

CONTINUATION  
OF THE  
COMTE DE GABALIS,  
OR  
NEW DISCOURSES UPON THE  
SECRET SCIENCES;  
Touching upon the New Philosophy.

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**POSTHUMOUS WORK.**

AMSTERDAM, PIERRE DE COUP, M.D.CCXV.

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*Translated by John Yarker, Esq.*

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ROBERT H. FRYAR, BATH.

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1897.

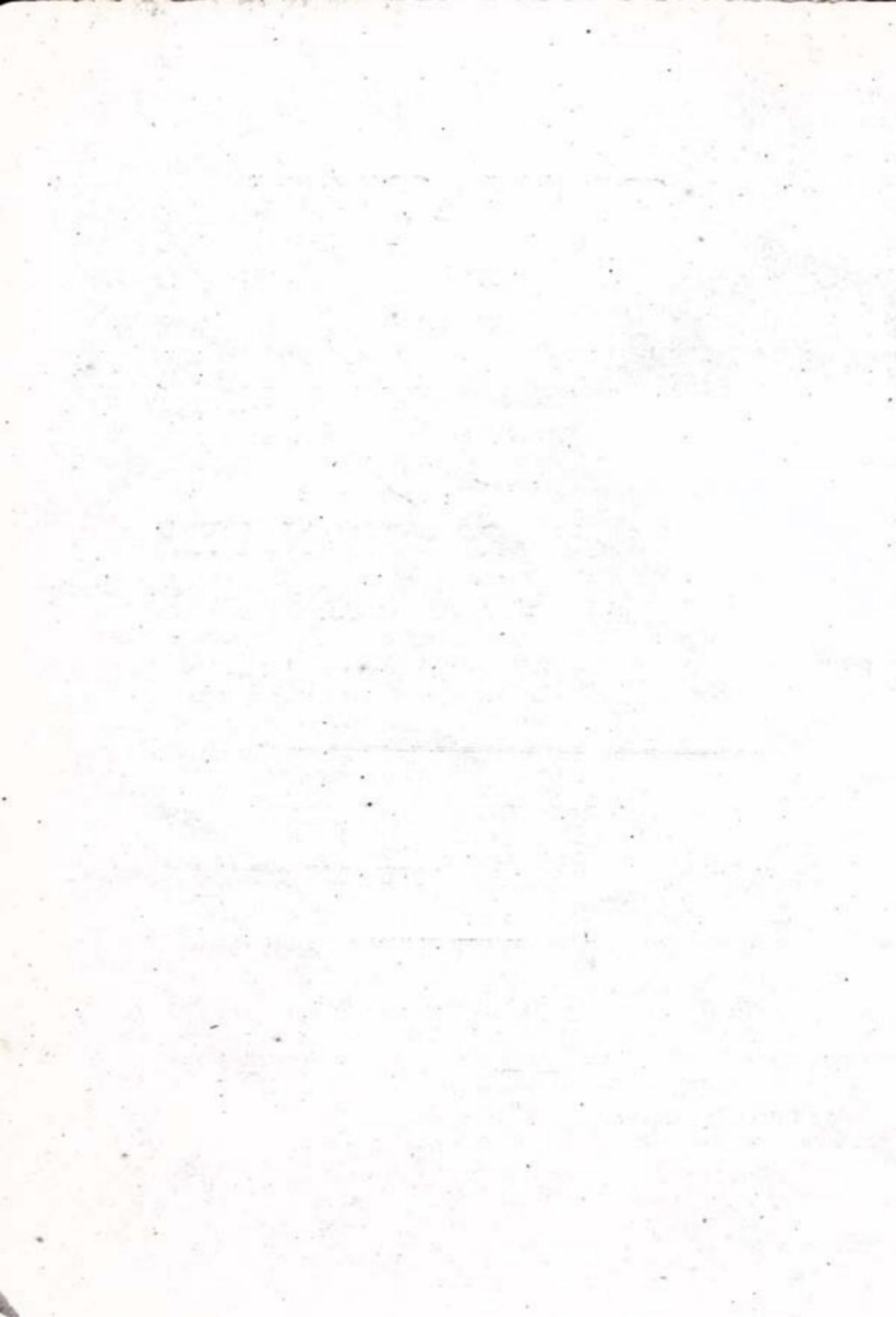
**PART 2.**

A CONTINUATION OF THE  
"COMTE DE GABALIS."

