretending to Honour our own Age, has in ſome Meaſure diſgrac'd it, by giving Inſtances, that there are Men capable of Writing ſuch Senſeleſs Stuff. PINDAR is handled the worſt of any; for the Beauties of that Poet being extreamly confin'd to the Language he writ in, the Author of theſe Dialogues, who probably knows nothing of Greek, and never read *Pindar* but in the Latin Tranſlations, (which are very faulty) has taken for Traſh whatever the Weakneſs of his
' Under-

‘ Understanding cou’d not comprehend. He
‘ has, *continues he*, especially ridicul’d those mar-
‘ vellous Passages, where the Poet, to shew a
‘ Spirit intirely beside it self, does sometimes
‘ designedly quit the Pursuit of his Discourse;
‘ and, if we may so say, departs from Reason,
‘ the better to enter into it ; with great Dili-
‘ gence avoiding that Methodical Order, and
‘ those exact Connections of Sense which wou’d
‘ take away the very Soul of Lyric Poetry.

~~Monsieur Despreaux~~ afterwards endeavours
to bring Religion into the Quarrel of the An-
cients. ‘ The Censor I speak of, *says he*, did
‘ not consider, That in falling upon these noble
‘ Boldnesses of *Pindar*, he gave Occasion to be-
‘ lieve, That he never understood the Sublime
‘ of *David’s* Psalms, wherein (if we may be
‘ allow’d to mention those Holy Songs in the
‘ same Breath with Things so Profane) there
‘ are a great many of these abrupt Meanings,
‘ which sometimes serve even to convey to us
‘ the Divinity of them. . It is very likely,
‘ *continues he*, this Critic is not thoroughly con-
‘ vinc’d of the Precepts I laid down in my
‘ *Art of Poetry*, with respect to the Ode.

‘ Her Generous Style, will oft at random Start,

‘ And by a brave Disorder show her Art.

‘ And

‘ And indeed, this Precept, which gives for a
 ‘ Rule, *Not to observe any Rule at all, upon some*
 ‘ *Occasions*, is a Mystery of the Art, adds he,
 ‘ not easily made intelligible to a Man without
 ‘ any Taste, who esteems *Clelia*, and the *Operas*,
 ‘ as Models of the Sublime; who thinks *Terence*
 ‘ flat, *Virgil* cold, *Homer* nonsensical; and who,
 ‘ by an odd turn of Mind, is become insensible
 ‘ to every Thing that the generality of Man-
 ‘ kind is mov’d with. But, ~~continues he~~ this is
 ‘ no Place to shew him his Errors, and there-
 ‘ fore we shall defer it to some proper Opportu-
 ‘ nity, which may happen ere it be long.

Monsieur *Despreaux* says afterwards, that it
 wou’d be no difficult Matter to make those
 sensible of *Pindar*’s Beauties who are ever so
 little acquainted with the *Greek*: But this
 Tongue being now-a-days pretty much un-
 known to most Men, and it being impossible to
 shew ’em *Pindar* in *Pindar* himself, ‘ he was of
 ‘ Opinion he cou’d not better justify that great
 ‘ Poet, than by endeavouring to make an *Ode* in
 ‘ *French* after his Manner: That is to say, full
 ‘ of Movements and Transports, wherein the
 ‘ Mind seems rather hurry’d away by the Fury
 ‘ of Poetry, than guided by Reason. Mon-
 sieur *Despreaux* adds, That he chose the Taking
 of *Namur* for his Subject, ‘ as the greatest war-
 ‘ like Action perform’d in our Time, and as the
 ‘ fittest Matter to warm a Poet’s Fancy; and
 he

he concludes this little Discourse, by saying, That tho' he has omitted nothing that cou'd imitate the Loftiness and Magnificence of *Pindar*; yet he does not know, 'whether the Public, who are accusom'd to the regular Excursions of *Malherbe*, will approve of these Sallies and Pindaric Extravagances; but that if he shou'd Miscarry, he comforts himself with the Difficulties which *Horace* represents in an Enterprize of that Nature.

