

THE SATYRICON of Petronius, Illustrated, v7

Petronius Arbiter (Translated by Firebaugh)

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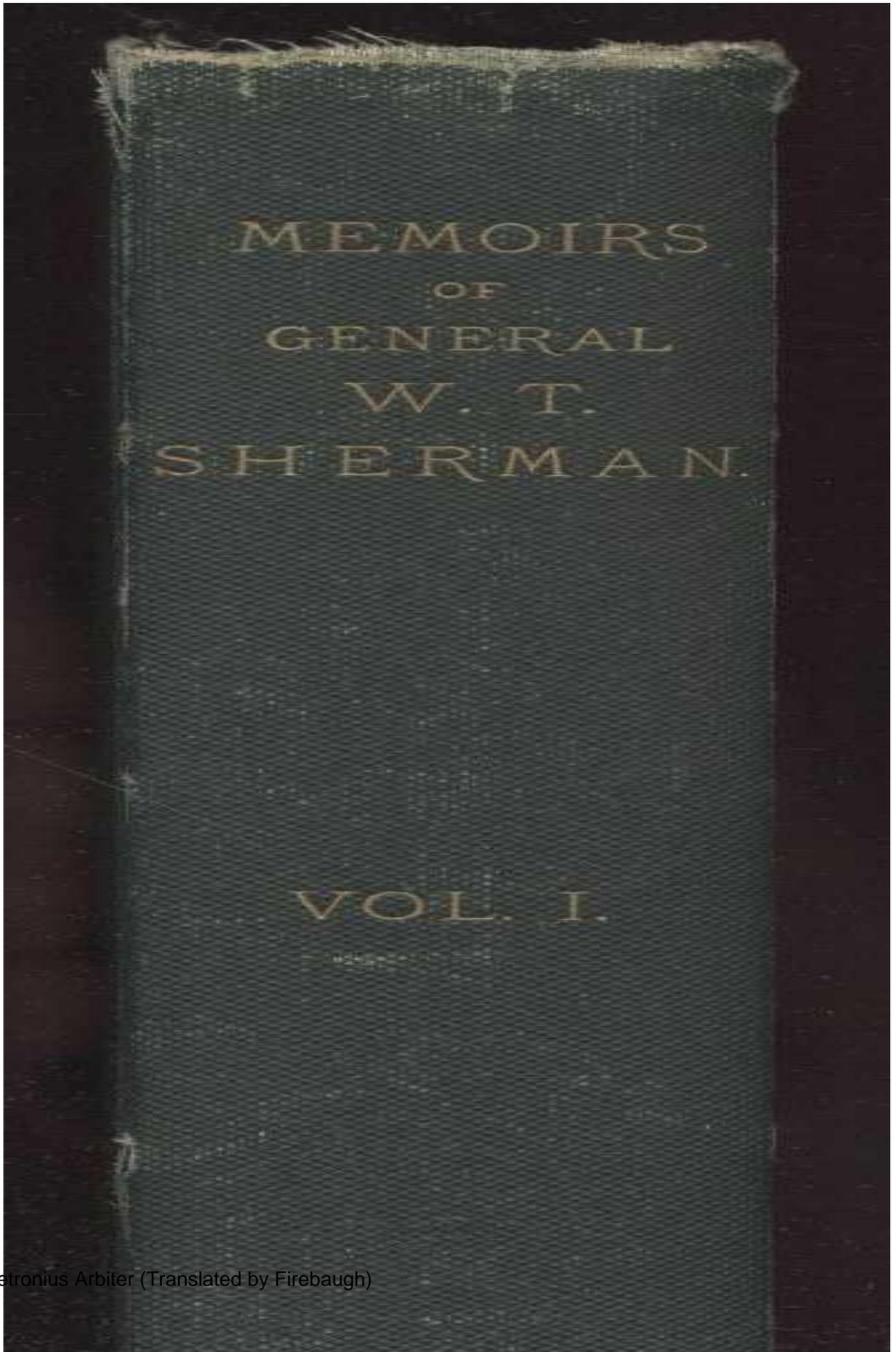
Petronius Arbiter (Translated by Firebaugh)

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THE SATYRICON OF PETRONIUS ARBITER

- SIX NOTES BY MARCHENA.
- TO THE ARMY OF THE RHINE.
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Complete and unexpurgated translation by W. C. Firebaugh, in which are incorporated the forgeries of Nodot and Marchena, and the readings introduced into the text by De Salas.



The Witches (*page 138*)

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The Witches [Frontpiece]

THE SATYRICON OF

PETRONIUS ARBITER

Volume 7.

BRACKET CODE:

(Forgeries of Nodot)

[Forgeries of Marchena]

{Additions of De Salas}

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THE SATYRICON OF PETRONIUS ARBITER

THE SATYRICON of Petronius, Illustrated, v7

SIX NOTES BY MARCHENA.

TO THE ARMY OF THE RHINE.

The conquests of the French have resulted, during this war, in a boon to knowledge and to letters. Egypt has furnished us with monuments of its aboriginal inhabitants, which the ignorance and superstition of the Copts and Mussulmans kept concealed from civilized countries. The libraries of the convents of the various countries have been ransacked by savants and precious manuscripts have been brought to light.

By no means the least interesting of the acquisitions is a fragment of Petronius, which we offer to the public, taken from an ancient manuscript which our soldiers, in conquering St. Gall, have sent to us for examination. We have made an important discovery in reading a parchment which contains the work of St. Gennadius on the Duties of Priests, and which, judging from the form of the letters employed, we should say was written in the eleventh century. A most careful examination led us to perceive that the work by this saint had been written on pages containing written letters, which had been almost effaced. We know that in the dark ages it was customary to write ecclesiastical works on the manuscripts containing the best authors of Latinity.

At a cost of much labor we have been able to decipher a morsel which we give to the public: and of the authenticity of which there can be no doubt. We render homage to the brave French army to which we owe this acquisition.

It is easy to notice that there is a lacuna in that passage of Petronius in which Encolpius is left with Quartilla, looking through a chink in the door, at the actions of Giton and little Pannychis. A few lines below, it relates, in effect, that he was fatigued by the voluptuous enjoyment of Quartilla, and in that which remains to us, there is no mention of the preliminaries to this enjoyment. The style of the Latin so closely resembles the original of Petronius that it is impossible to believe that the fragment was forged.

For the benefit of those who have not read the author, it is well to state that this Quartilla was a priestess of Priapus, at whose house they celebrated the mysteries of that god. Pannychis is a young girl of seven years who had been handed over to Giton to be deflowered. This Giton is the “good friend” of Encolpius, who is supposed to relate the scene. Encolpius, who had drunk an aphrodisiacal beverage, is occupied with Quartilla in peeping through the door to see in what manner Giton was acquitting himself in his role. At that moment a soldier enters the house.

