

*This being, says he, in all Probability the last Edition of my Works that I shall Revise, &c **

Then he enquires into the Reason that might Influence the Public in behalf of his Works †.

He afterwards Examines the Nature of those Graces and Delicacies which are necessary to recommend a Work of Wit. Now, if any Man asks me, What this Agreeableness and this Salt is? I Answer, That it is a *Je ne sçay quoy*, which may be better conceiv'd than describ'd. But yet in my Opinion, it principally consists in offering nothing to the Reader but true Thoughts and just Expressions. The Mind of Man is naturally full of an infinite Number of confus'd Ideas of *Truth*, which he oftentimes perceives but by Halves; and nothing pleases him more, than when any of these Ideas are presented to him well illustrated and set in a good Light. What is a New, Brilliant, Extraordinary Thought? It is not, as the Ignorant persuade themselves, a Thought which no Body ever had, nor was likely to have had. But on the Contrary, a Thought which every Body might have had, and which some one Berthinks himself of expressing the first, &c. **.

* Vid. M. Boileau's General Preface, hereto annex'd.

† Ibid.

** Ibid.

Monſieur *Deſpreaux* afterwards gives an Account of this new Edition; and laſtly Answers thoſe, who *Notwithſtanding the ſolid Reaſons he had Twenty Times given, ſtill look'd upon, as Calumny, the Railleries he had made on a great many Modern Authors, and who reported, that while he expos'd the Faults of thoſe Authors, he had not done Juſtice to their good Qualities*; he Answers them, I ſay, by repeating the ſame Words he had before us'd upon that Occaſion in the Preface to his Two preceding Editions.

While this Edition was preparing for the Public, Monſieur *Boivin*, the King's Library Keeper, communicated to Monſieur *Deſpreaux* ſome Obſervations he had made upon the old Manuſcript of *Longinus*, which is in that Library, and is an Original with Reſpect to all the other Manuſcripts of that Author that are at this Day to be found. He added thereto ſome very curious Remarks upon the famous Ode of *Sappho*, which *Longinus* hath preserv'd, and which is ſeen in this Manuſcript more Correct than in any other. Theſe Obſervations of Monſieur *Boivin* were ſo highly pleaſing to Monſieur *Deſpreaux*, that he deſir'd they might be Printed in his Book next to thoſe of Monſieur *Dacier*; as we are inform'd in the ſhort Adverſement that precedes them. *Whiſt theſe Notes were Printing, Monſieur Boivin, ſays that*
Adver-

Advertisement) one of the Under-Library Keepers of the King's Library, a very deserving Gentleman, and particularly skill'd in the Greek Tongue, brought to Monsieur Despreaux some very judicious Remarks he had likewise made upon Longinus in reading the old Manuscript which remains in that famous Library, and Monsieur Despreaux was of Opinion the Public might be pleas'd with seeing them subjoin'd to Monsieur Dacier's.

The most remarkable Piece in this New Edition is the Letter which Monsieur Despreaux wrote to Monsieur Perrault after their Reconciliation; it contains several very curious Particulars, and well deserves that I should take some Notice of it here. He tells him First, That since the Public had been inform'd of their Quarrel, it was likewise fit they should be acquainted with their Reconciliation, and that they were become very good Friends. He adds, That their Dispute was scarce at an End, but Monsieur Perrault sent him his Works, as he himself had done the like to Monsieur Perrault; and that notwithstanding those mutual Civilities they still adher'd each to the same Sentiments as before; that is to say, Monsieur Perrault in a firm Resolution not to have over much Esteem either for Homer or Virgil, and Monsieur Despreaux, their constant passionate Admirer.

Monsieur Despreaux afterwards asks Monsieur Perrault, What it was that could Incense him
so

so much, and induce him to write against all the celebrated Authors of Antiquity; and makes appear, that it could not be the want of Respect paid in France to any good Modern Author, since the Public have render'd to those Writers, (of whom he Names the greatest Part,) all the Justice they deserv'd. Your self, Sir, for instance, adds he, Can you complain of any Injustice done to your Dialogue of Love and Friendship, your Poem upon Painting, your Epistle to Monsieur de la Quintinie, and many other excellent Pieces of your Composing? He likewise shows, That it could not proceed from any fear that the Moderns should spoil themselves by imitating the Ancients; since on the contrary, it was to this very Imitation that Corneille, Racine, and Moliere, ow'd the Success of their Writings.

He therefore believes, That this Heat and Animosity of his against the Ancients might in all Probability be occasion'd 'by Meeting
' with some of those Sophists, who Study more
' to enrich their Memories than their Minds,
' and who having neither Wit, Judgment, nor
' Taste, esteem the *Ancients* only because they
' are *Ancients*; who think that Reason can't
' speak any other Language than Greek or
' Latin, and condemn at first Sight all that is
' writ in any Modern Tongue, merely because
' 'tis Modern. That these ridiculous Admirers
' of Antiquity had disgusted him against admiring what is wonderful in the Ancients; and
that

‘ that this in all Probability was, the Occasion
‘ of writing his *Parallels*. Monsieur Despreaux thereupon Desires him to remember, That the great Writers among the Ancients do not owe their Glory to the Approbation of some few either of the Sophists, or truly Learned; but to a constant and unanimous Admiration express’d by the Men of Sense and Taste in all Ages, among whom, says he, were more than one Alexander or one Cæsar.

Monsieur Despreaux afterwards shews, That Monsieur Perrault and himself did not differ so much in Opinion as some People might imagine. Your Design, says he, is to shew that as to the Knowledge, especially of the fine Arts, and the Belles Lettres, our Age, or, to speak better, that of LOUIS THE GREAT, is not only comparable, but superior to all the most famous Ages of Antiquity, and even to that of Augustus. You will then be surpriz’d, adds he, when I tell you, That as to that particular, I am entirely of your Opinion; and in case my Business or Infirmities wou’d give me leave, I wou’d joyn with you in the Proofs of it.

He, however, tells him, That he shou’d make use of different Arguments, and take such Precautions and Measures as he had not done: That he shou’d not oppose, like Monsieur Perrault, their own Nation and Age alone to all other Nations and Ages together; but that

that he wou'd examine every Nation and every Age separately; and after having maturely weigh'd wherein they excell'd us, and wherein we surpass'd them, I am very much mistaken, adds he, If I cannot prove that the Advantage is altogether on our Side. Monsieur Despreaux afterwards gives an Example of the Method he wou'd observe in this Examination, when he shou'd come to the Age of Augustus; after which, he adds, That nothing remain'd to confirm their Reconciliation, and prevent all further Disputes between them, but that they should endeavour each to cure his own Failings.

‘ This, Sir, continues he, is what I was very desirous the Public should know: and to inform them thoroughly of it, I do my self the Honour to write you this Letter, which I intend to Publish in the new Edition of my Works. I wou'd willingly have suppress'd some few Railleries, a little too Sharp, which unwarily fell from me in my Reflexions upon Longinus; but I thought such a Design altogether Fruitless, considering the Two former Editions were abroad; to which, and some foreign Editions that might be publish'd, People wou'd undoubtedly have Recourse. I thought, then, the best Way for me was to satisfy you here, as I have already done, of the real Sentiments I have for you. I hope you will be pleas'd with my Procedure, and that you will not be offended at the Liberty
‘ I

Monfieur Boileau Despreaux. cxxix

I have taken of inserting in this last Edition of mine, the *Letter* which the famous Monfieur *Arnauld* wrote to you concerning my Xth *Satire*.