As soon as this Ode appear'd, several Criticisms were made upon it: but Monsieur *Despreaux* did not think himself oblig'd to Answer them; he rather chose to employ his Time in defending the Ancient Poets; and thereupon writ a small Piece, Intituled, *Reflections upon Longinus; wherein Answer is occasionally made to some Objections of Monsieur P—— against Homer and Pindar*. There is conspicuous, throughout this Piece, a great Stock of Learning, supported by an exact and judicious Criticism. It were only to be wish'd, That Monsieur *Despreaux* had contented himself with being in the Right, and not made use of any harsh or outrageous Terms against his Adversary, who, in other Respects, was a Person of excellent Qualities. Monsieur *Despreaux*, it is true, pretended that he had been injur'd by Monsieur *Perrault*, in relation to what he had said in his Satires against some *French Authors*. And this is what he likewise gives to under-

understand in the Advertisement of the New Edition of his Works, which he publish'd at that Time*, with the Addition of the two Pieces I just now mention'd, and some others, which I shall take Notice of presently.

‘ I give here, *says he*, the same Preface which
 ‘ was in the two preceding Editions, because of
 ‘ the Justice I therein render to several Authors
 ‘ whom I attack’d. I thought I had sufficient-
 ‘ ly demonstrated by that voluntary Procedure,
 ‘ that it was no malignant Spirit which put me
 ‘ upon Writing against those Authors, and that
 ‘ I rather gave Instances of my Sincerity to-
 ‘ wards them, than Ill-will: Yet Monsieur P—
 ‘ is of another Opinion. That worthy Gentle-
 ‘ men (after Twenty five Years that my Sa-
 ‘ tires have been Printed) comes Slap upon me,
 ‘ and, whilst he calls himself my Friend, rakes
 ‘ into old Quarrels, and prosecutes a fresh In-
 ‘ dictment against my Works, when my Ene-
 ‘ mies had long ago drop’d the Suit. He
 ‘ reckons as nothing the good Arguments I
 ‘ made use of to shew that there is no Slander
 ‘ in Laughing at wretched Poetry; and, with-
 ‘ out taking the Pains to confute those Argu-
 ‘ ments, has thought fit to Style me, in Terms
 ‘ far from Obscure, a Slanderer, Envyer,
 ‘ Detractor, and one who meant nothing
 ‘ more than to establish his own Reputation
 ‘ upon

‘ upon the Ruin of that of other Men. And
‘ this, principally founded upon my having said
‘ in my Satires, that *Chapelain* was a rugged
‘ Poet, and that there was Elbow-room enough
‘ at *Abbot Cotin*’s Sermons.

‘ These are the Two great Crimes, adds *Mon-*
‘ *sieur Despreaux*, which he charges me with,
‘ even to the letting me know that I am never
‘ to expect Pardon for the Mischief I have
‘ caus’d, by giving thereby an Occasion to Po-
‘ sterity to believe, That under the Reign of
‘ *Louis the Great*, there was in *France*, a heavy
‘ Poet, and a Preacher not much follow’d.

‘ The Cream of the Jest, continues *Monsieur*
‘ *Despreaux*, is, That in the Book he wrote to
‘ vindicate our Age from that strange Calumny,
‘ He himself owns *Chapelain* to be no very di-
‘ verting Poet, and so harsh in his Expressions,
‘ that it is impossible to read him: But he does
‘ not agree as to the Solitude there is when
‘ *Abbot Cotin* preaches. On the contrary he
‘ affirms, He has been mightily Croud’d at a
‘ Sermon of that *Abbot*’s; but he informs us at
‘ the same time of one pleasant Particular of
‘ that great Preacher’s Life; namely, That had
‘ it not been for that Sermon, at which one of
‘ the Judges fortunately happen’d to be present;
‘ the Preacher, upon a Petition, prefer’d by his
‘ Kindred, had certainly been begg’d for a Fool.
‘ This is, *Monsieur P——*’s way of defending
‘ his

his Friends; and thus he Practises the Lessons of that noble Modern Rhetoric unknown to the Ancients, which probably has taught him to say, what he shou'd not say. But I take sufficient Notice of the Exactness of Monsieur P——'s Way of Thinking, in my Critical Reflexions on *Longinus*; to which I refer the Reader.