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No. 40



## PREFACE.

The modern publisher of this remarkable book has deserved well of such of the public as take an interest in this species of literature, and some time ago (1886) he issued a most desirable edition of the First Part of the "Comte de Gabalis," and announced at the same time the continuation of the Second Part to follow at once, but, from various causes, the same has been delayed. I was so much impressed with the high opinion which the late Mr. Hargrave Jennings expressed of this work, in his "Letters," recently published, that I resolved to translate the Second Part, never hitherto printed in English, for my own amusement. I have, accordingly, done so, and now offer it to the present publisher, Mr. R. H. Fryar, of Bath, to aid in completing his admirable edition, and through him I give it to the reader.

It is always a difficult task to give the spirit of an author in translation, but the following will be found a faithful version of the original work. It is a difficult work, and I have aimed only to be literal.

I am informed by the publisher that the demand for this species of literature is so small that the results barely cover cost, and as I translate this *con amore* I shall not be misunderstood in expressing a hope that the antiquarian reader will assist the sale for him. In this case it will be followed shortly by the Third Part, which is a still more interesting volume, as it overruns the literature of 2,500 years, to find alleged facts for that which the Moderns term extatic vision, premonitions, healing, clairvoyance, spiritualism, occultism, &c., and giving the views of the Ancients as to the cause of the visions and intuitions.

This Second Part, or Continuation, is metaphysical rather than practical, and covers some witty satire upon the more extravagant doctrines of the Sectaries of the 17th century. It turns almost entirely upon the physics of Giordano Bruno and René Descartes, and it may save the reader some trouble to say a few words upon these great men.

JORDANUS BRUNUS revived the doctrines of the Pythagorians, Gnostics, and Platonists, and he was practically a Rosicrucian. During his residence in England he wrote a work, entitled, the *Expulsion of the Triumphant Beast*, which he dedicated to Sidney; a satirical allegory upon the then state of theology and Christian morality, and advocating philosophy. This book closes with a prayer that "superstition, infidelity, and impiety may depart from the altar, and that faith which is not foolish, religion which is not vain, and a true and sincere piety may sojourn there." A prayer not at all inappropriate at this day, when we meet with so much hypocrisy. He was also the author of *Causa Principio Uno, or Infinito Universo e Mondo*; his principles have an affinity with the philosophy of Spinoza. Brunus was at length brought before the Inquisition, accused of heresy, magical powers, and the intention to form a sect, to be named the "New Philosophy." He boldly admitted his doctrines before the Inquisitors, and advocated a trinity of strength, wisdom, goodness, or mind, intellect, and love; Platonic doctrine. He declared his belief in an infinite universe, in an infinity of worlds, in infinite space, all created by divine goodness; in which everything lives and vegetates by a universal providence, or the Soul of the World. The reward of his life was that of being roasted alive at Venice, in the year 1600. The modern Freemasons of Spain, Italy, and other countries, have named after him various Lodges, and have erected a statue to his memory. The present writer is the Honorary Venerable of Lodge Giordano Bruno,

Palmi, Calabria. Toland published a tract, at Amsterdam, in 1709, entitled, *An Account of Jordanus Brunus's Book of the Infinite Universe and Innumerable Worlds, in Five Dialogues*; in which Bruno says, that for being solicitous about the field of nature, and the pasture of the soul, he is menaced, assaulted, and devoured. It is a well-reasoned work in which he frequently attacks the physics of Aristotle, holding that "those who have the poorest understanding, and comprehend him least, are those who magnify him most." This work is, without doubt, the system commented upon in these *Discourses*, and his book foreshadows many principles which are now accepted as scientific facts. One of the arguments which he uses for the infinity of the universe is this, "that if God does not make the world infinite, he cannot make it so; and that if he has no power to make it infinite, he has not strength to preserve it infinitely; nay, that if he is finite in one respect, he must be so in every respect; because in him every mode is a thing, and every particular mode and thing is the selfsame in Him with every other mode or thing. The diversity consists in our different ways of conceiving him." His physics are by no means of that contemptible nature which his enemies would seek to stamp them with, and for the period in which the man lived indicate an extraordinary knowledge of the Secrets of Nature.