You fee, by this Letter, *Sir*, what Monfieur *Despreaux's* Thoughts were upon the famous Difpute about the Ancients and Moderns, and the good Opinion he had of Monfieur *Perrault*. But do you not admire the frank Confession he makes; That the *Vexation* it gave him to fee himfelf reflected upon in Monfieur *Perrault's* *Dialogues*, made him fay fome Things that had better never been faid. Such a Confession cou'd proceed from nothing but a Gentleman, and is perfectly worthy of Monfieur *Despreaux*.

You are not to be inform'd, *Sir*, That for thefe laft Forty Years, the *Jefuits* in *France* have with great Induftry apply'd themfelves to the Study of the Sciences and polite Literature. They have likewise cultivated their Language with fo much Succefs, that many of their Works may now ferve for Standards; whereas formerly they were written in fo barbarous a Manner, that their Antagonifts us'd to make it a common Topick, to turn them into Ridicule.

However, as the beft Things are not fecure againft Envious and Sullen Tempers, They, who are no Well-wifhers to thefe Gentlemen,

in France, pretend, That it is nothing but a Spirit of Ambition and Vanity which puts them upon thus distinguishing themselves in all Sorts of Learning; and that they have nothing in View but to raise themselves by this Means above other Societies, both Religious and Civil. It is, *say they*, a Desire of Rule, that Spurs these good Fathers on to act thus, and not the Love of Learning, or the Good of the Public. They are little concern'd, whether the Sciences flourish, or whether Ignorance and Barbarism prevail, provided, they enlarge their Jurisdictions, and attain at length to be Masters. For we see them equally make use of these two Methods, as contrary as they are, in Hopes that one of them at least will succeed. Thus, we see them, at the same time, destroy all the Monuments of learned Antiquity, and clear up whatever is obscure in History or Chronology; decry the Study of Criticism, and yet comment upon, or examine the Ancient Authors both Ecclesiastical and Profane, according to the Rules of that very Art they so much condemn; revive Legends and superannuated Fictions, and question Maxims which no Man ever doubted of; declare for *Aristotle's* Philosophy, and assent to every Discovery made by the Moderns in the Sciences and Noble Arts. And all this, purely to attain to absolute Rule and Universal Dominion.

The

‘ The Reason why they apply themselves to the
‘ Mathematics, for Example, is only, *say these*
‘ *Gentlemen*, to get footing in the Territories
‘ of the *Eastern* Princes, and the more effectually
‘ to supplant all other Missionaries. They
‘ study’d the *French* Tongue, only out of Envy
‘ to the *Messieurs de Port Royal*, whose Writings
‘ were admir’d throughout *France*. But,
‘ *continue their Accusers*, the several Works
‘ which they from Time to Time publish’d, not
‘ seeming to them the most commodious or
‘ ready Way to spread their Merit through the
‘ World, they resolv’d at the beginning of this
‘ Century, to publish a Monthly Journal, where-
‘ in their Works might be proclaim’d and pompously
‘ founded forth, and wherein they might
‘ insert short Discourses, to shew, there was no
‘ Art, Science, or Language, they were Ignorant
‘ of, or wherein they had not made some
‘ considerable Discoveries; which, together with
‘ their unfair Judgment of all other Writers, as
‘ well Catholic as Protestant, wou’d not fail to
‘ leave in the Minds of the Readers a high Idea
‘ of the profound Knowledge and extraordinary
‘ Merit of the Fathers of the Society.

These, *Sirs*, are the ungenerous Motives ascribed
‘ by the Enemies of the Jesuits, to the Noblest
‘ Occupations of those Good Fathers. As their
‘ Distance from us secures us from their Attempts,
‘ we are not possess’d with that Hatred and Prejudice against them as is

Visible

Visible in *France*. Nothing hinders us from doing them Justice, and acknowledging the Benefit which the Public receives from their Works; and particularly from the *Memoirs for the History of the Sciences and Polity Arts*; for so they have Modestly intitul'd their Journal, which is Printed at *Trevoux*, a little Town within the Sovereignty of *Dombes**: It must, however, be own'd, That this Monthly Performance wou'd be more generally esteem'd, if they were Nicer in chusing the *Memoirs* they insert in it; it had fewer Monkish Invectives against the Protestants; and if the Criticisms they sometimes make upon Modern Authors, did not look as if they rather proceeded from some personal Animosity, than a too refin'd and delicate Taste.

For thus, as 'tis generally believ'd, they acted with respect to Monsieur *Despreaux*, in one of their Journals for the Year 1704. They seem'd to Censure his Works, only by way of Revenge, for his Reflecting upon their Brethren so much as he did, in his *Epistle on the Love of God*. What furnish'd them, Sir, with a Handle, was this. A Bookseller of *Amsterdam*, having publish'd in 1701. an Edition of Monsieur *Despreaux's* Works, wherein were inserted, at the Bottoms of the Pages, some Passages out of the

* *Trevoux*, is Three Leagues from *Lyons*: The Principality of *Dombes* belongs to the Duke du *Maine*.

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the *Latin* Poets which he had imitated ; These Gentlemen, under Pretence of giving an Account thereof in their Journal, represented Monsieur *Despreaux* as a Copier, or rather a Plagiary, who ow'd his whole Reputation and Merit to the Noblest Passages of the Ancients, which he had transferr'd into his Works ; and endeavour'd to give a ridiculous Turn to the Preface of the last Edition of his Works before-mention'd. As 'tis likely you have not seen this Article of their *Memoirs*, you will please, Sir, to give me leave to insert it here at full length.

' The New Edition of Monsieur *Despreaux's*
' Works, which is lately come to our Hands,
' seems to us, says these Gentlemen, remarkable
' enough to be taken Notice of. At the Bot-
' tom of the Pages there are seen the Verses of
' the *Latin* Poets which he has transferr'd into
' his Works. Others, may by this Means learn,
' from that Great Poet, the Prime Satyrift of
' our Time, how to imitate the Beauties of the
' Ancients, and to improve them to their own
' Advantage and Reputation ; not to mention
' the Pleasure there is in Comparing the bor-
' row'd Places with those from whence they
' are taken, and in Discovering every where
' something more Cutting in one than t'other.
' This Edition is likewise Advantageous to
' Monsieur *Despreaux* in another Respect. It
' highly justifies his siding with the Ancients,
k . . . whom

' whom he always look'd upon as the best
 ' Models. And indeed, the Reader, in turn-
 ' ing over this Volume, will find the Pages
 ' more or less abounding with *imitated Latin*
 ' Verses, according as Monsieur *Despreaux's*
 ' Pieces were generally more or less esteem'd.
 ' For Example, In his *Art of Poetry*, by which
 ' he has got so great a Reputation, here is
 ' Printed a full fourth Part of *Horace's Art of*
 ' *Poetry* upon the same Subject, so far as con-
 ' cerns the General Rules of Poetry : And yet
 ' I have seen a Preface to some of Monsieur
 ' *Despreaux's* Editions, where he affirms, He
 ' borrow'd no more than Forty Verses from
 ' *Horace* : But the Others, by long Acquain-
 ' tance, might become as it were his own
 ' Thoughts, without his perceiving it. Several
 ' Pages are likewise cramm'd with *Latin* Verses
 ' in the Eighth Satire, *Against Man*; in the Ninth,
 ' where the Author speaks to his *Muse*; and in
 ' the Fifth upon *True Nobility*, wherein is seen
 ' a long Series of *Juvenal's* Verses translated
 ' almost *Verbating*; and yet so happily turn'd,
 ' and with so much Genius, that 'tis certain
 ' there are no finer Passages in all Monsieur
 ' *Despreaux's* Works.