All I have to tell him here, continues he, is, That I give him in this new Edition, besides my old Works exactly revis'd, my Satire against *Women*, the Ode upon *Namur*, some Epigrams, and my Critical Reflexions upon *Longinus*. These Reflexions, which I compos'd upon Occasion of Monsieur P——'s Dialogues, multiply'd themselves under my Hand much faster than I expected, and caus'd me to divide my Book into Two Volumes. I have added at the End of the Second, two *Latin* Translations of my Ode done by Two of the most celebrated Professors in Eloquence of the whole University: I mean, Monsieur *Lenglet* and Monsieur *Rollin*. These Translations have been generally admir'd; and they are so much the more honourable for me, as that they very well know it was nothing but the reading my Work that excited them to undertake that Trouble. I have likewise subjoin'd to these Translations Four *Latin* Epigrams, made by the Reverend Father *Fraguer*, Jesuit, against the Modern *Zoilus*. There

‘ There are Two of them imitated from One of
 ‘ mine. Nothing can be more Polite or Elegant
 ‘ than these Four Epigrams ; and I can’t but
 ‘ fancy, that *Catullus* is therein reviv’d to re-
 ‘ venge *Catullus*. I therefore hope, the Pub-
 ‘ lic will think themselves oblig’d to me for
 ‘ that Present I make them.

‘ Furthermore, *says he, in concluding this Ad-*
vice to the Reader, just as this new Edition of
 ‘ my Works was going to be publish’d, the
 ‘ Reverend Father *de la Landelle*, another fa-
 ‘ mous Jesuit, brought me a *Latin* Translation
 ‘ he had likewise made of my *Ode* ; and I
 ‘ thought it so well done, that I cou’d not resist
 ‘ the Temptation of further enriching my Book
 ‘ with it, and accordingly it will be found
 ‘ with the Two others at the End of the Second
 ‘ Volume.

The *Satire* against *Women* had made a great
 deal of Noise even before it was publish’d ;
Monsieur Despreaux had read it to his Friends,
 and they had spoken so advantageously of it
 that every Body passionately wish’d to see it.
 He did not, however, make over much haste
 to publish it, because he was willing to in-
 sert it in the New Edition of his Works that
 was Printing, as he himself tells us in the
 short Advertisement which he prefixes to that
 Piece.

‘ At last, *says he*, I present you with the
‘ Satire which has so long been demanded of
‘ me. That I deferr’d publishing of it till now
‘ was, because I was unwilling it shou’d appear
‘ till the New Edition of my Book, which was
‘ then in the Press came out, intending to have
‘ it therein inserted. Several of my Friends,
‘ to whom I read it, have given it great Com-
‘ mendations, and prais’d it publicly, as the
‘ best of my Satires; in which they did not do
‘ me any Pleasure. I know the Public natu-
‘ rally rises against any extraordinary Praises
‘ bestow’d on Works before they appear in the
‘ World, and that the greatest part of Readers
‘ peruse what is rais’d so high, only with a De-
‘ sign to abase it.

‘ I declare therefore, continues Monsieur *Des-
‘ peraux*, That I will not make any Advantage
‘ of these Discourses in Favour of this Satire,
‘ and not only leave the Public to it’s free Judg-
‘ ment, but give full Power to all those who
‘ criticis’d on my *Ode on Namur*, to exercise
‘ the utmost Severity of their Criticisms against
‘ my Satire also. I hope they will do it with
‘ the same Success; and I can assure them, that
‘ all their Discourses shall not oblige me to break
‘ a Sort of Vow I have made, never to defend
‘ my Writings, when only Words and Syllables
‘ are attack’d. I can very easily defend against
‘ these

‘ these Censurers, *Homer, Horace, Virgil*, and
 ‘ all those other great Men whose Works I ad-
 ‘ mire. But for my own, which I do not value,
 ‘ let those who approve of them find out Rea-
 ‘ sons to defend them; which is all the Advice
 ‘ I have here to give to the Reader.

Monsieur *Despreaux* afterwards says, ‘ That
 ‘ nevertheless, he thinks, Decency requires that
 ‘ he shou’d make some Excuse to the fair Sex for
 ‘ the Liberty he has taken to paint their Vices.
 ‘ But in the Main, all the Pictures he has drawn
 ‘ in his Satire are so general, that far from be-
 ‘ ing afraid the Ladies will be offended, ’tis
 ‘ on their Approbation and Curiosity he
 ‘ Grounds his greatest Hopes of it’s Success;
 ‘ That, one Thing at least he is sure they will
 ‘ commend him for, which is, his having found
 ‘ out a Way in treating of so delicate a Subject.
 ‘ to do it so that no one Word has escap’d him
 ‘ which can give the least Offence in the World
 ‘ to Modesty.