Finally an old woman, about whom there is some question in the fragment, is the same as the one who had unexpectedly conducted Encolpius to the house of the public women and of whom mention is made in the beginning of the work.

*Ipsa Venus magico religatum brachia nodo
Perdocuit, multis non sine verberibus.
Tibullus viii, 5.*

I.

Vous verrez que vous avez affaire a un homme.

You will learn that you have to deal with a man.

Fighting men have in all times been distinguished on account of the beauty of their women. The charming fable of the loves of Venus and Mars, described by the most ancient of poets, expresses allegorically, this truth. All the demi-gods had their amorous adventures; the most valiant were always the most passionate and the happiest. Hercules took the maidenheads of fifty girls, in a single night. Thesus loved a thousand beauties, and slept with them. Jason abandoned Hypsipyle for Medea, and her, for Creusa. Achilles, the swift of foot, forgot the tender Deidamia in the arms of his Briseis.

It has been remarked that the lovers did not have very scrupulous tastes in their methods of attaining

satisfaction from the women they loved. The most common method was abduction and the women always submitted to this without a murmur of any sort. Helen was carried off by Theseus, after having also been abducted by Paris. The wife of Atreus was abducted by Thyestus, and from that arose the implacable hatred between the two families. Rape was no less common. Goddesses themselves and the favorites of the Gods were at the risk of falling prey to strong mortals. Pirithous, aided by Theseus, even attempted to snatch Proserpina from the God of the under-world. Juno herself was compelled to painful submission to the pursuit of Ixion, and Thetis succumbed despite herself, to the assaults of Peleus. The gift of foretelling the future, with which Apollo endowed Cassandra, did not insure her against the brutal caresses of Ajax, son of Oileus.

In the infancy of society, there was never known any other distinction except between the weak and the strong: the strong commanded and the weak obeyed. For that reason, women were regarded in the light of beings destined by nature, to serve the pleasures and even the caprices of men. Never did her suitors express a tender thought for Penelope, and, instead of making love to her, they squandered her property, slept with her slaves, and took charge of things in her house.

Circe gave herself to Ulysses who desired to slay her, and Calypso, full blown goddess as she was, was obliged to make his advances for him. The fine sentiments that Virgil puts into the mouth of the shade of Creusa, content with having died while serving against the Greeks, "she was a Trojan, and she wedded the son of Venus"; the confession with which Andromache, confronted by the murderer of her first husband, responds to the question of Aeneas; these ideas, I say, and these sentiments, appertained to the polished century of Augustus and not to the epoch or, scene of the Trojan War. Virgil, in his Aeneid, had never subscribed to the precepts of Horace, and of common sense:

Aut famam sequere, aut sibi convenientia finge

Horace Ars Poet. 119.

From this manner of dealing with women arose another reason for the possession of beauty by the valiant. One coveted a woman much as one would covet a fine flock of sheep, and, in the absence of laws, the one in possession of either the one or the other of these desirable objects would soon be dispossessed of them if he was not courageous enough to guard them against theft. Wars were as much enterprises for ravishing women as they were for taking other property, and one should remember that Agamemnon promised to retire from before Troy if the Trojans would restore Helen and his riches to Menelaus; things which Paris had despoiled him of.

Also, there was never any of that thing we call "conjugal honor" among the Greeks; that idea was far too refined; it was a matter too complex ever to have entered the heads of these semi-barbarous people. This is exemplified in the fact that, after the taking of Troy, Helen, who had, of her own free will, belonged successively to Paris, and to Deiphobus, afterwards returned to Menelaus, who never offered her any reproach. That conduct of Menelaus was so natural that Telemachus, who, in his trip to Sparta found Helen again with Menelaus, just as she was before her abduction, did not show the least astonishment.

The books which bear the most remarkable resemblance to each other are the Bible and Homer, because the people they describe and the men about whom they speak are forerunners of civilization in pretty much the same degree. Sarah was twice snatched from the bosom of Abraham and he was never displeased with his wife and continued to live on good terms with her. David, a newcomer on the throne, hastened to have Michol brought to him although she had already married another man.

The best proof that, during the time of the Romans the women preferred soldiers to other men is in the claims to successful enterprises by the bragging soldier of Plautus. Pyrgopolinices thought it was only necessary to pose as a great warrior, to have all the women chasing after him; therefore, his parasite and his slave spoke of nothing but the passions he inspired in women. Tradition has it that among the Samnites, the bravest men had the choice of the fairest women, and to this custom is attributed one of the reasons these people were so warlike.

In the times of chivalry the greatest exploits were achieved for the pleasure of one's Lady-Love, and there were even such valiant knights, as Don Quixote, who went about the world proving by force of arms that their ladies had no peer. The poverty-stricken troubadours singing harmoniously about their beautiful women found them flying away in the arms of knights who had broken lances at tournaments, or had performed the greatest feats of arms. In fine, all the peoples of the world have said with Dryden:

"None but the brave deserves the fair."

II.

Ses camarades se saisissent de moi et de Quartilla.

His comrades seized hold of Quartilla and me.

The profession of Quartilla corresponded to that which is followed by our ladies of the Palace Royal. This Palace Royal is a sort of Babylon, with this difference; that the former prostitute themselves all the year round, and that they are not quite so attractive as the Chaldean beauties. For the rest, one of the incontestable facts of ancient history is this prostitution of the women of Babylon in honor of Venus, and I cannot understand why Voltaire refused to believe it, since religions have always been responsible for the most abominable actions, and because religious wars, the horrors of intolerance, the impostures of priests, the despotism of kings, the degradation and stupidity of the people, have been the direct fatal effects of religions; and seeing that the blind fanaticism of martyrs and the brutal cruelty of tyrants is a hundred times more deplorable than a sacrifice equally agreeable to the victim and to the one who officiates at the sacrifice; and seeing that the enjoyment and giving of life is no less holy than the maceration and caging of innocent animals.

The origin of courtesans is lost in the deepest antiquity. It appears that it was one of the patriarchal customs to enjoy them, for Judah slept with Tamar, widow of his two sons, and who, to seduce him, disguised herself as a courtesan. Another courtesan, Rahab, played a great role in the first wars of the people of the Lord: it was this same Rahab who married Solomon, father of Boaz, fourth forefather of David, and thirty– second forefather of Jesus Christ, our divine Savior. Yet the eternal sagacity of man has failed to take notice of this profession and to resent the injustice done it by the scorn of men. The elected kings of the people, the man who adopts the word father according to the flesh, are descendants of a courtesan.

For the rest, it must be admitted that many who follow this noble profession are unworthy of it and only too well justify the ignominy which is levelled against the entire class. You see these miserable creatures with livid complexions and haggard eyes, with voices of Stentor, breathing out at the same time the poisons which circulate in their veins and the liquors with which they are intoxicated; you see on their blemished and emaciated bodies, the marks of beings more hideous than they (twenty come to satisfy their brutal passions for every one of them); you listen to their vile language, you hear their oaths and revolting expressions: to go to these Megeres is often to encounter brigands and assassins: what a spectacle! It is the deformity of vice in the rags of indigence.