RENE DESCARTES was born at La Haye, 31st March, 1596, so that he was four years old at Bruno's death. He was educated at the Jesuit College, and had a life-long friendship with the eminent Monk Mersenne. In youth he served as a soldier in Holland and Bavaria, and during this period wrote his *Compendium Musicæ*. His talents were for Mathematics and Metaphysics, and he now determined to devote his mind to these, by abandoning everything that he had been taught, and begin a new investigation into first causes. For this purpose he retired into Holland, where he

expected more retirement. Soon the Church rose in arms against the heresies of his physics and positive philosophy, and Christina, Queen of Sweden, invited him to her capital, and herself studied under him. He was probably acquainted with the Rosicrucians, who were opposed to the physics of Aristotle, though it is considered historical that they would not receive him. His physics, touching the places and paths of the Celestial bodies, were that these were the result of some fixed and unalterable system of machinery, invisible to us, but under the control of some original accident or of the creative fiat of God. This machinery he considered to be an ethereal fluid revolving round a centre, like water in a vortex. He was also the first to bring optics under the law of mathematics. Space he considered to be infinite, filled with ethereal life, which keeps the globes in motion, and his vortices have relationship to magnetism and electricity. He considered that the pineal gland, which is a horny cone-like gland of the brain, seated under the forehead of man, was the seat of his soul, and therefore of his spiritual and intuitive faculties. The modern Theosophists, of the Oriental school, teach that this gland has a primal function, in divorcing soul or spirit from the outer body, and that in prehistoric times it was an actual third eye which ossified. In this relation we may mention that ancient Greece, at Mycenae, possessed the statue of a god, represented with this third or Cyclopean eye, which had been brought to them from Troy. It only remains to add that Descartes died at Stockholme, 11th February, 1650. Like Socrates, it is said that he had a tutelary guide that urged him on in his search for truth. The third part, on the *Génie*, has a curious story of clairvoyance which appeals to Descartes.

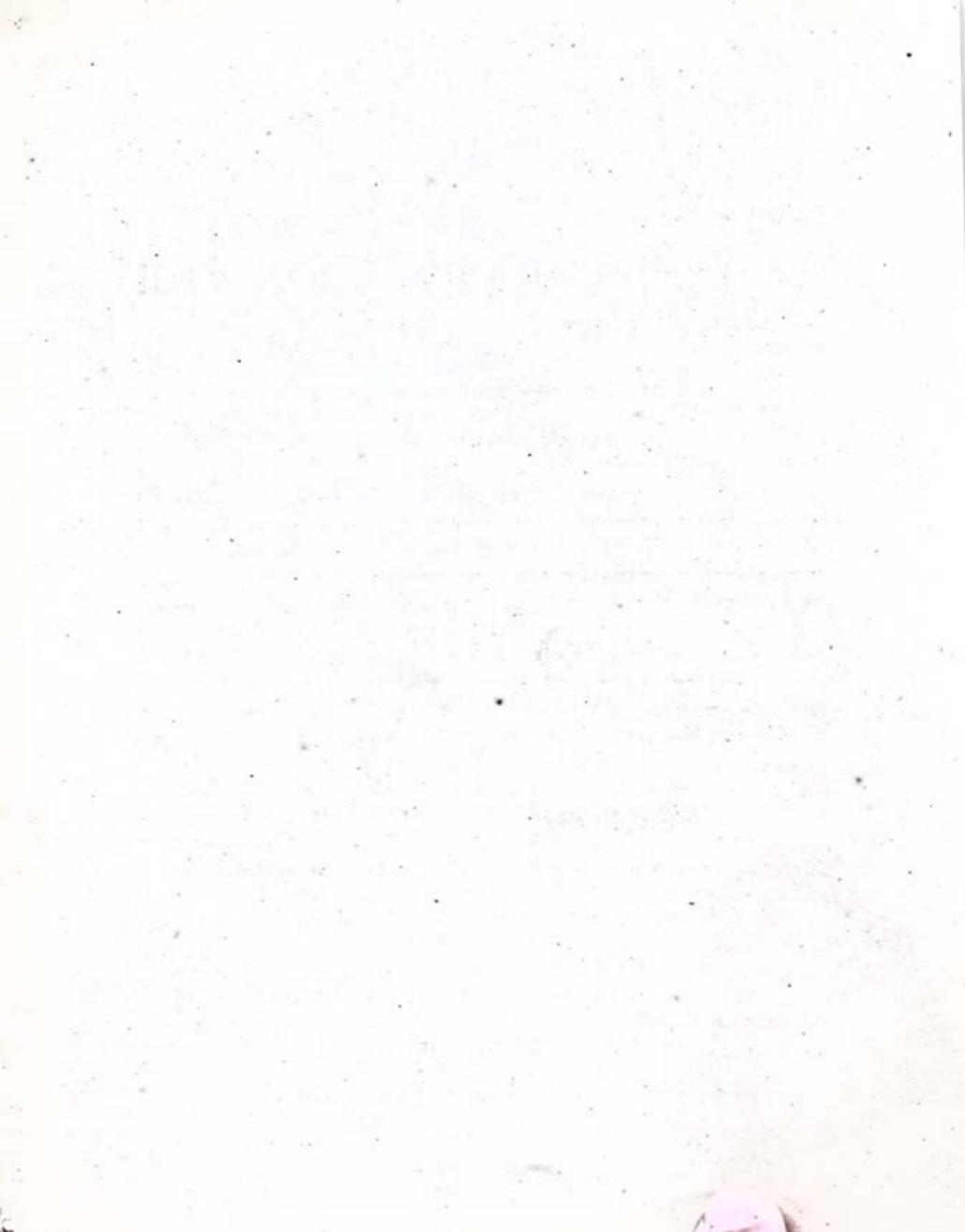
SAINT THOMAS (AQUINAS) will be found to be highly spoken of in these pages by the professedly orthodox writer of the book. He was a younger son of Landulf, Count of