' We find no *imitated Latin* Verses in the
 ' Tenth Satire *Against Women*; and but Two
 ' or Three in his Epistle *upon the Love of God*.
 ' And yet this Collection of Quotations, as be-
 ' neficial as it is, may be made much fuller and
 ' more exact than it appears.

There

‘ There are likewise contain’d in this Edition, two ingenious Pieces, but of which we cannot certainly say, that Monsieur *Despreaux* was the Author, since he did not publish them himself in his last Collection to which he put his Name. The first is a *Parodie of some Passages of the Cid*, which is a very sharp Criticism upon *Chapelain*, *Cassaigne*, and *la Serre*, drawn into Scenes. • As for this *Parodie*, we are assur’d from the Authority of the second Edition of the *Menagiana*, that ’twas made on Purpose to divert the late Monsieur de *Lamoignon*. The second Piece is a Petition in Prose in Favour of *Aristotle*, wherein is foolishly ridiculed the blind Adherence of the University of *Paris*, to the true or pretended Doctrine of that Philosopher. We have, indeed, in the last *Paris* Edition, the Decree that was made upon that Petition, and which is written in a no less Merry but much more delicate Style: But as for the Petition it self, it is not inserted in that Edition.

‘ The Public may perhaps take it well of us, at least they in *Holland*, for Pointing out the whole Difference that there is between these two Editions publish’d in the same Year, (1701) with respect to the several Things therein contain’d. We have just now taken Notice of those which are in the *Dutch* Edition, and omitted in that of *Paris*; and now we shall

‘ give an Account of what are in the *Paris*
‘ Edition, and omitted in that of *Holland*.

‘ Besides the Name of Monsieur *Despreaux*,
‘ Printed here at full length, there is a very
‘ remarkable Preface of the Author’s, by which
‘ he seems to set the Seal to all the preceding
‘ Editions which he has made of his Works;
‘ being, as he says himself, Sixty three Years
‘ of Age, and depress’d with *many Infirmities*.
‘ And therefore he takes his Leave of the *Public*
‘ *in Form*; and to avoid the most monstrous of all
‘ Vices, Ingratitude, he thanks the *same Public*
‘ for their Goodness in so often purchasing Pieces
‘ so little worthy of their Admiration. Having
‘ this Preface before us, we cannot avoid tran-
‘ scribing here, some particular Places, which
‘ made an Impression upon us. Among others,
‘ we think nothing more Witty than what the
‘ Author says, when he endeavours to explain
‘ wherein the Agreeableness and Salt of any
‘ excellent Work of Wit consists.

‘ It consists, says he, in *True Thoughts and*
‘ *just Expressions*. The Mind of Man, adds Mon-
‘ sieur *Despreaux*, is naturally full of an infinite
‘ Number of confus’d Ideas of Truth, which he
‘ oftentimes perceives but by Halves; and nothing
‘ pleases him more, than when any of these Ideas
‘ are presented to him well Illustrated and set in
‘ a Good Light. Upon which he produces an
‘ Example in the Saying of *Lewis XII.* which
‘ every

Monsieur Boileau Despreaux. cxxxvii

‘every Body knows, *A King of France revenges*
‘*not the Injuries done to a Duke of Orleans.*

‘To shew on the contrary, how cold and
‘Puerile a false Thought is, he brings several
Examples: The first is out of *Theophile*:

Ah! Coward Blade, which Drank, before his
Time,

It’s Master’s Blood; and *Blushes at the Crime.*

‘The Second is the Author’s own, which
‘he, it seems, made Choice of, on purpose to
‘make the Character of the First more ob-
‘vious. *All the Ice of the North put together,*
‘*is not, in my Opinion, more Frigid than this*
‘*Thought.*

‘Monsieur *Despreaux* concludes this Article
‘with telling us, *That he cou’d say a great*
‘*deal more upon the Subject, enough to fill a*
‘*a large Volume*; but he thinks this sufficient
‘to testify to the Public his Gratitude, and the
‘high Opinion he has of their Taste and Judg-
‘ment. After these repeated Compliments and
‘Civilities, the Public wou’d be very rude
‘if they did not make some return on their
‘Part.

‘ Besides this Preface, the Pieces which are
‘ in the late *Paris* Edition, and not in that of
‘ *Amsterdam*, are. 1. A Satire upon False
‘ Honour, address’d to Monsieur *de Valincour*.
‘ 2. Several Trifles which the Author wrote in
‘ his Youth, but which he has corrected a little
‘ to render ’em the more tolerable to the Reader.
‘ 3. A Letter to Monsieur *Perrault*, concern-
‘ ing their Réconciliation. 4. A Letter writ-
‘ ten by the famous Monsieur *Arnauld* to Mon-
‘ sieur *Perrault*, wherein he makes an Apology
‘ for the Xth Satire against Women. Mon-
‘ sieur *Despreaux* does not doubt that the Pre-
‘ sent, he makes to the Public, of this Letter,
‘ will be very acceptable : And indeed, it is a
‘ true Present and a perfect Bounty, for the
‘ Public cou’d not expect the Author shou’d
‘ give them a Letter which was not writtē to
‘ him.

The Author of this Extract does not Study
(you see, *Sir*,) to perform the Duty of an Impartial
Journalist or Historian : He sets himself up a
Public Censor, and a declar’d Enemy of Mon-
sieur *Despreaux*. He disguises his Words, he
ascribes Things to him which he does not say ;
and changes his Expressions to make them ca-
pable either of a false or ridiculous Meaning.
All this wou’d furnish Matter for a large Disser-
tation, but which cannot be brought within the
compass of these Memoirs. Besides, if we compare
Monsieur *Despreaux*’s General Preface with what
our

our Journalist says of it, 'twill easily be seen that his Criticism is mixt with too much Passion and Ill Nature.

I shall content my self, *Sir*, with giving you Two or Three Examples of this Author's unreasonable Prejudice, and relate them as they Offer, without confining my self to Order.

After having laid down as a Maxim, That in turning over this *Dutch* Edition it will be found the Pages are more or less cram'd with imitated Latin Verses, according as *Monsieur Despreaux's* Pieces were generally more or less esteem'd, he afterwards observes, That there are but Two or Three to be found in his *Epistle upon the Love of God*. He might justly have added, That the Two single Verses of *Horace*, quoted by the *Dutch* Editor upon that *Epistle*, have but a very remote Relation, or rather none at all, with the Subject which *Monsieur Despreaux* is there treating of; and from thence he might, according to the Maxim he had laid down, conclude more certainly, That the *Epistle upon the Love of God* was One of those Pieces which were less esteem'd. But how comes our Journalist not to perceive he lay open to this Objection, That 'tis no wonder *Horace*, *Juvenal*, or any other Ancient *Latin* Poet never writ any Thing against *False Attrition*, since in their Time there were no loose Casuists who

‘ discharg’d Mankind from the most important
 ‘ Duties of Morality, and who even dispens’d
 ‘ with their Obligation to love God? But this
 Epistle on the Love of God was what he
 principally aim’d at: This was the real Cause
 of his Animosity against Monsieur Despreaux;
 and there was a Necessity for finding out some
 Pretence to run it down.