Ah! But these are not courtesans, they are the dregs of cities. A courtesan worthy of the name is a beautiful woman, gracious and amiable, at whose home gather men of letters and men of the world; the first magistrates, the greatest captains: and who keeps men of all professions in a happy state of mind because she is pleasing to them, she inspires in them a desire for reciprocal pleasure: such an one was Aspasia who, after having charmed the cultured people of Athens was for a long time the good companion of Pericles, and contributed much, perhaps, towards making his century what it was, the age of taste in arts and letters. Such an one also was Phryne, Lais, Glycera, and their names will always be celebrated; such, also, was Ninon d'Enclos, one of the ornaments of the century of Louis XIV, and Clairon, the first who realized all the grandeur of her art; such an one art thou, C——, French Thalia, who commands attentions, I do not say this by way of apology but to share the opinion of Alceste.

A courtesan such as I have in mind may have all the public and private virtues. One knows the severe probity of Ninon, her generosity, her taste for the arts, her attachment to her friends. Epicharis, the soul of the conspiracy of Piso against the execrable Nero, was a courtesan, and the severe Tacitus, who cannot be taxed with a partiality for gallantry, has borne witness to the constancy with which she resisted the most seductive promises and endured the most terrible tortures, without revealing any of the details of the conspiracy or any of the names of the conspirators.

These facts should be recognized above that ascetic moral idea which consists of the sovereign virtue of abstinence in defiance of nature's commands and which places weakness in these matters along with the most odious crimes. Can one see without indignation Suetonius' reproach of Caesar for his gallantries with Servilia, with Tertia, and other Roman ladies, as a thing equal to his extortions and his measureless ambitions, and praising his warlike ardor against peoples who had never furnished room for complaint to Rome? The source of these

errors was the theory of emanations. The first dreamers, who were called philosophers imagined that matter and light were co-eternal; they supposed that was all one unformed and tenebrous mass; and from the former they established the principle of evil and of all imperfection, while they regarded the latter as sovereign perfection. Creation, or, one might better say co-ordination, was only the emanation of light which penetrated chaos, but the mixture of light and matter was the cause of all the inevitable imperfections of the universe. The soul of man was part and parcel of divinity or of increased light; it would never attain happiness until it was re-united to the source of all light; but for it, we would be free from all things we call gross and material, and we would be taken into the ethereal regions by contemplation and by abstinence from the pleasures of the flesh. When these absurdities were adopted for the regulation of conduct, they necessarily resulted in a fierce morality, inimical to all the pleasures of life, such, in a word, as that of the Gymnosophists or, in a lesser measure, of the Trappists.

But despite the gloomy nonsense of certain atrabilious dreamers, the wonderful era of the Greeks was that of the reign of the courtesans. It was about the houses of these that revolved the sands of Pactolus, their fame exceeded that of the first men of Greece. The rich offerings that decorated the temples of the Gods were the gifts of these women, and it must be remembered that most of them were foreigners, originating, for the most part, in Asia Minor. It happened that an Athenian financier, who resembled the rest of his tribe as much as two drops of water, proposed once to levy an impost upon the courtesans. As he spoke eloquently of the incalculable advantages which would accrue to the Government by this tax, a certain person asked him by whom the courtesans were paid. "By the Athenians," replied our orator, after deliberation. "Then it would be the Athenians who would pay the impost," replied the questioner, and the people of Athens, who had a little more sense than certain legislative assemblies, hooted the orator down, and there was never any more question about a tax upon courtesans.

Corinth was famous for the number and beauty of its courtesans, from which comes the proverb: "It is not given to every man to go to Corinth"; there they ran the risk of losing their money and ruining their health. The cause of this great vogue of courtesans in Greece was not the supposed ugliness of the sex, as the savant Paw imagined, and contradicted by the unanimous evidence of ancient authors and of modern travellers; but rather, the retired and solitary life which the women of the country led. They lived in separate apartments and never had any communication with the streets or with the residences of men "the inner part of the house which was called the women's apartments," said Cornelius Nepos (preface). Strangers never visited them; they rarely visited their nearest relations. This was why marriage between brothers and sisters was authorized by law and encouraged by usage; the sisters were exposed to the attacks of their brothers because they lived separated from them.

With the Romans, as with us, the virtuous women corrupted somewhat the profession of the courtesans. The absolute seclusion of women was never the fashion at Rome and the stories we have on the authority of Valerius Maximus on the chastity and modesty of the first Roman matrons merit the same degree of belief as the legend of Romulus and Remus being brought up by a wolf, the rape of Lucretia or the tragic death of Virginia. On the contrary, in Livy, a great admirer of the customs of the early days of Rome, we find that in those times a great number of Roman women of the noblest families were convicted of having poisoned their husbands and condemned to death for this hideous crime: that, by no means shows a very exquisite and tender conjugal sentiment. During the period of the second Punic War with what energy they went about the city seeking the repeal of the law which took out of their hands the custody of jewels and precious stones! A repeal which they obtained despite the opposition of Cato the Censor. It appears that the profession of the courtesan was generally practised by the freed-women; their manner necessarily showed the results of their education. But the young sparks of Rome never paid much attention to them, they preferred to have love affairs with the wives of their friends. For one Sallust who ruined himself with freedwomen, there were five Cupienniuses; "Cupiennius, that admirer of the pudenda garbed in white," Hor. Sat. I, ii, 36. Delia, Lesbia, Ipsythillia, Corinna, Nemesis, Neeria, Cynthia, Sulpitia, Lycimnia, and almost all the women to whom, under real or assumed names, Catullus, Tibullus, Propertius, Ovid, Horace, and others, addressed their erotic compositions, were Roman married women. Horace is the only one who celebrated a freedwoman in some of his odes. This is due, however, to his taste for variety and perhaps also, to his birth, for he himself was the son of a freedwoman. Ovid's Art of Love and the Satires of Juvenal reveal the extent to which gallantry was the fashion at Rome and Cato would never have praised the conduct of that young man who had recourse to a public house if that had been an ordinary course of procedure.