Monsieur *de la Bruyere*, in Answer to the
 Criticism that had been made upon his Speech
 to the *French Academy* *, mentions this Satire
 with great Commendations, and even defends
 it against those who had censur’d it. *There is*
publish’d, says he, *a new Satire against Vice*

h 3 in

* June 15, 1693, the Day of his Reception.

in general, which in a nervous Strain of Poetry, and with a Pen of Steel inforces it's Strokes against Avarice, Excess of Gaming, Chicanry, Effeminacy, Sordidness and Hypocrisie, wherein no Body is either nam'd or delineated, where no Woman of Virtue either can or ought to think her self struck at:

A BOURDALOUE in the Pulpit never drew more lively or innocent Pictures of Guilt, no Matter for that, 'tis all Slander, 'tis all Calumny.

This has been for some time their only Cry, and all they have to say against Books of Morality that are in any Vogue: They take every Thing literally, they read them as they do a History, they make no Allowance for Poetry, no Allowance for Figure; and so they condemn them; they find out some weak Places in them; there are some such in Homer, in Pindar, in Virgil, in Horace, indeed where are there not? Except, perhaps in their own Writings*.

Monsieur Bayle has likewise given very great Praises to this Satire, which he calls Monsieur Despreaux's Master-Piece †. But tho' there are indeed many Things in it which discover it to be the Product of an excellent Pen, yet it is very short of that Energy and Fire which is to be found in the other Satires of Monsieur Despreaux. Neither is the Versification either so pure or so easie, and we ought not to wonder at it. Human Wit, Sir, has it's Revolutions and Alterations as well as all other Things.

* Bruyere's Preface to his Speech to the French Academy, Pag. 9, 10.

† Diction. Hist. & Crit.

Things. It wears out like them, and grows weaker by Degrees, as it approaches to it's End.

However Monsieur *Perrault* might be mortify'd by the *Critical Remarks upon Longinus*, he did not fail to Answer it by some *Reflections*, wherein he endeavours to repel the Censure of his Adversary. He likewise compos'd a small Poem, Intituled, *Apologie des Femmes*, in Opposition to the *Satire against Women*; and in the Preface to that Piece, he sharply criticis'd that *Satire*, which contain'd some very nipping Strokes against him. He even accus'd him of making use of indecent Terms in that *Satire*, and Expressions, which gave Offence to modest Ears. Monsieur *Perrault* having sent this Work to Monsieur *Arnauld*, the latter writ him a long Letter, wherein he justifies Monsieur *Despreaux* with great Force and Eloquence. Monsieur *Despreaux* was so proud of such an Advocate, he caus'd that Letter to be printed at the End of his Works in the last Edition he gave of them.

* The Criticisms that were publish'd upon the *Satire against Women* gave Occasion to Monsieur *Despreaux* to write an Epistle address'd, to his Book, wherein he Accounts for his Life and Works. It is, you see, Sir, an

h 4

Imi-

Imitation of one of the most beautiful Pieces in *Horace* *. I have already quoted to you two Places of it, give me leave, *Sir*, to do the like here. After having taken Notice of the Success that his first Pieces met with, he adds :

But now that I am Old, and on my Head
The Snow of Threescore Winters has been shed ;
Now these dissembled Locks my Baldness hide,
And Age has with my Vigour sunk my Pride ;
Now heavy is it's Hand, and I, with Pain,
Pursue the wonted Labours of my Brain.
Cease then my Muse, in your Fantastic Whims,
To hope the World will crowd to buy your Rhymes ;
That *Barbin* will be throng'd ; 'twill now be strange,
If for your Ice, they shou'd their Silver change.
Our brighter Days are gone, &c.

He thus afterwards Draws his own Picture :

If my past Writings for my present plead,
And you, my Verse, shou'd for my Sake be read ;
Describe me, in Return, and let 'em see,
I'm not the Man that I've been made to be.

* Epist. 20. Lib. 2. Vertumnum janumq; &c.