Monsieur Despreaux thought this so Merry
 a Criticism, that he made it the Subject of an
 Epigram. It is as follows. He speaks to the
 Journalists.

*Non, pour montrer que Dieu doit etre aime de nous,
 Je n’ai rien emprunte de Perse ni d’Horace,
 Et je n’ai point suivi Juvenal a la trace:
 Car bien qu’en leurs Ecrits ces Auteurs, mieux que vous,
 Attaquent les Erreurs dont nos Ames sont ivres,*

*La necessite d’aimer Dieu
 Ne s’y trouve jamais prechee en aucun lieu,
 Mes Peres, non plus qu’en vos Livres.*

Right; When I undertook to Prove,
 Men ought, to serve the Power above,
 Not with base Fear, but filial Love:

}

From

From *Juvenal* I did not steal,
 Nor follow'd *Horace* at the Heel;
 For tho' the *Vices* that controul,
 And lord it o'er the Human Soul,
 Are rally'd with more Sense and Wit
 By *Them*, in ev'ry Poinant Sheet
 Than in whatever *You* have writ;
 The *Love* which to our GOD is due,
 Is no more Preach'd by *Them* than *You*.

Our Cenſor is no leſs Satyrical on *Monsieur Despreaux's* Art of Poetry. In his *Art of Poetry*, ſays he, by which he has got ſo much Reputation, eſpecially with Reſpect to the General Rules of Poetry; we ſee Printed a full fourth Part of *Horace's* Art of Poetry upon the ſame Subject. And yet I have ſeen, continues he, a Preface to ſome of *Monsieur Despreaux's* Editions, wherein he affirms he took no more than Forty Verſes out of *Horace*, &c. To make a right Judgment of this Criticiſm, we muſt firſt of all conſider, That the Queſtion here does not turn upon the Conformity there may be between the Verſes of *Monsieur Despreaux* and thoſe of *Horace*, in Relation to certain Maxims of good Senſe which may naturally offer themſelves to the Mind of any Writer, who is, attentive and judicious. To take it by this Handle, there is no Author that may not be

re-

represented as a Copyer or Imitator of another, when he treats upon the same Subject ; since it can't possibly happen but that a great Number of general Maxims will be equally found in both of them. The *Dutch* Editor ought to have no regard to this Kind of Conformity. He was only to quote the *Latin* Verses, which, it manifestly appear'd to him, Monsieur *Despreaux* had in View, and which he had only translated as it were into *French*. Yet this was what he did not observe ; as it were easie to shew if it were necessary. But supposing all the *Latin* Verses which he has taken out of *Horace's* Art of Poetry were imitated by Monsieur *Despreaux* in the Sense of the Journalist ; it is not however true, as he pretends, that these imitated Verses make a full fourth Part of the Art of Poetry, and he that is ever so little acquainted with Arithmetic may convince himself of it*.

As to what he adds about his seeing a Preface to some of Monsieur *Despreaux's* Works, wherein he affirms, he took but Forty Verses out of *Horace* ; I have given that Preface already†, and you have seen, Sir, That Monsieur *Despreaux* only says, That in his Work, which consists

* *Horace's* Art of Poetry, consisting of 476 Verses, the fourth Part is 119. Now all the Verses quoted in the foremention'd Dutch Edition amount but to 92, which is short of a fourth Part by 27. The Journalist therefore did not reckon right when he spoke of a full fourth Part.

† See, Pag. lxx.

sists of 1100 Verses, there are, not above 50, or at most 60 imitated from Horace. There's a great deal of Difference betwixt *Forty* and *Sixty*; and after all, *Monsieur Despreaux*, I shou'd think, ought sooner to be credited than the Journalist, who plainly declares himself his Enemy, and whose Passion must needs magnifie the Object. But let us admit, that there is in *Monsieur Despreaux's Art of Poetry*, a full fourth Part taken out of *Horace*, that is to say, 119 Verses; since *Monsieur Despreaux's Work* contains 1100, there will still remain, upon that Foot, very near a 1000 which he has not imitated from that Ancient Poet.

Our Censor's Intention is to represent *Monsieur Despreaux* as a Person of no extraordinary Genius, but has trickingly adorn'd himself with the Merit and Reputation of the Ancients whom he has Copy'd. After having said, *there are seen at the Bottom of the Pages in the Dutch Edition, the Verses out of the Latin Poets which Monsieur Despreaux has transferr'd into his Works*, he adds, *That by this Means others may Learn to imitate the most beautiful Passages of the Ancients, and improve them to their own Advantage and Reputation.* But if this Criticism were Just, it wou'd fall no less upon *Virgil* than *Monsieur Despreaux*. For *Virgil*, every one knows, has imitated *Theocritus* in his *Eclogues*, and *Homer* in his *Aeneid*. *Fulvius Ursinus*

Ursinus has given us a Collection of the Verses which that illustrious Author has imitated from the Greek Poets, and transferr'd into his Works: And yet no Body ever took it in their Heads to conclude from thence, that, Others may Learn after the Example of this great Poet to imitate the finest Passages of the Ancients, and to improve them to their own Advantage and Reputation, &c. And the Reason is, because, tho' *Virgil* did transfer into his Works several Places out of *Homer* and *Theocritus*, yet the Substance of these same Works, that is to say the Argument, the Plan, the Turn, the Diction, &c. being a Fund of his own, he has a Right to Challenge these Pieces entirely as his own, since he furnish'd the Principal Part of them, and borrow'd nothing from another but what was Accessory. We may say the same with Respect to *Monsieur Despreaux*; he has made use of the Ancients, it is true: But if we compare his Works with theirs, even in those Places, which one wou'd take for bare Imitations, we shall soon discover, that the Oeconomy, the Turn, and the Expression, belongs properly to him, and consequently they may be look'd upon as his own proper Goods. *Horace*, for Example, has given a Description of a ridiculous Collation in one of his Satires*: *Monsieur Despreaux* has imitated him in this; but he that ever so little examines *Monsieur*
Des-

* Lib. II. Sat. 8.

Despreaux's Imitation *, must confess it to be a true Original.

This is so Evident, That an ingenuous Author, and one of our Journalist's own Fraternity, who has given us a very valuable Translation of *Horace*, acknowledg'd it with respect to another Passage of that Poet: For after having translated these Four last Verses of the Epistle to *Augustus*:

*Ne rubeam pingui donatus munere; & una
Cum Scriptore meo, capsâ porrectus aperta,
Deferar in Vicum vendentem Thus & Odores,
Et piper, & quidquid chartis amittitur ineptis:*

in these Words: I shou'd Blush at such a Present, and to see the Hero of a Poem, together with his Poet, lying at the full length, in some old Trunk without a Lock, to be carry'd to the Grocers-street, where dull and impertinent Pieces serve to wrap up Pepper, Frankincense, and Perfumes, &c. he adds, 'This is what Monsieur Despreaux has so happily and so elegantly express'd so many different Ways, and in Verses altogether new, and which will continue so a long time.

' Ha-

' *Habiller chez' Franc-Cœur le Sucre & la Cannelle.*

' *Autour d'un Caudebec j'en ai lu la Preface.*

' *Et j'ai tout Pelletier*

' *Roule dans mon Office en Cornets de Papier.*

And in the Second Canto of his *Art of Poetry*, speaking of Sonnets :

' *Le reste aussi peu lus que ceux de Pelletier,*

' *N'a fait de chez Sercy qu'un saut chez l'Epicier.**

' Here we have Wrappers of all Sorts, small
' and great, and the *Grocer* that makes them
' up. This is neither Copying nor Imitating,
' but Creating *.