In Europe of the middle ages, the priests and abbots helped to some extent in reviving the profession of the

courtesans. Long before, Saint Paul had stated in his Epistles that it was permitted to the apostles of the Lord to take with them everywhere a sister for charity. The deaconesses date from the first century of the church. But the celibacy of the clergy was not universally and solidly established until about the eleventh century, under the pontificate of Gregory VII. During the preceding century, the celebrated Marozie and Theodore had put their lovers successively upon the chair of St. Peter, and their sons and grandsons, as well. But after the priests had submitted to celibacy they ostensibly took the concubines of which, alas! our housekeepers of today are but feeble vestiges. The Spanish codes of the middle ages were often concerned with the rights of the concubines of priests (mancebas de los clerigos) and these chosen ones of the chosen ones of the Lord invariably appeared worthy of envy. Finally the courtesans appeared in all their magnificence in the Holy City, and modern Rome atoned for the rebuffs and indignities these women had been compelled to endure in ancient Rome. The princes of the church showered them with gifts, they threw at their feet the price of redemption from sin, paid by the faithful, and the age of Leo X was for Rome a wonderful epoch of fine arts, belles lettres, and beautiful women. But a fanatical monk from Lower Germany fell upon this calm of the church and this happy era of the harlots; since then the revenues of the sacred college have continued to decrease, the beautiful courtesans have abandoned the capital of the Christian world, and their pleasures have fled with them. And can anyone longer believe in the perfection of the human race, since the best, the most holy of human institutions has so visibly degenerated!

III.

Le Soldat ordonne a embasicetas de m'accabler de ses impurs baisers.

[The soldier ordered the catamite to beslaver me with his stinking kisses.]

One of the reasons which caused the learned and paradoxical Hardouin to assert that all the works which have been attributed to the ancients, with the exception of the Georgics and the Natural History of Pliny, were the compositions of monks, was doubtless the very frequent repetition of scenes of love for boys, which one notices in most of these writings: this savant was a Jesuit. But this taste is not peculiar to convents; it is to be found among all peoples and in all climates; its origin is lost in the night of the centuries; it is common in the most polished nations and it is common among savage tribes. Profound philosophers have argued in favor of it; poets have sung the objects of this sort of love in their tender and passionate compositions, and these compositions have always been the delight of posterity. What stupid or unfeeling reader can read without emotion that beautiful eclogue of Virgil where Corydon sighs his hopeless love for the beautiful Alexis? The most passionate ode of Horace is that one in which he complains of the harshness of Ligurinus. The tender Tibullus, deceived by his Marathus, brings tears to all who have hearts. The delicate Anacreon, praising his Bathylle, and the valiant Alceus giving himself up after his labors in war to sing of the dark eyes and black hair of Lycus . . . “with dark eyes and black hair beautiful.” It is not to over-civilized refinements of society which, according to certain misanthropists, degrade nature and corrupt it, that this taste is due; it is found among the south sea islanders, and the evidence of the first Spaniards attests that it was common among the hordes of American Indians before the discovery of the new world. Paw had attempted to explain this as resulting from defects in the formation of the organs of pleasure among the natives; but a peculiar cause is not sufficient explanation for a universal effect.

At the time of the Patriarchs, Greek love was so general that in the four cities, Sodom, Gomorrah, Adama, and Seboim, it was impossible to find ten men exempt from the contagion; that number would have sufficed, said the Lord, to withhold the punishment which he inflicted upon those cities.

It should be noted here that most of the assertions about the morals of the Israelites which are to be found in the Erotica Biblon of Mirabeau are either false or pure guesswork. It is a bizarre method of judging the morals of a people, that of taking their legal code and inferring that the people were accustomed to break all the laws which are forbidden by that code. Nevertheless, that is the method which the author of the Erotica Biblon adopts for portraying the morals of the Jewish people. Again, he has not even understood this code; he has believed that the law against giving one's seed to the idol Moloch meant giving the human semen; and he is ignorant of the fact that this seed, as spoken of in the Bible, means the children and descendants. Thus it is that the land of Canaan is promised to the seed of Abraham, and the perpetuity of the reign on Sion to that of David. Moloch was a Phoenician deity, the same one to which, in Carthage, they sacrificed children; the Romans believed him to be a reincarnation of their Saturn, but Saturn was an Etruscan divinity who could never have had any connection with the Gods of Phoenicia. He (Mirabeau) has translated “those who polluted the temple” as meaning those who were guilty of some obscenity in the temple; and he does not know that the temple was “polluted” by a thousand acts, declared impure by law, and which were not obscene. The entrance of a woman into a sacred place, less than forty days after her accouchement, or the entrance of a man who had touched an impure animal, constituted a pollution of the House of the Lord. When one wishes to make a parade of erudition he should make some attempt to understand the things which he pretends to make clear to others. Or is it that this Mirabeau was merely careless?

The love of boys was so thoroughly the fashion in Greece that we have today given it the name “Greek Love.” Orestes was regarded as the “good friend” of Pylades and Patroclus as the lover of Achilles. In this taste, the Gods set the example for mortals, and the abduction of Ganymede for the service of the master of thunder, was not the least cause for annoyance given the chaste but over-prudish Juno. Lastly, Hercules was not content with the loves of Omphale and Dejanira, he also loved the beautiful Hylas, who was brought up by the nymphs.

The Greeks boasted, without blushing, of this love, which they considered the only passion worthy of men, and they did blush at loving a woman, intimacy with whom, they said, only rendered her adorers soft and effeminate. In the Dialogue of Plato, entitled “The Banquet,” which is concerned entirely with discussions of the various

forms of love, they dismiss love for women as unworthy of occupying the attention of sensible men. One of the speakers, I believe it was Aristophanes, explaining the cause of this fire which we kindle in the bosoms of our loved ones, affirms that the first men were doubles which multiplied their force and their power. This, they abused and, as punishment, Jupiter struck them with lightning and separated them. By their love for each other they came together again to regain their primitive state. But the effeminate sought out only the women because they were only half men, half women; while those whose tastes were masculine and courageous wanted to become double men again.

Phedre has put into the mouth of AEsop an explanation of that love which would certainly not have been relished by the Greeks. He says that while Prometheus was occupied with modelling his man and woman, he was invited to a feast given by Jupiter, to the Gods; he came back intoxicated and, by mistake, applied the sexual parts of one to the body of the other.

For the rest, the Greeks were all in accord in their profound contempt for women. The theatrical writers, especially, who studied more particularly the general opinions and catered to them in order to obtain the applause of the public, were distinguished by their bitterness against the sex. Euripides maintained that Prometheus deserved to be chained to Mount Caucasus with the vulture gnawing at his entrails, because he had fashioned a being so pernicious and hateful as woman. The shade of Agamemnon, in the Odyssey advised Ulysses not to put any faith in Penelope and did not stop talking until he had enumerated the entire list of the vices of the sex. The first Latin authors imitated the Greeks in their invectives against women; the comedies of Plautus, especially, teem with virulent attacks upon them.

At Rome, however, the great freedom permitted to women, soon brought about other opinions in regard to them; they often played an important role in public and private affairs, and the men convinced themselves that, like men, women were capable of the greatest crimes and of the most heroic virtues. The noble stoicism of Arria is not the only example of courageous virtue displayed by the Roman women at a time when crowned monsters governed the empire. The young Paulina opened her veins with her husband, the philosopher, Seneca; Mallonia preferred to die in torments rather than give herself up to the odious he-goat of Capri. Who does not admire the noble independence, the conjugal love, and the matronly virtues of Agrippina, the wife of Germanicus?