Aquino, who was a nephew of the Emperor Frederic I, and the Thomas of this notice was born in 1227, joined the Dominican Friars at 15 years of age, and became a pupil of Albertus Magnus, who is celebrated as an Alchemist and Magician, and was the alleged designer of Cologne Cathedral. Thomas Aquinas was ordained a priest in 1248, and in 1253 published a defence of the Monastic life. Amongst his numerous works the most famous are his *Summa Theologiæ*, and his *Commentary of the Four Books of Peter Lombard*. He maintained the supreme and irresistible power of divine grace, a doctrine afterwards opposed by Duns Scotus and his disciples. Aquinas died on the 7th March, 1274, in the 48th year of his age, and he was canonised by a Bull dated 18th July, 1323, issued by Pope John XXII.

I need only add that the arguments adduced in these Discourses (often satirical) are drawn from all sorts of beliefs, heretical and orthodox, and it is no part of my plan to offer any comment upon them, the reader is left to take what pleases him, or in other words, to carry away what belongs to him.

JOHN YARKER.

*West Didsbury, 1896.*



# NEW DISCOURSES UPON THE SECRET SCIENCES.

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## *FIRST DISCOURSE.*

I am (\*) destined each year to behold an extraordinary man. Blessed be the star which has given me this year, Monsieur the Doctor, Jean le Brun, and blessed be those, whether of my friends or my enemies, who, either to divert themselves, or to insult me, has sent this excellent man. Other people than myself would perhaps be offended at a certain compliment which has been made me, but I treat not that as a fault. I find it well to make the most of people who are singular in their species; an original is a great prize to me, and God has given me the grace to recognise that folly was sent into the world to afford lessons of wisdom. It is true that I had a little need of this grace, in order not to show Monsieur Jean le Brun to the door the first time that he made his appearance. He rushed brusquely into my study, entering the same holding a book and a stick in one hand, and carrying his large hat in the other. "Monsieur," said he, "I am your servant; I have come expressly from Ireland to tell you that you are badly advised." He had eyes that were red and wild, a pale visage; his clothing was black and short, the cassock bound with a woollen girdle; a peculiar beard, and the air and bearing of an injured devotee. "Monsieur," said I, very courteously, and at the same time sweetly taking the hand

\* This work appeared thirty years after the death of its author (1716).