What Answer do you think, *Sir*, cou'd these
Censurers of Monsieur *Despreaux* make to a
Person who shou'd Talk to them in this Manner.

' You endeavour, *Gentlemen*, to lessen the Value
' of Monsieur *Despreaux's* Works, under Pre-
' tence, that they are only Imitations, which
' can afford at best but a borrow'd Merit an
' Reputation : Well, do you, your Selves en-
' deavour to imitate the finest Passages of the
' An-

* Letter from Father Tarteron, to a particular Friend, prefix'd before
that Jesuit's Translation of Horace, Pag. 60, 61. Dutch Edit. 1710.

‘ Ancients; write *Satires* for Example, or an
‘ *Art of Poetry*, that shall be as well received
‘ by the Public as those of Monsieur *Despreaux*.
‘ You have, as well as he, the *Verses of the*
‘ *Latin Poets*, which, you say, he has only
‘ Copy’d; transfer them into your *Works*;
‘ imitate the most beautiful *Passages* of these
‘ *Ancients*; make Use of them; take your
‘ Advantage of them; and we shall see, whe-
‘ ther, by this Means, you will be able to gain
‘ your selves a Reputation and a Merit equal
‘ to that of Monsieur *Despreaux*?

But this is enough to shew how little Exac-
t-ness and Solidity there is in the Censure of
the Journalists of *Trevoux*. Monsieur *Des-*
preaux no sooner read it, but he address’d to
them the following Epigram:

Mes Reverens Peres en Dieu,
Et mes Confreres en Satire,
Dans vos Ecrits en plus d’un lieu
Je vois qu’a mes depends vous affectez de rire;
Mais ne craignez vous pas que pour rire de vous,
Relisant Juvenal, reseuilletant Horace
Je ne ranime encor ma Satirique audace?
Grands Aristarques de *Trevoux*
Ne faites point courir aux Armes

clxviii *The LIFE of*

*Un Athlete tout pret a prendre son Conge,
Qui par vos traits malins au Combat rengage
Peut encore aux Rieurs faire verser des Larmes.*

Apprenez un Mot de Regnier

Notre celebre devancier ;

“ Corsaires attaquant Corsaires

“ Ne font pas, dit il, leur Affaires.

Fathers in God, whom I revere !

But as to Satire, Brethren dear !

You lately have vouchsaf'd to show

Your Strength of Wit on poor Boileau.

But are you not afraid, his Gall,

With Help of Horace, Juvenal,

May rise again, tho' now 'tis low,

And with a stronger Tide reflow ?

Trevoux's great Aristarchuses !

Mind your own Business if you please.

Be once advis'd, and don't enrage

A Wrestler, going off the Stage,

Who, tho' Infirm, and much in Years,

May turn your Laughter into Tears.

What

What our Forefather *Regnier* says,
Is worth your Notice and your Praise:
That when *Corfaires* attack *Corfaires*,
Ill must it go with their *Affairs*.

Monsieur Despreaux did not Content himself with letting fly this and the preceding Epigram against these Gentlemen; he form'd the Design of a Work, wherein the whole Body of *Jesuits* were to be Censur'd. As he was not Ignorant that these Fathers were accus'd of having pernicious Sentiments upon the Doctrine of *Equivocation*, he compos'd a New *Satire*, wherein he addresses himself to *Equivocation*, as to a Person, and ascribes to it the Cause of *Adam's* Fall; of the *Pagan* Idolatry; of the *Heresies* that have disfigur'd Christianity; of the Blood that has been shed both by the Hereticks and the Orthodox in their Turns; and lastly, of the Licentiousness which has slip't into the Christian Morality, by introducing the Tenet of Probability, that of false Attrition, and some others, which have been Taught by the most celebrated *Jesuits*, whom he accuses, directly, of totally subverting the Morality of *JESUS CHRIST*. But the *Jesuits* of *Trevoux* being the Principal Object of his Anger, he did not forget them in this *Satire*. After having said, that
I
'twas

'twas proper to prevent, by a prudent Silence,
the Noise which wou'd infallibly be made by
the *Doctors of Equivocation*, whom he had be-
gun to paint in the blackest Colours; he adds,
in the Conclusion of that Piece:

*Alte donc la ma Plume : & toi sors de ces lieux,
Monstre, a qui par un trait des plus capricieux,
Aujourd'hui terminant ma course Satirique,
J'ai prête dans mes Vers un Ame allegorique.
Fui, va chercher ailleurs tes Patrons bien aimez
Dans ces Pays par toi rendus si renommez,
Où l'Orne epand ses eaux, & que la Sarte arrose * :
Où si plus surement tu veux gagner ta cause,
Porte la dans Trevoux a ce beau Tribunal,
Où de nouveaux Mydas un Senat Monacal,
Tous les Mois, appuye de ta Sœur l'Ignorance,
Pour juger Apollon, tient, dit on, sa Seance.*

But halt my Pen—— and, thou my Prefence quit,
Monster! To whom, in a Poetic Fit,
(My last Performance of the Satire Kind)
I here have lent an *Allegoric* Mind.

Fly

* La Normandic.

Monsieur Boileau Despreaux.

eli

Fly to thy Friends, be gone, thou guilty Shade,
Into those Climes, by Thee so famous made,
Where *Sarte* glides, and *Orn'* o'erflows his Bed.
Or woud'st thou gain a Vict'ry more compleat,
Carry thy Cause to *Trevoux's* Judgment Seat!
There, by thy Sister *Ignorance's* Care,
A Monkish Set of *Midas's* repair,
And, every Month, as basle Fame reports,
For trying of *Apollo*, keep their Courts.

This New Satire made a great deal of Noise in *Paris*, tho' it was yet known only upon the Report of some of Monsieur *Despreaux's* Friends to whom he had recited it. People passionately wish'd he wou'd hasten the Publication of it, but he rather chose to keep it till the new Edition of his Works, which he intended suddenly to give the Public.

* And indeed, about the End of the last Year, he obtain'd a Privilege from the King for the Reprinting his former Pieces, and for the Publication of several others which had not yet seen the Light; such as the *Satire upon Equivocation*; the *Dialogue upon Romances*,
1 2 which

which I have already taken Notice of, with the Addition of a very curious Preface; Fifteen or Sixteen *Letters* upon Subjects of Literature; some Additional *Chapters* to his *Reflections upon Longinus*, wherein, among other Things, he answers Monsieur *Huet's* Dissertation, relating to the Passage out of *Genesis*; a Dissertation upon the Manner of making Inscriptions, &c.