Moreover, men began to avow their love for women, and we have here occasion to observe the rapid progress of gallantry among the Romans. However, the love for boys was no less universally in vogue in Rome, and Cicero charges, in his letters to Atticus, that the judges who had so scandalously white-washed Clodius of the accusation of having profaned the mysteries of the "Good Goddess," had been publicly promised the favors of the most illustrious women and the finest young men of the first families. Caesar himself, in his early youth had yielded to the embraces of Nicomedes, King of Bithynia; moreover, after his triumph over the Gauls, on the solemn occasion when it was customary to twit the victor with all his faults, the soldiers sang: "Caesar subdued the Gauls, Nicomedes subdued Caesar. But Caesar who subdued the Gauls, triumphed, and Nicomedes, who subdued Caesar did not." Cato said of him that he was loved by the King, in his youth and that, when he was older, he loved the queen and, one day, in the senate, while he was dwelling on I know not what request of the daughter of Nicomedes, and recounting the benefits which Rome owed to that monarch, Cicero silenced him by replying: "We know very well what he has given, and what thou hast given him!" At last, during the time when the first triumvirate divided all the power, a bad joker remarked to Pompey: "I salute thee, O King," and, addressing Caesar, "I salute thee, O Queen!" His enemies maintained that he was the husband of all the women and the wife of all the husbands. Catullus, who detested him, always called him "the bald catamite," in his epigrams: he set forth that his friendship with Mamurra was not at all honorable; he called this Mamurra "pathicus," a name which they bestowed upon those who looked for favors among mature men or among men who had passed the stage of adolescence.

The masters of the empire never showed any hesitancy in trying and even in overdoing the pleasures which all their subjects permitted themselves. Alas! A crown is such a weighty burden! The road of domination is strewn with so many briars that one would never be able to pass down it if he did not take care that they were pressed down under the roses. The Roman emperors adopted that plan; they longed for pleasures and they took the pleasures which offered themselves without delay and in a spirit of competition. Caligula was so little accustomed to waiting that, while occupied in offering a sacrifice to the Gods, and the figure of a priest having pleased him, he did not take time to finish the sacred ceremonies before taking his pleasure of him.

A remarkable thing is that among almost all peoples, the baths are the places where the prostitution of men by their own sex is the most common. We see in Catullus that the “cinaedi” (catamites), a noun which my chaste pen refuses to translate into French, haunted the baths incessantly to carry out their practices. Among the Orientals, of all modern peoples who have retained this taste most generally, this same fact holds good. It was at the bath that Tiberius, impotent through old age and debauchery, was made young again by the touch little children applied to his breasts; these children he called “little fishes,” they sucked his withered breasts, his infected mouth, his livid lips, and finally his virile parts. Hideous spectacle of a tyrant disgraced by nature and struggling against her maledictions! But in vain did he invent new pleasures, in vain did he take part in these scenes in which groups of young men by threes and fours assumed all sorts of lascivious postures, and were at the same time active and passive; the sight of these indulgences of the “sprintrae” (for that is the name which was given there) did not enable him to resuscitate his vigor any more than the glamor of the throne or the servile submission of the senate served to mitigate his remorse.

But of all the emperors, the ones who carried their taste for young boys to the greatest lengths were, Nero, Domitian and Hadrian. The first publicly wedded the young eunuch Sporus, whom he had had operated upon so that he might serve him like a young woman. He paid court to the boy as he would to a woman and another of his favorites dressed himself up in a veil and imitated the lamentations which women were accustomed to utter on nuptial nights. The second consecrated the month of September to his favorite and the third loved Antinous passionately and caused him to be deified after death.

The most ample proof of the universality of the taste for young boys among the Romans is found in the Epithalamium of Manilius and Julia, by Catullus, and it might be cause for surprise that this has escaped all the philologists, were it not a constant thing that men frequently reading about these centuries fail to perceive the most palpable facts in their authors, just as they pass over the most striking phenomena of nature without observing them. It appears, from this epithalamium, that young men, before their marriage, had a favorite selected from among their slaves and that this favorite was charged with the distribution of nuts among his comrades, on the day, they in turn, treated him with contempt and hooted him. Here follows an exact translation of this curious bit. The favorite could not refuse the nuts to the slaves when by giving them it appeared that he owned that his master had put away his love for hire.

“Lest longer mute tongue stays that
In festal jest, from Fescennine,
Nor yet deny their nuts to boys,
He—Concubine! who learns in fine
His lordling's love is fled.

Throw nuts to boys thou idle all
He—Concubine! wast fain full long
With nuts to play: now pleased as thrall
Be thou to swell Talasios' throng
He—Concubine throw nuts.

Wont thou as peasant—girls to jape
He—whore! Thy Lord's delight the while:
Now shall hair—curling chattel scrape
Thy cheeks: poor wretch, ah' poor and vile:—
He—Concubine, throw nuts.”

and further on, addressing the husband:

“Tis said from smooth—faced ingle train
(Anointed bridegroom!) hardly fain
Hast e'er refrained; now do refrain!
O Hymen Hymenaeus io,
O Hymen Hymenaeus!

We know that naught save licit rites
 Be known to thee, but wedded wights
 No more deem lawful such delights.
 O Hymen Hymenaeus io,
 O Hymen Hymenaeus.”

(LXI. Burton, tr.)

The Christian religion strongly prohibits this love; the theologians put it among the sins which directly offend against the Holy Ghost. I have not the honor of knowing just why this thing arouses his anger so much more than anything else; doubtless there are reasons. But the wrath of this honest person has not prevented the Christians from having their “pathici,” just as they have in countries where they are authorized by the reigning deities. We have even noticed that they are the priests of the Lord and especially the monks who practice this profession most generally amongst us. The children of Loyola have acquired well-merited renown in this matter: when they painted “Pleasure” they never failed to represent him wearing trousers. Those disciples of Joseph Calasanz who took their places in the education of children, followed their footsteps with zeal and fervor. Lastly, the cardinals, who have a close acquaintance with the Holy Ghost, are so prejudiced in favor of Greek love that they have made it the fashion in the Holy City of Rome; this leads me to wonder whether the Holy Ghost has changed His mind in regard to this matter and is no longer shocked by it; or whether the theologians were not mistaken in assuming an aversion against sodomy which He never had. The cardinals who are on such familiar terms with him would know better than to give all their days over to this pleasure if He really objected to it.

I shall terminate this over-long note with an extract from a violent diatribe against this love which Lucian puts into the mouth of Charicles. He is addressing Callicratidas, a passionate lover of young boys, with whom he had gone to visit the temple of Venus at Cnidus.