See, that with Care, those Features be effac'd,
With which my Picture has been oft disgrac'd.

Tell all Mankind, What e'er my Foes have said,
I'm not so Black at Bottom, as I'm made :

-That he, who has for Railing been revil'd,
Is in the main, Plain, Equitable, Mild :

A Friend to Truth ; Nor did he ever write
With Malice, or was Spitefull out of Spite :

That in a Word, his Candor was his Fault,
And That Sincerity he lov'd, he Taught :

Say, tho' by wretched Rhymers teaz'd, his Pen,
When e'er it lash'd the Poets, spar'd the Men.

Free was his Verse, but it was still Discreet,
And Sow'r as it may seem, his Look was Sweet.

In Body weak ; not short, nor yet too tall ;

Nor is he what the World Voluptuous call.

Himself less Virtuous than he's Virtue's Friend,
Yet will not dare his Frailties to defend.

At length, after having given an Account of
his Father and Mother, of the Inclination he
had to Poetry from his very Youth, and the
Progress he made therein ; he sets forth the Steps
of his Fortune, how he had been produc'd at
Court,

Court, and how he quitted it, the Infirmities that grew upon him, &c.

Tell 'em; by Chance, I in my greener Age,
To Court was brought, and to the Public Stage.
And from *Permessis* humble Banks remov'd,
Amid the Great applauded and belov'd,
I liv'd, and early saw my Weeks approv'd.
And when the Muse her lowly Shades forsook,
A flight Sublime with daring Wings she took.
Tell 'em, that Monarch, whose victorious Name,
To Monarchs dreadful, is so dear to Fame,
Me has employ'd, his Conquests to Record,
And bid my honour'd Pen attend his Sword,
To tell to future Times the glorious Deeds,
Which he who saw 'em scarce Believing reads.
Tell 'em, your Author to the Great was dear;
And had in mighty *Colbert's* Heart a share.
Tell 'em, that now, tho' he's from Court retir'd,
Weak in two Senses, and not oft Inspir'd;
Yet is he not forgotten; still the Great
Seek him, and please themselves with his Retreat.
More than One Hero, whom his Works content,
The Shade, he for his Labours chose, frequent.

Some short time afterwards, Monsieur Despreaux compos'd a new *Epistle*, directed to his *Gardener* *. Tho' there be a great deal of Gayety and Jocularity in this Piece, yet it contains some very beautiful Moral Strokes upon the Necessity and Advantage of Pains-taking, and the Inconveniences of Idleness and Sloth, and the Difficulties of Poetry.

† For the right Understanding of the Subject of the Satire upon *The Love of God*, which Monsieur Despreaux publish'd afterwards, we are to remember, That the Divines of the *Romish Church* are very much divided upon the Tenet of *Attrition*; Thus they call a *Sense of Grief* conceiv'd from the bare Apprehension of Hell Torments, and without any Love for God; and 'tis made a Question, *Whether such Grief be a sufficient Preparative for receiving Remission of Sins, and the Benefit of Justification at the Sacrament of Penance.* Many Divines of the *Romish Church*, among whom are reckon'd the most Learned Jesuits, declare themselves for the Affirmative; but others maintain, That Confession, and the Priest's Absolution, avail nothing, if the Party be without *Contrition*, that is to say, *A sincere Sorrow*

* Horace, directed one of his *Epistles* to his Farmer; it is the XIVth *Epistle* of the first Book: *Villicæ Silværum, & mihi me reddentis agelli, &c.*

† 1697.

Sorrow for having offended God as he is Amiable.
 Both Sides Appeal to the Council of *Trent*, and pretend it favours them; which shews, That that Council was not clear in it's Explications upon so important a Matter. *Alexander VII.* has equally forbid * those who maintain the Sufficiency of Attrition, and those who defend the Necessity of Contrition, to pass Censures on each other; whereby he undoubtedly meant, That it was no great Matter which of the two Opinions was follow'd. However, it were doing wrong to the Church of *Rome* to accuse Her of having determin'd in general and absolutely, That a Man may be absolv'd from his Sins and consequently Sav'd, without Loving God. That Church never intended to establish so detestable a Doctrine. But she has happen'd upon this Occasion, as well as some others, to renounce the most evident Notions, for the saving a Tenet, which by degrees was crept upon Her, and which she put among the Articles of Her Creed before She was well aware of all the Consequences of it. Thus having laid down, That to obtain Pardon of Sins, a Man must confess himself to a Priest, and receive Absolution from him; many have believ'd they had a right from thence to conclude, that that alone was sufficient to restore them into the Way of Salvation. And this Opinion seem'd to them so much the better Grounded, as that they