which held the stick, "before I respond to the honest compliment, which you have come so far to make me, have the goodness to tell me, if you are Cabalist, Rabbin or Rose-croix." "I am Master Jean le Brun," he answered, "the great *Jordanus Brunus* was my great-great-grandfather, and you are a badly advised man, and an ignoramus." "Master Jean le Brun," I responded, "I am in accord with the second eulogy, but I neither know you nor your great-great-grandfather; but shew me what foundation you have to give me the first epithet, and to come all the way from Ireland to compliment me thus." "Why," said he, "have you then ravished me in this wicked book, of the glory which I have merited? Why give to your scholar Descartes the glory which is only due to *Jordanus and Joannes Brunus*? Why praise him even to the skies? And why do you decisively say that he has brought more light to philosophy than it has had for even three thousand years?" "I understand nothing of all that which you tell me, Monsieur Jean le Brun," interrupted I, "I have no part in the panegyrics of which you speak to me, I am not otherwise subject to praise anyone *malàpropos*; and, moreover, although I hardly like Aristotle, I do not find any that has been brought up in our days that throws more light upon nature than he has, but, obscurity for obscurity, I will never praise the new to the prejudice of the Ancients." "How, Monsieur," said he to me, in shewing the title of the book, "You have not made this book?" "No, assuredly," responded I, "It belongs not to me to make such an essay." "And, further," pursued he, "You are not infatuated with Aristotle? and you do not believe that the Breton who is spoken of in this book is the greatest Philosopher that has ever been?" "For Aristotle," said I, "I have much information against him, and for Descartes, I have no strong esteem, for I do not understand him." "Ah, Monsieur," cried he, humbly, "I demand of you, then, a thousand pardons for

my mistake. A Monk assured me that you had composed this book, and gave me your name and your address. I am wholly ready to make you all the satisfaction that you may desire." "I desire not, Monsieur Jean le Brun," said I to him, "any satisfaction, save for a little evil a great good. Make me a partaker of your science, and, your friend." "I give it you," said he to me, putting his hand in mine. "You appear to me a proper subject for the great designs that I have formed since my youth. Your morals are good, since you suffer injuries without emotion, and your philosophy will rest in the future, since you are not opinionated about Aristotle. Ah! Aristotle, what evil thou hast done to good morals; and the Councils in former times have forbidden us to read thee, were inspired from heaven! Are you not of this opinion, Monsieur? Is not Aristotle pernicious to morality?" "Pernicious," answered I, "Monsieur, pernicious to the last." "And do you not find the age," continued he, "horribly corrupt?" "Horribly," answered I. "And will you not willingly," pursued he, "become the disciple and the coadjutor of a man raised up in an extraordinary way, by the Holy Spirit, for the general reformation of manners?" "Provided that this was neither Luther nor Calvin," answered I, "or any man of the same species, I have sufficient inclination to amend." "That is," said he, "the most commendable inclination that a Christian can have; he may well think as to morals, that we are all Pastors of each other; God has charged us all with the safety of our neighbours. Misfortune and unhappiness overtake those who labour alone for their own sanctification, and neglect that of their brothers; but this only tends to the correction of particular faults; to oppose in detail the abuses which glide into morality, it is necessary to go to the source, to sap the foundation of all disorders, to understand the principle of general corruption and to destroy it. I hope that God has reserved to me this glory; I understand the evil, and I have

the remedy for it." "Ah, Monsieur," said I to him, "give me a share in this glory, cause me to comprehend this evil, and suffer me to help you in this warfare." "I see nothing in you," he answered me, "that obliges me to refuse that which you request. This zeal, so worthy of commendation, which you show for good morals, is the effect and the mark of the little attachment which you have for Aristotle; this is the great point, whoever loves Aristotle knows not right morals. As to Descartes, it is a melancholy thing, full of good opinion for his reveries, which he would wish to carry further than I would like to do, and he has erred. He has desired to adjust his speculations to those of mine and to those of my great-great-grandfather, and has altogether spoiled them. If you scarcely esteem him, you have good reason, and if you do not understand him, I esteem you none the less, for he is unintelligible. The philosophy which he had from us was clear and pure, solid and sensible, nothing visionary rendering it ridiculous and suspected, and everything was proper for the reformation of morals. It is necessary for me to explain to you all this, even if you be not admitted to the number of those who pretend, with the aid of grace, to reform the manners of the time by the principles which I have imagined. It is necessary now that I go to consult with God upon this. I pray you, therefore, Monsieur, to forget the brusqueness with which I made my entrance, I will be careful when I have the honour of seeing you again." He wished to go, but I did not intend that he should slip away. All those visionaries who make themselves reformers, and pass their lives in meditating new laws, a new policy, a new theology, a new morality, a new philosophy, have always the good side and the ridiculous. They have certain lucid intervals when there is something profitable; we laugh at the rest, and we admire that which exalts the imagination of the man of letters." "Monsieur," said I, to