“O Venus, my queen! to thee I call; lend me your aid while I plead your cause. For everything over which you deign to shed, be it ever so little, the persuasion of your charms, reaches absolute perfection, above all, erotic discourses need your presence, for you are their lawful mother. In your womanhood, defend the cause of woman, and grant to men to remain men as they have been born. At the beginning of my discourse, I call as witness to the truth of my arguments the first mother of all created things, the source of all generation, the holy Nature of this universe, who, gathering into one and uniting the elements of the world— earth, air, fire and water—and mingling them together, gave life to everything that breathes. Knowing that we are a compound of perishable matter, and that the span of life assigned to each of us was short, she contrived that the death of one should be the birth of another, and meted out to the dying, by way of compensation, the coming into being of others, that by mutual succession we might live forever. But, as it was impossible for anything to be born from a single thing alone, she created two different sexes, and bestowed upon the male the power of emitting semen, making the female the receptacle of generation. Having inspired both with mutual desires, she joined them together, ordaining, as a sacred law of necessity, that each sex should remain faithful to its own nature—that the female should not play the male unnaturally, nor the male degrade himself by usurping the functions of the female. Thus intercourse of men with women has preserved the human race by never- ending succession: no man can boast of having been created by man alone; two venerable names are held in equal honor, and men revere their mother equally with their father. At first, when men were filled with heroic thoughts, they revered those virtues which bring us nearer to the Gods, obeyed the laws of Nature, and, united to women of suitable age, became the sires of noble offspring. But, by degrees, human life, degenerating from that nobility of sentiment, sank to the lowest depths of pleasure, and began to carve out strange and corrupt ways in the search after enjoyment. Then sensuality, daring all, violated the laws of Nature herself. Who was it who first looked upon the male as female, violating him by force or villainous persuasion? One sex entered one bed, and men had the shamelessness to look at one another without a blush for what they did or for what they submitted to, and, sowing seed, as it were, upon barren rocks, they enjoyed a short-lived pleasure at the cost of undying shame.

“Some pushed their cruelty so far as to outrage Nature with the sacrilegious knife, and, after depriving men of their virility, found in them the height of pleasure. These miserable and unhappy creatures, that they may the longer serve the purposes of boys, are stunted in their manhood, and remain a doubtful riddle of a double sex, neither preserving that boyhood in which they were born, nor possessing that manhood which should be theirs. The bloom of their youth withers away in a premature old age: while yet boys they suddenly become old, without

any interval of manhood. For impure sensuality, the mistress of every vice, devising one shameless pleasure after another, insensibly plunges into unmentionable debauchery, experienced in every form of brutal lust. “Whereas, if each would abide by the laws prescribed by Providence, we should be satisfied with intercourse with women, and our lives would be undefiled by shameful practices. Consider the animals, which cannot corrupt by innate viciousness, how they observe the law of Nature in all its purity. He–lions do not lust after he–lions, but, in due season, passion excites them towards the females of their species: the bull that rules the herd mounts cows, and the ram fills the whole flock of ewes with the seed of generation. Again, boars mate with sows, he–wolves with shewolves, neither the birds that fly through the air, nor the fish that inhabit the deep, or any living creatures upon earth desire male intercourse, but amongst them the laws of Nature remain unbroken. Put you men, who boast idly of your wisdom, but are in reality worthless brutes, what strange disease provokes you to outrage one another unnaturally? What blind folly fills your minds, that you commit the two–fold error of avoiding what you should pursue, and pursuing what you should avoid? If each and all were to pursue such evil courses, the race of human beings would become extinct on earth. And here comes in that wonderful Socratic argument, whereby the minds of boys, as yet unable to reason clearly, are deceived, for a ripe intellect could not be misled. These followers of Socrates pretend to love the soul alone, and, being ashamed to profess love for the person, call themselves lovers of virtue, whereat I have often been moved to laughter. How comes it, O grave philosophers, that you hold in such slight regard a man who, during a long life, has given proofs of merit, and of that virtue which old age and white hairs become? How is it that the affections of the philosophers are all in a flutter after the young; who cannot yet make up their minds which path of life to take? Is there a law, then, that all ugliness is to be condemned as vice, and that everything that is beautiful is to be extolled without further examination? But, according to Homer, the great interpreter of truth—‘One man is meaner than another in looks, but God crowns his words with beauty, and his hearers gaze upon him with delight, while he speaks unflinching with winning modesty, and is conspicuous amongst the assembled folk, who look upon him as a God when he walks through the city.’ And again he says: ‘Your beauteous form is destitute of intelligence; the wise Ulysses is praised more highly than the handsome Nireus.’ How then comes it that the love of wisdom, justice, and the other virtues, which are the heritage of the full–grown man, possess no attraction for you, while the beauty of boys excites the most vehement passion! What! should one love Phaedrus, remembering Lysias, whom he betrayed? Could one love the beauty of Alcibiades, who mutilated the statues of the Gods, and, in the midst of a debauch, betrayed the mysteries of the rites of Eleusis? Who would venture to declare himself his admirer, after Athens was abandoned, and Decelea fortified by the enemy—the admirer of one whose sole aim in life was tyranny? But, as the divine Plato says, as long as his chin was beardless, he was beloved by all; but, when he passed from boyhood to manhood, when his imperfect intelligence had reached its maturity, he was hated by all. Why, then, giving modest names to immodest sentiments, do men call personal beauty virtue, being in reality lovers of youth rather than lovers of wisdom? However, it is not my intention to speak evil of distinguished men. But, to descend from graver topics to the mere question of enjoyment, I will prove that connection with women is far more enjoyable than connection with boys. In the first place, the longer enjoyment lasts, the more delight it affords; too rapid pleasure passes quickly away, and it is over before it is thoroughly appreciated; but, if it lasts, it is thereby enhanced. Would to heaven that grudging Destiny had allotted us a longer lease of life, and that we could enjoy perpetual health without any sorrow to spoil our pleasure; then would our life be one continual feast. But, since jealous Fortune has grudged us greater blessings, those enjoyments that last the longest are the sweetest. Again, a woman, from puberty to middle age, until the last wrinkles furrow her face, is worth embracing and fit for intercourse; and, even though the prime of her beauty be past, her experience can speak more eloquently than the love of boys.