* By a Decree of the 6th of May, 1657.

they fancy'd Confession, &c. would become useless, if in order to reap any Benefit by it, they ought previously to have a true Contrition. And indeed, such *Contrition*, carrying along with it a true Love for God, and such Love being a Favour from the Holy Ghost, communicated to none but the Faithful; it necessarily follows, that every Man, who is truly *contrite*, is, *ipso facto*, justify'd and absolv'd from all his Sins. What need therefore is there after this for Confession and Sacramental Absolution? And how can the *Sacrament of Penance* procure Pardon to a Person, who before the receiving that Sacrament must have been in a State of Grace? It is no easie Matter, according to the System of the *Romish* Religion to remove these Difficulties. In the mean while, there is something so harsh and so shocking in asserting a Man may be Sav'd tho' he has no Sense of the Love of God, that the greater Number of *Roman* Catholicks have rejected this Doctrine, and without being concern'd at the Objections that may be made against them, they look'd upon the Tenet of *Attrition* as an abominable Error.

Monsieur *Despreaux* had, long before, declar'd himself upon that Subject in one of those Assemblies which were held at Monsieur *de Lamoignon's* House. One Day after they had been reading some Book relating to this Subject, he maintain'd that neither Confession nor the Priest's Absolution were sufficient unless the
Party

Party had in his Heart, at least some Tendency towards the Love of God. Some Jesuits who were present, immediately cry'd out against this Opinion, and said it was downright *Calvinism*. They afterwards put him to all the Difficulties that the Subject cou'd possibly bear. But Monsieur *Despreaux* brought himself off by a Piece of Wit which confounded those good Fathers, and gain'd him the Applause of the whole Company. Give me Leave, *Sir*, to relate this Particular as I find it in a Book which I have already more than once quoted. ' Monsieur *Boileau Despreaux*, ' says the *Menagiana* *, was one Day at the ' House of the late Monsieur de *Lamoignon* at ' *Barville* †. There was a great Number of Je- ' suits, who all of them, to a Man, boldly main- ' tain'd, that a certain well known Author ' was in the Right to make a Book on purpose ' to prove that we were not oblig'd to love ' God, and that those who affirm'd the contra- ' ry were in the Wrong, and impos'd an insup- ' portable Yoak upon the Necks of Christians, ' from which God has set them free by the new ' Dispensation. The Dispute upon this Subject ' growing at length to be pretty warm, Mon- ' sieur *Despreaux*, who till then had kept a pro- ' found Silence: Ah, cried he, rising up, how ' prettily will it sound on the Day of Judgment, ' when our Lord shall say to his Elect: Come ' you

* Tome 2. Pag. 302. 2d Edit. Holl.

† A Country Seat of Monsieur de *Lamoignon*'s.

' you the well beloved of my Father, for you never
 ' lov'd me in your Life, but always forbid that I
 ' ſhou'd be belov'd, and conſtantly oppos'd thoſe Here-
 ' tics who were for obliging Chriſtians to love me;
 ' and you on the contrary go to the Devil and his
 ' Angels, you the Accuſed of my Father, for you
 ' have lov'd me with your whole Heart, and have
 ' ſollicitated and urg'd every Body elſe to love me-----
 ' It made the whole Company laugh, adds the
 ' Menagiana, and this Raillery was a more ef-
 ' fectual Argument for the Neceſſity of the
 ' Divine Love than any Monſieur Arnauld cou'd
 ' uſe in his Books or moſt eloquent Diſ-
 ' courſes.

' ridiculum acri

' Fortius ac melius magnas plerumq, ſecat res.

Monſieur Despreaux darted a Stroke of his
 Satire againſt theſe looſe Doctors, in the VIth
 Canto of the *Lutrin*, where he introduces Piety
 complaining to *Themis* in this manner:

False Teachers next in numerous Crouds ariſe,

To fill the Measure of my Miſeries.