† The New Edition was now put to the Press; but there was hardly Five Sheets Printed, when the Jesuits, not able to endure the Publishing the *Satire upon Equivocation*, order'd their Father *le Tellier*, the King's Confessor, to speak to his Majesty about it, and prevail with him to give Orders, that the Impression of the whole *Work* might be stop'd, and to revoke the Privilege he had granted. Some very considerable Persons, among others, the Cardinal de *Noailles*, Archbishop of *Paris*, and the Comte de *Pontchartin*, Chancellor of *France*, solicited for Monsieur *Despreaux*; but the Insinuations of Father *le Tellier* prevailed with his Majesty, and render'd all their Representations ineffectual; so that the King, not only forbid Monsieur *Despreaux* to publish that *Satire*; but likewise order'd him to put the Original into his Hands. It is true, He at the same time let him know, That in respect to his

his other Writings, the *Privilege* shou'd continue in it's full Force : But Monsieur *Despreaux*, who found himself near his End, did not think fit to Temporize, and rather chose entirely to suppress his New Edition, than to Maim it, thro' any mean, interested Views. He had long before this quitted the Court, and liv'd in a sort of Recess. As he never car'd to Launch far into the Conversation of the Great, he contented himself with a Set of Friends, whose Commerce was always his Chief Delight. And thus he quietly expected Death which he was daily warn'd of by acute Pains, Swoonings, and an almost habitual Fever, which at length carry'd him off, on the Second Day of *March*, in the 74th Year of his Age. He was Buried at St. *John le Rond*, where his Friends will undoubtedly erect a Monument worthy of him.

We are in Hopes of a New Edition of his Works, with those Pieces that have not yet appear'd. We can't expect to find therein the *Satire upon Equivocation*; but that Defect is already supply'd by the Impression that was secretly made of it a few Days after the Author's Death. As for the *History of Louis XIVth*, which he was long engaged upon, we must not expect to see it publish'd before the Death of that Prince. Mean while, the Sincerity and Natural Candor of Monsieur *Despreaux* cannot but give us a favourable pre-possession for whatever he has written upon that Subject. A Gentleman, who

was intimately acquainted with him, has assur'd me, that, Discourſing one Day upon the Difficulties ſuch Works were attended with, *Monſieur Despreaux* frankly own'd, That he did not well know what Reaſons to alledge in Juſtification of the War againſt *Holland* in 1672, This were a very evident Proof of his Veracity; and, in truth, this Circumſtance of *Louis XIVth's* Hiſtory has been hitherto the Stumbling-Block of the *French* Writers. Some have urg'd childiſh and frivolous Pretences; while others, more Circumſpect, have look'd upon the Motives of that great Enterprize, as one of thoſe Myſteries of State, which it does not belong to private Men to ſearch into. This Year, (1672) ſays *Monſieur Riencourt* (was remarkable for the War which the King declar'd againſt the Dutch, after having found Means to diſſuade them from the Kings of England and Sweden: His Majeſty engag'd the former to make War upon them by Sea, after he had promis'd to do the like by Land. As it is not permitted to Subjects, adds he, to penetrate into the Secrets of their Prince, his Majeſty contented himſelf to let them know in the general, That he had ſufficient Reaſons no longer to look upon that Nation any otherwiſe than as his Enemies. If this Declaration of War, continues he, was very ſurprizing to the Dutch, that which the King of England, on his ſide, declar'd againſt them, was no leſs amazing; each of
those

† Ubi ſupra, Pag. 379, 380.

those Monarchs had their private Reasons, and Corresponded together.

This, Sir, is certainly a very Mysterious Way of Writing; and if Posterity had not more intelligible Memoirs relating to that War than those of Monsieur *Riencourt*, they wou'd find it pretty difficult to come at the secret Motive of it. After all, I shou'd think the French Historians need not be so perplex'd to Account for this Historical Phenomenon. Why do they not say, *That Louis XIVth having a Conde and a Turenne to put at the Head of a Victorious Army; That besides, being in the midst of a great many young Lords, eager to Signalize themselves and to acquire Glory; That, in short, being himself young, and proposing to follow the Example of Alexander, or Charles the Great, he was willing to begin with the Conquest of Holland, being reasonably perswaded, that if he cou'd once unite his own Forces with those of that Mighty State, all the rest of Europe wou'd soon be oblig'd to submit to his Power, and to acknowledge him for their*
UNIVERSAL MONARCH.

But, leaving Politicks, let us return to Monsieur *Despreaux*. It is time I shou'd give you some Lineaments of his Character.

Nothing is more frightful than the Picture his Enemies have giv'n of him, They have

represented him, as a *Slanderer, an Envyyer, a Detrafter, and one who only study'd how to establish his own Reputation upon the Ruin of that of other Men* * : But never was Man more exempt from all these Faults than he, or more strongly addicted to the contrary Virtues. And by this it was, he principally won the Esteem of so many Persons no less conspicuous for their Quality than their Merit. His Justice, his Rectitude, and his Sincerity, were so well establish'd, that he made no difficulty of publishing them himself in his *Epistle to his Book*, and to make it a Matter of Glory to himself; as you have already seen †. It is likewise true, That it was his Integrity and Innocence, which did, as it were, give him a Right to Compose *Satires*. An Author that should reprehend in others such Faults as he himself is guilty of, would be expos'd to the public Laughter, and regarded by none. A Satiric Poet, shou'd, to a great share of Equity and Uprightness, joyn an ardent Love for Virtue and a perfect Exemption from the Vices which he Lashes in his Writings: By this he gains the Favour of good Men, and secures himself against the Malice of his Enemies ¶.

A

* See above, Pag. cii.

† See, Pag. cviii.

¶ Si quis

Opprobriis dignum lastraverit, integer ipse,
Solvuntur risu tabule, tu missus abibis.

Hor. Sat. Lib. II. Sat. 1.

A Satyric Author is commonly represented as a Malicious, Envious, Sullen, and Ill-natur'd Person: But there's nothing more unreasonable than this Prejudice. It is not, either, Malice or Envy or a sour captious Humour that inclines him to write; but the sole Desire of making Men better. It is the Consideration of their Disorders that Angers him; his Sharpness proceeds ~~only~~ from his Vexation to see Vice, Error, or Folly, prevail. As he has a Natural Sense of Good-nature, Justice and Humanity, he Interests himself in every Thing that Concerns other Men; he Sympathizes with their Misadventures; and the Wrong they receive, either in their Person or Reputation, makes as quick an Impression upon him, as if himself had suffer'd those Indignities. One of our most Polite ^{or} Writers, who is justly admir'd for a New and Inimitable Manner of Correcting the Vices of the Age; who has the Art to ennoble the most Common Subjects, to Abound in the most Barren, and to make so happy a Mixture of the *Utile* and the *Dulce*, that Censure, in his Hands, becomes Amiable, and Reproof Agreeable: In a word, Mr. *Steele* has perfectly well discuss'd this Subject in his Incomparable TATLER *.

Good

Good Nature, says he, is an essential Quality in a Satyrift, and all the Sentiments which are beautiful in this Way of Writing must proceed from that Quality in the Author. Good Nature produces a Disdain of all Baseness, Vice, and Folly, which Prompts them to express themselves with Smartness against the Errors of Men, without Bitterness towards their Persons. This Quality keeps the Mind in Equanimity, and never lets an Offence unseasonably throw a Man out of his Character. When Virgil said, He that did not hate Bavius might love Mevius, he was in perfect Good Humour, and was not so much mov'd at their Absurdities, as passionately to call them Sots or Blockheads in a direct Invective, but Laugh'd at them with a Delicacy of Scorn, without any Mixture of Anger.

The best good Man, with the worst-natur'd Muse³ was the Character among us of a Gentleman as famous for his Humanity as his Wit*.

The ordinary Subjects for Satire are such as incite the greatest Indignation in the best Tempers, and consequently Men of such a Make are the best qualified for speaking of the Offences in Human Life. These Men can behold Vice and Folly when they injure Persons to whom they are wholly

* My Lord Rochester's Character of the late Earl of Dorset.

wholly unacquainted, with the same Severity as others resent the Ills they do themselves. A good natur'd Man cannot see an over-bearing Fellow put a bashful Man of Merit out of Countenance; or out-strip him in the pursuit of any Advantage; but he is on fire to succour the Oppress'd, to produce the Merit of the one, and confront the Impudence of the other.