“I should consider anyone who attempted to have intercourse with a youth of twenty years to be the slave of unnatural lust. The limbs of such, like those of a man, are hard and coarse; their chins, formerly so smooth, are rough and bristly, and their well–grown thighs are disfigured with hairs. As for their other parts, I leave those of you who have experience to decide. On the other hand, a woman's charms are always enhanced by an attractive complexion, flowing locks, dark as hyacinths, stream down her back and adorn her shoulders, or fall over her ears and temples, more luxuriant than the parsley in the fields. The rest of her person, without a hair upon it, shines more brilliantly than amber or Sidonian crystal. Why should we not pursue those pleasures which are mutual, which cause equal enjoyment to those who receive and to those who afford them? For we are not, like animals, fond of solitary lives, but, united in social relations, we consider these pleasures sweeter, and those pains easier to

bear, which we share with others. Hence, a common table was instituted, the mediator of friendship. When we minister to the wants of the belly, we do not drink Thasian wine, or consume costly food by ourselves alone, but in company: for our pleasures and enjoyments are increased when shared with others. In like manner, the intercourse of men with women causes enjoyment to each in turn, and both are alike delighted; unless we accept the judgment of Tiresias, who declared that the woman's pleasure was twice as great as the man's. I think that those who are not selfish should not consider how they may best secure the whole enjoyment for themselves, but should share what they have with others. Now, in the case of boys, no one would be mad enough to assert that this is the case; for, while he who enjoys their person reaches the height of pleasure—at least, according to his way of thinking—the object of his passion at first feels pain, even to tears, but when, by repetition, the pain becomes less keen, while he no longer hurts him, he will feel no pleasure himself. To mention something still more curious—as is fitting within the precincts of Venus—you may make the same use of a woman as of a boy, and thereby open a double avenue to enjoyment; but the male can never afford the same enjoyment as the female.

“Therefore, if you are convinced by my arguments, let us, men and women, keep ourselves apart, as if a wall divided us; but, if it is becoming for men to have intercourse with men, for the future let women have intercourse with women. Come, O new generation, inventor of strange pleasures! As you have devised new methods to satisfy male lust, grant the same privilege to women; let them have intercourse with one another like men, girding themselves with the infamous instruments of lust, an unholy imitation of a fruitless union; in a word, let our wanton Tribads reign unchecked, and let our women's chambers be disgraced by hermaphrodites. Far better that a woman, in the madness of her lust, should usurp the nature of a man, than that man's noble nature should be so degraded as to play the woman!”

IV.

Embasicetas fut bientôt au comble de ses voeux.

The Catamite soon reached the height of his passion.

The theologians class this species of lascivious feeling with pollution which is complete when it produces a result. The Holy Scripture tells us of Onan, son of Judas, grandson of Jacob, and husband of Thamar, who was slain by the Lord because he spilled his semen, "he poured his semen upon the ground." We may be reproached, perhaps, for citing the Holy Bible too frequently, but that book contains the knowledge of salvation, and those who wish to be saved should not fail to study it with assiduity. That this study has occupied a good part of our life, we admit, and we have always found that study profitable. To vigorous minds that admission may seem ridiculous, but we are writing only for pious souls, and they will willingly applaud this courageous profession of our piety.

The theologians have also classified onanism and pollution among the sins against the Holy Ghost, and this being the case, there is no being in the world who has been sinned against so often. A medium indulgence in this sin furnished the pleasure of a queen, the severity of one Lucretia does not repel a thousand Tarquins. Men with vivid imaginations create for themselves a paradise peopled with the most beautiful houris, more seductive than those of Mahomet; Lycoris had a beautiful body but it was unfeeling; the imagination of her lover pictured her as falling before his caresses, he led her by the hand over pressed flowers, through a thick grove and along limpid streams; in that sweet reverie his life slipped by.

Here icy cold fountains, here flower covered meadows, Lycoris;

Here shady groves; life itself here would I dream out with thee.

Virgil Bucol. Ecl. X, 41.

In the minds of the theologians pollution is synonymous with all pleasures with persons of the opposite or the same sex, which result in a waste of the elixir of life. In this sense, love between woman and woman is pollution and Sappho is a sinner against the Holy Ghost.

(Notwithstanding), however (these caprices of the third person of the trinity) I cannot see why pleasure should be regulated, or why a woman who has surveyed all the charms of a young girl of eighteen years should give herself up to the rude embraces of a man. What comparisons can be made between those red lips, that mouth which breathes pleasure for the first time, those snowy and purplous cheeks whose velvet smoothness is like the Venus flower, half in bloom, that new-born flesh which palpitates softly with desire and voluptuousness, that hand which you press so delicately, those round thighs, those plastic buttocks, that voice sweet and touching,—what comparison can be made between all this and pronounced features, rough beard, hard breast, hairy body, and the strong disagreeable voice of man? Juvenal has wonderfully expended all his bile in depicting, as hideous scenes, these mysteries of the Bona Dea, where the young and beautiful Roman women, far from the eyes of men, give themselves up to mutual caresses. Juvenal has painted the eyes of the Graces with colors which are proper to the Furies; his tableau, moreover, revolts one instead of doing good.

The only work of Sappho's which remains to us is an ode written to one of her loved ones and from it we may judge whether the poetess merited her reputation. It has been translated into all languages; Catullus put it into Latin and Boileau into French. Here follows an imitation of that of Catullus:

Peer of a God meseemeth he,

Nay passing Gods (and that can be!)

Who all the while sits facing thee

Sees thee and hears

Thy low sweet laughs which (ah me!) daze

Mine every sense, and as I gaze

Upon thee (Lesbia!) o'er me strays

My tongue is dulled, limbs adown

THE SATYRICON of Petronius, Illustrated, v7

Flows subtle flame; with sound its own
Rings either ear, and o'er are strown
Mine eyes with night.

(LI. Burton, tr.)

After that we should never again exhort the ministers and moralists to inveigh against love of women for women; never was the interest of men found to be so fully in accord with the precepts of divine law.

Here I should like to speak of the brides of the Lord; but I remember "The Nun" of Diderot, and my pen falls from my hand. Oh, who would dare to touch a subject handled by Diderot?

V.

Giton venait de la deflorer, et de remporter une victoire sanglante.

Giton the victor had won a not bloodless victory.

All people have regarded virginity as something sacred, and God has so honored it that he willed that his son be born of a virgin, fecundated, however, by the Holy Ghost. Still, it appears problematical whether the Virgin Mary, complete virgin that she was, did not have the same pleasure as those who are not virgins, when she received the divine annunciation. Father Sanchez has discussed the question very fully “whether the Virgin Mary 'spent' in copulation with the Holy–Ghost,” unhappily, he decided in the negative, and I have too much veneration for Father Sanchez not to submit to his decision; but because of it, I am vexed with the Virgin Mary and the Holy Ghost.

Notwithstanding this, the daughters of the people of the Lord were not content to remain virgins; a state of being which, at bottom has not much to recommend it. The daughter of Jephtha before being immolated for the sake of the Lord, demanded of her father a reprieve of two months in which to weep for her virginity upon the mountains of Gelboe; it seems it should not have taken so long had she had nothing to regret. Ruth had recourse to the quickest method when she wished to cease being a virgin; she simply went and lay down upon the bed with Boaz. The spirit of God has deemed it worth while to transmit this story to us, for the instruction of virgins from century to century.