Then dangerous Heretics began their Reign,

(And execrable Maxims craz'd the Brain.

That 'tis enough, to Dread the Pow'r above,

And ſervile Fear's prefer'd to Filial Love.

' That

That God necessitates the Doing Ill,
 By pre-determining his Creature's Will.
 That Reason is the only Sovereign Queen,
 And Faith no Evidence of Things not seen.
 Church-Champions me with formal Lips address,
 And at my Feet for Absolution press.
 Pure to the outward Eye, ~~blissful~~ within,
 Place all their Virtue in confessing Sin.

Monfieur *Despreaux* said no more of the Matter at that Time. But some Years afterwards, *Louis XIV*, having given into Devotion; the whole Court after his Example, strove who shou'd seem the most Devout; and there was no Author of any Name, but what conform'd himself to the Humour in Fashion. Monsieur *Racine* apply'd himself to write nothing but Holy Plays; and the Commentators of profane Authors fill'd their Remarks with Moral and Religious Maxims. Monsieur *Despreaux* accommodating himself to the Taste of the Court, or perhaps only following the Sentiments with which an advanc'd Age is apt to inspire us, wrote his *Epistle upon the Love of God*, wherein the Defenders of *False Attraction*, as he calls it, were oppos'd with equal Strength and Zeal. He concludes this Piece by a Recital of what happen'd at Monsieur

de Lamoignon's, and forgets not the *Prosopopææ* which he had made use of with so good an Effect.

He publish'd these Three New Epistles separately in 1697, with a short Preface. 'I know not,' says he in this Preface, Whether the Three Epistles I now present to the Public will meet with a great many Admirers: But I know very well, my Censors will find abundantly wherewithal to exercise their Criticisms; for every Thing in them is extremely put to the Venture. In the *First*, Under pretence of Condemning my own Works, I make my own Elogium, and forget nothing that cou'd be said to my Advantage. In the *Second*, I entertain my self with my *Gard'ner* upon trivial Matters: And in the *Third*, Take upon me boldly to determine the greatest and most important Point in Religion, I mean the *Love of God*: I therefore give my Censors a fair Occasion to attack, in me, the Proud Poet, the Rude Peasant, and the Presumptuous Divine. However, as strong as their Efforts may be, I question, Whether they will shake the firm Resolution I have long since taken, never to make any Reply to whatever shou'd be written against me, at least not to Answer any thing in a grave Manner.

And indeed, continues he, To what End shou'd one needlessly waste Paper? If my Epistles are bad, all that I can say will not make them

' them better: If they are good, all that can
 ' be urg'd against them will not make them
 ' worse. The Public is not a Judge liable to be
 ' corrupted, nor is it govern'd by another's
 ' Passions. The Effect all Criticisms have
 ' against such Pieces as please, only helps for-
 ' ward their general Reception, and shews the
 ' Merit of them the better. 'Tis Essential to
 ' a good Book to meet with Censors; and the
 ' greatest Disgrace which can happen to a
 ' Work, after 'tis publish'd, is not that Abun-
 ' dance of People speak ill of it, but that no
 ' Body speaks of it at all.

' For which Reason, *pursues* he, I shall not
 ' be in the least concern'd, if these Three *Epi-*
 ' *stles* are taken to Task. 'Tis most certain, I
 ' have been at a great deal of Pains about them,
 ' especially that, on the *Love of God*, which I
 ' have revis'd more than once; and I own, I
 ' made use of all the little Wit and Judgment
 ' I was Master of, in giving it the finishing
 ' Stroke.

Monsieur Despreaux says afterwards, That
 at first he intended to publish this Epistle, singly,
 because the other Two seem'd too trifling to ap-
 pear with so serious a Work; but that his Friends
 over-ru'd this Design, by Reasons which he
 relates, and to which he yielded. Yet, he
 tells us, That there being some Religious Per-
 sons, who desir'd to have only That Epistle, he
 had

had given Notice to his Bookseller, to distribute it separately; and I shall not only not think it strange, adds he, that they read no more than that, but I am sometimes ready to wish, I had never wrote any other, than that Piece; tho' tis likely to be the last Poem I shall ever write: My Genius for Verse beginning to be exhausted, and my Historical Employments not affording me much Leisure for Rhyming.