Mr. Steele shews afterwards, that 'The Men of the greatest Character in this Kind were Horace and Juvenal; and adds that, There is not that he remembers, one ill-natur'd Expression in all their Writings, not one Sentence of Severity which does not apparently proceed from the contrary Disposition; tho' they attack Vice with an equal Force, but in a different Style, according to the particular Genius, Manners, and ridicule of the respective Times they liv'd in.

And such was Monsieur Despreaux. Plain and unaffected in his Manners; full of Sentiments of Humanity, Mildness and Justice; He nervously censur'd Vice, and sharply attack'd the bad Taste of his Time, without being govern'd by any Motive of Envy, or any Spirit of Calumny. But, whatever shock'd good Sense or Truth, rais'd in him an Indignation which he cou'd not Master, and to which perhaps we are beholden for his most ingenious Compositions. But tho' he expos'd this Defect in Writers, he
always

always spar'd their Persons *. The Hatred which he had for indifferent Verses did not hinder him from esteeming the good Qualities of bad Poets : And when he was most unmerciful to their Writings, he not only spar'd their Persons, but likewise sought Occasions to do them Service. *The Sight of any Learned Man in Want made him so uneasy, that he cou'd not forbear lending Money, even to Liniere, who often went from him directly to the Tavern, to make a Song against his Creditor* †. This was the same *Liniere* whose Name you have met with, more than once, in *Monfieur Despreaux's* Works, among the Poets of the lower Rank ; so that we may, with a great deal of Reason, apply to *Monfieur Despreaux* what was said of the late Earl of Dorset :

The best Good Man, with the worst-natur'd Muse.

The good Nature and Justice of *Monfieur Despreaux* did further appear in his Manner of Recompensing his Domesticks, and by his Liberality to the Poor. He gave by his Will Fifty Thousand Livres to the small Parishes of the City, adjoining to the Church of *Notre Dame* ; Ten Thousand Livres to his *Valet de Chambre* ; and Five Thousand to an old Woman.

* *Monfieur Valincour's* Answer to the Speech made by the Abbot d'Estrees to the French Academy, upon his Reception, the 25th of June 1711. N. S. in the Room of *Monfieur Despreaux*.

† *Le Nouveau Mercure*, Printed at *Trevoux*, April 1711. Pag. 127.

man who had serv'd him a long time. But he was not contented to bestow his Benevolences at his Death, and when he was no longer in a Condition of enjoying his Estate himself; he was, all his Life long, studious in seeking Opportunities of doing good Offices. This Inclination was Natural to him, and nothing equal'd the Pleasure he took in Satisfying it. I shall give an Instance of it in a Story well known throughout *France*.

Monsieur *Patru* *, Advocate in the Parliament of *Paris*, was one of the finest Wits of his Age. When he was admitted into the French Academy †, He made a Speech of Thanks, which was so very pleasing to the Academicks, that they order'd That for the Time to come, whoever was admitted into their Body shou'd make a Speech of Thanks to the Company; which has been ever since practis'd. He had so perfect a Knowledge of the French Tongue, that all the best Writers of his Time consulted him as their Oracle. His Pleadings serve still as a Model for correct Writing in French. He was, besides, a Man, whose Virtue was Proof against the Corruption of the World; and there never was a more faithful or a more officious Friend. But having entirely devoted himself to the violent Passion he had for the

Belles

* He Died in 1681.

† Morcry, Artic. of *Patru*, ubi supra.

Belles Lettres, and prefer'd his Books and Closet to the Bustle of the Bar, he fell at length into extreme Poverty, too common with Men of Learning; and found himself at last reduc'd to Sell his Library. Monsieur *Despreaux*, who knew his Merit, and had consulted him oftner than once upon his own Works, came to hear that he was just upon the Point of parting with his Books for a very inconsiderable Sum of Money. He presently went and bid more, that he might have the Preference, and obtain'd it; but, the Money being told out, he add'd to his Bargain a new Condition, which surpriz'd Monsieur Patru: It was, That he shou'd keep his Books as before, and that his Library shou'd only revert to Monsieur *Despreaux* after his Death*.

Monsieur *Boursault* reporting this Particular, has join'd another to it, which is no less glorious for our Author; it is concerning the great *Corneille*; and Monsieur *Boursault*'s Testimony ought to be so much the less suspected by us, since Monsieur *Despreaux* did not spare him in his Satires †. It is in one of those Letters, containing Observations and Wise Sayings, written to the Bishop of Langres, that Monsieur *Boursault* tells us these Particulars. He

* Le Nouveau Mercure, ubi supra.

† *Boursault*, to be reveng'd, writ a whole Comedy against Monsieur *Despreaux*, where he Criticiz'd him in his Turn; but it was not allow'd to be Play'd, because Monsieur *Despreaux* was nam'd in it.

He had just been giving the Elogium of Monsieur *Catinat*. 'After having mention'd to you, 'says he to that *Prelate* *, a great Marechal 'of *France*, whom I have no Knowledge of, 'but from public Fame, be pleas'd, my Lord, 'to give me leave to take Notice of a Person 'illustrious in another Respect, whose Enemy 'I have heretofore been; and whom I cou'd 'not help praising even tho' I were so still. 'I mean Monsieur *Despreaux*, whom I have 'already quoted at the beginning of this Letter. Monsieur *Patru*, of the *French Academy*, 'a Person of great Merit, but low in Circumstances, being persecuted by inflexible Creditors, who wou'd have oblig'd him to make 'a public Sale of his Library; Monsieur *Despreaux*, having Notice of it, Bought it, 'to prevent the Indignity he might suffer by 'parting with it, and then left Monsieur *Patru* freely to enjoy it the remainder of his 'Days, as if it were still his own. If the 'Pleasure was great to him that received it, 'adds Monsieur *Boursault*, I make no Question 'but it was greater to him that gave it. 'The same Monsieur *Despreaux*, continues he, 'being at *Fontainebleau*, and hearing that the 'Pension, which the King gave to the great 'Corneille had been just then retrench'd, he 'hasten'd to Madam de *Montespan*, and roid 'her, That the King, as Equitable as he was, 'cou'd

* *Letters nouvelles de feu Monsieur Boursault*, Vol. 2. Pag. 149. Paris Edit. 1709.

' cou'd not without some Appearance of In-
 ' justice, give a Pension to such a Man as him-
 ' self, who was but beginning to Climb the
 ' Hill of *Parnassus*, and take it away from
 ' another who had so long been at the Top.
 ' He beg'd her, for his Majesty's Glory, ra-
 ' ther to cause his own to be withdrawn than
 ' to take it away from a Man who deserv'd
 ' it incomparably better ; and that he cou'd
 ' much easier bear the not having it himself,
 ' than to see so great a Poet as *Corneille* with-
 ' out it. He spoke to her so advantageously
 ' of the Merit of *Corneille*, and *Madam de*
 ' *Montespan* thought it so generous a Proceed-
 ' ing, that she promis'd him to cause *Corneille's*
 ' Pension to be restor'd ; and was as good as
 ' her Word. Tho' nothing can be more beau-
 ' tiful than Monsieur *Despreaux's* Poetry, yet
 ' in my Opinion, adds Monsieur *Boursault*, the
 ' Actions I've just now mention'd to your
 ' Lordship, are much more so.