*Joannes Brunus*, "there is no need for you to go away; if it pleases you, you are fatigued with your long voyage, repose yourself here. Here is a little bed where you will be able to sleep some time, and for the consultation which you desire to hold with the Lord, behold a *Prie-Dieu*. I go to change my dress, we will confer upon your holy projects when we dine, if that pleases you." "Ah, Monsieur," said he, embracing me, "there is nothing so honest as you, I hope that God will inspire me to admit you to the apostleship to which He has called me; go then and change your dress, leave me here to request His will." I left him in my study.

## SECOND DISCOURSE.

JOANNES BRUNUS was an hour in conference with the Holy Spirit; he came out of my study enflamed like a cherubim. "You are one of ours, my son," said he, "God has informed me that the zeal which you have for the reformation of manners comes from Him; that it is He who has inspired the distrust which you have for Aristotle; and that it is He who has taught you that the melancholy Descartes does not merit all the esteem that the author of this book desired to insist upon. Upon these three fundamental points, it will not be difficult for me to tell you my designs; to recount to you my history, to explain to you my philosophy, and to associate you with the glory of reforming the Christian world." "Proceed then, Monsieur," I answered, "I will listen to you with all the docility of which I am capable." He seated himself, and spoke with strength.

"These later times have been fertile in reformers. Hell seems to have opened all its gates to overturn the Boat of Peter, under pretext of repairing it . . . God, always faithful to the promise which He has made, that the gates of hell shall never prevail against it, has raised up also on His side some extraordinary men, to save it by the same means which the emissaries of hell had willed it to perish. A veritable zeal for a general reformation has animated several great personages to labour with indefatigable care, to re-establish the purity of primitive morals, but by the secret judgment of God their holy efforts have been futile. I have, on other occasions, conferred with most of these great men, and have told them my sentiments, they have not credited me; I am not surprised that they have not been able to unite. One of them wished to undertake forthwith to

re-establish the ancient vigour of the Discipline and the severity of the ancient Canons. His design has grounded; it is not necessary to go thus openly against the torrent of corruption of the century, the human heart must be managed in other ways. Another of intelligence with this, was a prodigious study to change the face of all theology, to discredit the Scholastic Doctors, and to substitute for reason a Science of memory and collections from the Fathers. This design was great and good, but good God, what enterprise! to outface the Pedants, the universities, the Monks. God willed to have his soul; I said to him one day, 'that his project lacked prudence, and that he would be blustered by the people.' Another made great *fracas* with his raileries upon certain pretended looseness of manners, but beyond this few people believed in the good faith of his citations, because he found few Christians; and all the good people found that this invention further damaged morality, that it could not profit them, since, not the least, it made known to the people how far the Doctors, who were held by them in greater veneration than this author, permitted them to relax themselves. If all these gentlemen had been willing to believe me we should have done better than that, but each abounded in his own judgment, and that is why the affairs of God are very often retarded. It is necessary to commence by discrediting Aristotle without making it appear that we have an intention to establish an opposite Philosophy, thus without its being perceived, theology and morality will necessarily change its face: the thing had been easy in those times, I do not say that it will be so now. The disciples of these great men, of whom I speak to you, were advised to undertake it, and they make, in the best way they can, a new Philosophy. As their intention is good, and all tends but to continue the plan of our reformation, I will accord with them if they do not two things. The first is to

attribute to Descartes the glory of an invention which belongs to my great-great-grandfather and to me. And the second is that they take for *argent comptant* (small change), all the reveries which Descartes has added of his own, which are, nevertheless, all proper to fully ruin the base of Christian morality, if it be not already ruined."