' This, says he, is all I had to say to the Reader. However, before I finish this Preface, it will not be improper, methinks, to satisfy some scrupulous People, who, having no great Opinion of my Capacity in Theological Matters, may question, whether what I advance in my XIIth Epistle, be Orthodox; and may be apprehensive, that while I pretend to be their Guide, I shall lead 'em astray. Wherefore, that they may Walk securely, I must tell them, I have read that Epistle several Times to a very great Number of eminent Doctors of the Sorbonne, Fathers of the Oratory, and Jesuits, who all applauded it; and allow'd the Doctrine to be very sound and pure. He adds, That a great many illustrious Prelates likewise, entertain'd the same Thoughts of it. And lastly, That the Bishop of Meaux, and the Archbishop of Paris, had also read and examin'd it with Care, and had given it their Approbation.

While these Epistles were Printing, there came out a Spurious Copy of Monsieur Despreaux's Epistle on *The Love of God*. It was accompanied with divers Remarks, wherein the Jesuits were not spar'd: Upon which, Monsieur Despreaux was oblig'd to disown that Piece. *I thought*, says he, *I shou'd have no further Occasion to trouble the Reader. But whilst this Preface was Printing, a wretched Epistle in Verse was brought me, publish'd by some impertinent Fellow, as if it were written by me. I am therefore oblig'd to add this Article, to inform the Public, that I never made any other Epistle upon the Love of God, than that which will be found in this Edition: The other, being a fictitious and imperfect Copy, consisting of some Verses which were stol'n from me, and many others ridiculously father'd upon me, as well as the presumptuous Notes that go along with it.*

Some Time after, the Count d'Ericeyra sent to Monsieur Despreaux from *Lisbon*, a Translation which he had made of his *Art of Poetry*, in *Portuguese Verse*, and with it a very obliging Letter, and some *French Verses*, which shew'd an extraordinary good Taste. Monsieur Despreaux in the Answer he return'd to that Letter, express'd how sensible he was of the Honour of being approv'd of by a Person of his Merit and Quality, and assur'd him, *That in the next Edition of his Works he wou'd not fail*
to

to insert a Translation which was fo glorious for him.

* Tho' the Difpute between *Monfieur Despreaux* and *Monfieur Perrault* was mingled with a great deal of Sharpnefs and Personal Animofity, yet it was not attended with the common Fate of Quarrels between Men of Letters, which nothing but the Death of one of the Difputants generally puts an end to. Thefe two Gentlemen were foon reconcil'd, and without either's pretending to impofe his Opinion upon the Other, they interchangeably gave Proofs of a real Esteem and hearty Friendfhip. Upon which Occafion *Monfieur Despreaux* made the following Epigram.

The Poets Wars at *Paris* ceafe,

And *Phæbus* to his Sons gives Peace :

Perrault, Immortal *Pindar*'s Foe ;

And *Homer*'s falteft Friend, *Boileau*,

Their Critic Quarrel now give o'er,

As Angry as they were before.

Each other's Merit they confeff ;

Nor think it, for their differing, lefs ;

Nor Argue who was Wrong or Right,
 But both in Search of Truth unite ;
 We fear it will much longer be,
 E'er *Pradon* and the *Pit* agree.

* Monsieur *Racine*, you know, *Sir*, died in 1699. and the Most Christian King having appointed Monsieur *de Valincour*, Secretary-General of the Navy, to succeed him in the Place of Historiographer-Royal, Monsieur *Despreaux* address'd to his new Associate, a *Satire*, Upon True and False Honour, which he at that Time compos'd.

Some short Time after, Monsieur *Despreaux* being recover'd from a dangerous Fit of Sickness, Father *Fraguier*, who had written in his Favour some *Latin* Epigrams against Monsieur *Perrault*, congratulated him upon the happy Restoration of his Health, in a *Latin* Epistle, which he made at the Instance of Monsieur *Remond*, Counsellor in the Parliament of *Paris*, their common Friend.

† Monsieur *Despreaux* publish'd in 1701. a New Edition of his Works, with several Additions. To this he prefix'd a new Preface, wherein he first of all Thanks the Public for the Approbation they had given to his Works.

This

* 1699.

† 1701.