It were indeed impossible to give more sen-
 sible Proofs of Good nature, and a strong In-
 clination to Beneficence.

You, *Sir*, will have a quicker Sense of this,
 because you are not, in the least, a Stranger
 to so Noble an Inclination, and are never
 better pleas'd than when you can give In-
 stances of it. This is one of your strongest
 Passions ; and this Conformity of Temper will
 make

make Monsieur *Despreaux's* Memory dearer and more precious to you.

This, *Sir*, is sufficient, to let you into the Character of Monsieur *Despreaux*, with respect to the Virtues of the Heart: It were needless to go about to describe his WIT to you; his WORKS are a faithful Representation of it. I shall Content my self with Two or Three Reflexions.

Monsieur *Despreaux* had not that fiery Imagination which is observ'd in some other Poets: He rather seems a little Dry, and sometimes falls into a Repetition of the same Thought. But what he wants in Imagination, he amply Supplies by the Order and Exactness of Thinking, Purity of Style, a beautiful Turn, and clearness of Expression; Qualities, far more valuable than the First, and which very rarely go along with it. It is however, visible by the Poem of the *Lutrin*, That he had a beautiful, lively, and fruitful Imagination. This further appears, from his having compos'd almost always by Memory, and never committing his Productions to Paper till he was going to Print them.

He took a great deal of Pains about his Works, as he himself insinuates in his Preface. Whatever Facility there is in his Verses, every Body that reads them is sensible

ble they Cost him a great deal, and that it was only by Dint of Labour, he gave them that free and natural Air which constitutes the principal Beauty of them.

Those Pieces of Poetry which he publish'd after his *Ode upon Namur*, are neither so lively nor so exact as those that he publish'd before. And indeed, there are some of them, which it were to be wish'd he had not written. But when a Man has been a long time in Possession of the just Applauses of the Public, it is very Difficult for him not to, persuade himself that he can always continue to Please them.

There is, however, visible throughout his whole Works, an exquisite Taste, a true good Sense, and an infinite Politeness. Whenever he Borrow'd any Thing from the Ancients, he made a masterly Use of it, and render'd it his Own by the New Turn he gave it. *This Gentleman*, says Monsieur de la Bruyere, in giving the Character of Monsieur Despreaux *, excels Juvenal, comes up to Horace, seems to create the Thoughts of another, and to make whatever he Handles his own. He has, in what he borrows from others, all the Graces of Novelty, and all the Merit of Invention; his Verses strong, and harmonious,
made

* In his Speech to the French Academy.

made by Genius, tho' wrought with Art, will be read even when the Language is obsolete, and will be the last Ruins of it; there is observable in them, a Criticism, sure, judicious, and innocent, if it be but allowable to call Bad, Bad.

But it is not only the French who have prais'd Monsieur Despreaux, his Elogium has been made by all ingenious Men, of whatever Nation, who have read his Works. ' Baron Spanheim, says Monsieur Baillet, acknowledging, that it is upon the Model of the ' Ancient Latin Authors, such as Lucilius, ' Horace, Persius, and Juvenal, that the Modern Satyrists in France, Italy, and elsewhere, ' have form'd their Works, thought himself ' oblig'd in Justice to say, That France bears ' away the Bell not only from her Neighbours, as ' to Satire, but Disputes it with Old Rome. ' He adds, That if the Glory of the Invention be ' due to Lucilius; That of having equal'd or surpass'd it, be due to those who have come after; ' the Glory of having exceli'd therein, either ' for Beauty and Facility in Versification, for ' true good Sense, or for a Liberty which has it's ' requisite Bounds and Decencies, cannot be contested with Monsieur Despreaux*.

m 2

But

* Baron Spanheim's Preface to his Translation of Julian's Account of the Emperors, Pag. 5. apud Baillet, ubi supra, Pag. 360.

But it must be confess'd, That nothing is more glorious for Him than the Approbation he has met with in *England*, where a Foreign Author wou'd in vain attempt to impose upon the People's Judgment. A too favourable prepossession is not much to be fear'd ; and therefore we may say, That Monsieur *Despreaux* is beholden to nothing but his own Merit for those advantageous Notions which are entertain'd of him. The present Translation of his WORKS will make him still better known. If he cou'd be read in his own Tongue he wou'd undoubtedly be a Gainer ; but equitable Readers will of themselves make the necessary Allowances, and forbear to condemn Monsieur *Despreaux* before they are sure it is He that Speaks, and not his Translators. But this Inconvenience is the less to be fear'd, since the greatest Part has pass'd thro' the Hands of Mr. *Ozell*, who some time since made a Version of the *LUTRIN*, which has met with a general Reception.

I wish, *Sir*, That these MEMOIRS may not be found unworthy of your Approbation : At least, I beg you wou'd look upon them as a Testimony of my Gratitude, and of the Passion with which I shall ever be,

London, Nov. 24.
1711.

S I R,

Tours, &c.

T H E

75
THE
LUTRIN:
A
Mock Heroic
POEM.

In Six CANTO'S.

Render'd into English Verse.

To which is prefixt Some ACCOUNT of
BOILEAU's Writings, and this TRANSLATION,

By N. ROWE, Esq;

THE SECOND EDITION.

L O N D O N,

Printed in the Year MDCCXI.



To the Right Honourable

Charles Lord *HALIFAX*.

YOUR Lordship is not to be inform'd of the great Reputation Monsieur BOILEAU has acquir'd by all his Works. They are esteem'd so Nice in themselves, that it has been thought by some as rash an Attempt to translate this *French* Author, as for an English General to attack an Army of theirs. The late Successes of some former Campaigns have sufficiently prov'd that their *Heroes* are not *Invincible*; and the happy Imitations of some of their best Pieces, that their *Writers* are not *Incomparable*. Not that I'm so vain as to imagine the following Translation deserves to be mention'd in the same Breath with some I cou'd name. But certain it is the *French* Genius may be match'd (if not surpass'd) in both, the *Pen* as well as the *Sword*; whatever exalted Notions to the contrary

The Dedication.

trary some amongst us may have, who cou'd relish *Slavery* it self, if it were but *French*. I do not intend any thing to the Disadvantage of our Enemy's Wit and Knowledge, but only to put the Matter in a Way of Issue, and let the Country try it. I have endeavour'd with the Assistance of my Friends, to do Monsieur BOILEAU all possible Justice in this Celebrated Piece of his, the *Lutrin*; I hope I have us'd him with that Civility which is due to one of the first Figure in the Common-wealth of Learning; I was going to say, with that Generosity our Country-Men treat his at *Litchfield* and *Nottingham*.

But, *My Lord*, if it really be so bold an Undertaking to translate the *Lutrin*, it is unpardonably worse to offer it to Your Lordship, whose *Penetration*, is equal to Your Noble *Birth*; and yet *Both* yield to the Prevalence of Your *Good Temper*, which with a like Indulgence receives the Homage of all sorts of Persons.

Upon this Foundation I presum'd to set Your Lordship's Name on the Frontispiece of this Work; to be to it, what You are to Your Country, its *Ornament* and *Protection*.

If ever Your Lordship shall alienate so much of Your Time from the *Public Good*, as to read this *Poem*; You will find in it very Great, but necessary Variations from the *Original*; whether for the better or the worse, I submit to You, from whose Judgment there is no Appeal.

Nothing