The pagan Gods thought highly of maidenheads, they often took them and always, they set aside the virgins for themselves. The Phytian, from whose organ Apollo was foreordained to come, proved to be only a virgin; the spirit of God did not communicate itself to anyone who had ever been sullied by contact with a mortal. It was to virgins that the sacred fires of Vesta were entrusted, and the violation of their virginity was a capital crime which all Rome regarded as a scourge from wrathful heaven.

The Sybils lived and died virgins; in addressing the Cumaean Sybil, Aeneas never failed to bestow that title upon her.

Most of the immortals have preserved their virginity, Diana, Minerva, et cet. But what is the most astonishing is that the companions of Venus and Amor, the most lovable of all divinities, the Graces, were also virgins. Juno became a virgin again every year, by bathing in the waters of a magic fountain; that must have rendered Jupiter's duties rather onerous.

There are some reasons for this passion of mankind for maidenheads. It is so wonderful to give the first lessons of voluptuousness to a pure and innocent heart, to feel under one's hand the first palpitations of the virginal breasts which arouses unknown delights, to dry the first tears of tenderness, to inspire that first mixture of fear and hope, of vague desires and expectant inquietude; whoever has never had that satisfaction has missed the most pleasurable of all the delights of love. But taken in that sense, virginity is rather a moral inclination, as Buffon says, than a physical matter, and nothing can justify the barbarous precautions against amorous theft which were taken by unnatural fathers and jealous husbands.

In those unhappy countries which are bent under oppression, in those countries where heaven shows its heat in the beauty of the sex, and where beauty is only an object of speculation for avid parents; in such countries, I say, they resort to the most odious methods for preserving the virginity of the young and beautiful daughters who are destined to be sold like common cattle. They put a lock over the organ of pleasure and never permit it to be opened except when it is strictly necessary for carrying out those animal functions for which nature destined them.

The locks of chastity were long known in Europe; the Italians are accused with this terrible invention. Nevertheless, it is certain that they were used upon men, at least, in the time of the first Roman emperors. Juvenal, in his satire against women, VI, says: “If the singers please them there is no need for locks of chastity for those who have sold their voices to the praetors, who keep them.”

Si gaudet cantu, nullius fibula durat

Vocem vendentis praetoribus.

Sat. VI, 379.

If pleased by the song of the singer employed by the praetor

No fibula long will hold out, free, the actor will greet her.

Christianity, most spiritual, most mystical of ancient religions, attempts to make out a great case for celibacy. Its founder never married, although the Pharisees reproached him for frequenting gay women, and had, perhaps, some reason for so doing. Jesus showed a particular affection for Mary Magdalen, to the point of exciting the jealousy of Martha, who complained that her sister passed her time in conversation with Jesus and left her with all the housework to do. "Mary has chosen the better part," said the Savior. A good Christian must not doubt that the colloquies were always spiritual.

St. Paul counseled virginity and most of the apostolic fathers practiced it. Among others, St. Jerome lived his whole life among women and never lost his purity. He answered his enemies who reproached him with his very great intimacy with the Saintly Sisters, that the irrefutable proof of his chastity was that he stank. That stinking of St. Jerome, which is not a veritable article of faith in the Church, is, however, an object of pious belief; and my readers will very gladly assent to it.

When the Christian clergy wishes to form a body of doctrines to be submitted to by all the common people it thinks that by separating its interests and those of the common people as far as possible it must tighten those ropes by which it binds its fellow citizens. Also the Pope who was the most jealous of ecclesiastical power and the one who abused it most, Hildebrand, rigorously prohibited the marriage of priests and enunciated the most terrible warnings against those who did not retain their celibacy. However, although neither priests nor monks were permitted to marry, the epithet "virgins" cannot be justly applied to all priests and all monks without exception. Nor shall I repeat here the naughty pleasantries of Erasmus, of Boccaccio, and all the others, against the monks; without doubt maliciousness has developed more "satirical" traits that they have brought out; beyond that, I have nothing to say.

VI.

Alors une vielle. . . .

[Finally an old woman . . .]

The question here has to do with a procurers or go-between. That profession has gradually fallen into discredit by I know not what fatality, which befalls the most worthy things. Cervantes the only philosophic author Spain has produced, wanted that calling to be venerated in cities above all others. And truly, when one thinks how much finesse is necessary to pursue that profession with success, when one considers that those who practice that truly liberal art are the repositories of the most important as well as the most sacred secrets, one would never fail to have the greatest respect for them. The tranquillity of homes, the civil state of persons they hold at their discretion, and still, though they drink in insults, though they endure abuse, very rarely do these beings, true stoics, compromise those who have confided in them.

In their Mercury, the ancients realized their beau ideal or archetype of go-between which they called; in vulgar language “pimp”. That God, as go-between for Jupiter, was often involved in the most hazardous enterprises, such as abducting Io, who was guarded by Argus of the hundred eyes; Mercury I say, was the God of concord, or eloquence, and of mystery. Except to inspire them with friendly feeling and kind affections, Mercury never went among mortals. Touched by his wand, venomous serpents closely embraced him. Listening to him, Achilles forgot his pride, extended hospitality to Priam and permitted him to take away the body of Hector. The ferocious Carthaginians were softened through the influence of this God of peace, and received the Trojans in friendship. Mercury it was who gathered men into society and substituted social customs for barbarism. He invented the lyre and was the master of Amphion, who opened the walls of Thebes by the charm of his singing. Mercury or Hermes gave the first man knowledge; but it was enveloped in a mysterious veil which it was never permitted the profane to penetrate, which signifies that all that he learned from God, concerning amorous adventures, should be wrapped in profound silence. How beautiful all these allegories are! And how true! How insipid life would be without these mysterious liaisons, by which Nature carries out her designs, eluding the social ties, without breaking them! Disciples of Mercury, I salute you, whatever be your sex; to your discretion, to your persuasive arts are confided our dearest interests, the peace of mind of husbands, the happiness of lovers, the reputation of women, the legitimacy of children. Without you, this desolated earth would prove to be, in reality, a vale of tears; the young and beautiful wife united to decrepit husband, would languish and grow weak, like the lonely flower which the sun's rays never touch. Thus did Mexence bind in thine indissoluble bands the living and the dead.

Fate, however, has often avenged the go-betweens on account of the misunderstandings from which they suffer at the hands of the vulgar. Otho opened the way to the empire of the world by his services as a go-between for Nero. And the go-betweens of princes, and even of princesses, are always found in the finest situations. Even Otho did not lose all his rights; Nero exiled him with a commission of honor, “because he was caught in adultery with his own wife, Poppaea.” “Uxoris moechus coeperate esse suae” (Suet. Otho, chap. 111), said malicious gossip at Rome.

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To the scholar contemplating an exhaustive study of Petronius, the masterly bibliography compiled by Gaselee is indispensable, and those of my readers who desire to pursue the subject are referred to it. The following is a list of editions, translations, criticisms and miscellaneous publications and authors from which I have derived benefit in the long and pleasant hours devoted to Petronius.

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