"They are very wrong in these two points," said I to him, "but I am not sufficiently able to unmix that which Descartes has mixed up with the speculations of your great-great-grandfather, *Jordanus Brunus*, whose works I have never read. I do not even know sufficient of the philosophy of Descartes to discern what it may contain which is contrary to good morals." "That which Descartes has taken from us," replied he, "is good and proper for our design, but that which he has added is very pernicious. I desire to make you comprehend this clearly and in a few words. And for this reason, it is necessary, in the first place, that I tell you my sentiments upon the Philosophy of Aristotle, so that then you dwell in accord with me upon the principle of Christian morality, without which there is no difference between a Christian and a Pagan. This is, that Faith is the soul of Christianity, it is the principle of whatever is good and of all merit. Now further, this Faith suffers some contradictions, further it is combatted by human reason, further it is single, above all it is meritorious, more victorious, more triumphant." "This principle is admirable," exclaimed I, "Assuredly," pursued he, "one could do nothing more destructive of Christianity than to diminish the glory and the merit of this Faith, in undertaking to subject one's reason to divine things. It is the glory of Christianity that those who approach God, believe that God is, that is to say that Faith alone can teach them. All reasoning upon divine things only accustoms and teaches the spirit to doubt. If it does not destroy truth, far less will it diminish the merit,

if it happens that one could find a demonstration of what one believes. In fine, by Faith, all have their prize, by it they are delivered from all obscurity, which is a part of the merit. Thus one can do nothing so pernicious, as to fill the spirit of young people with a Philosophy which undertakes to prove to them the existence of God, the immortality of the soul, and other things of this nature. It is to change Christianity into Peripateticism, and transplant the Cross of Calvary into the Lyceum. O God! extirpate syllogism and the *Enthymeme* of Thy Church, and leave off all argument, but the argument of the things that we see not." "Monsieur," interrupted I, "your ejaculatory prayer and your reasoning makes me see that your great chagrin against Aristotle comes of this, that his strange philosophy is proper to prove that there is a God." "You have said it my son," said he, "this Philosophy is the destruction of Faith; there is nothing in religion that one cannot undertake to prove by that, so it is not by this dangerous manner of reasoning, and by these unfortunate principles, that the fanatic, Raymond Lulli, has been able to demonstrate the Trinity and the Incarnation, and has not the most ignorant of the Disciples of this extraordinary Man, had the timidity to say, 'that he saw as clear as the day into these Mysteries?' See the fruit of the philosophy of Aristotle. With God's aid let us root up this evil tree, and labour with all our strength to exterminate this enemy of the Faith; I would like to die in this quarrel, and I would be its Martyr." "Your zeal is admirable and singular," said I to him, "but is it then by your philosophy, that one cannot prove that there is a God, that the soul is immortal, and other things of that nature? And is not this also as pernicious to Faith, as the philosophy of Aristotle?" "No, my child," answered he, "see in what Descartes has erred. By the Philosophy which he has taken from us, we do not, in evident truth, prove that there is no God, nor that

the soul is mortal, but he follows clearly in our system, that it is not necessary that God has any part in the creation, in its conservation, and in the conduct of the world, and as for our soul, it flies away, hence that it is not different from that of beasts, then it is not necessary that it die not. In this way the merit of Faith receives no taint by that Philosophy, and you see it is not unworthy of being taught and studied by Christians. But Descartes, little dreaming of the glory of Christianity, has mixed the Peripatetic chimeras with this solid philosophy, and he has so much dreamt upon a thought of Aristotle, that he has at last come to make of it a species of sophism, which dazzled forthwith feeble spirits, and which appeared to them a demonstration clear and certain of the existence of God."

"See, Monsieur," said I to him, "that which I have found ridiculous and impenetrable in that Man. He says openly that one can learn nothing in his philosophy, unless one is perfect in Metaphysics, and that Metaphysics, so necessary, is all founded upon that demonstration of which you speak, and which at once appears to me a true Paralogism, that we cannot comprehend but in supposing two or three times that which it is necessary to prove."

"It is true, my child," responded Jean le Brun, "but that is not the worst, it will not be a very dangerous evil to have made a false demonstration of the existence of God; in making this falsity to be seen to those who are persuaded that this demonstration is good, we strengthen them in Faith, and they dwell convinced of the inutility of reasoning upon the more difficult truths, since that which is so plausible, and which appeared so reasonable to Pagans, as well as to Christians, cannot be demonstrated; but the great evil that is made by the visions in which Descartes has entangled the Physic of my great-great-grandfather, is that he has put, at once, into the spirit of his disciples, the most dangerous

disposition in which the spirit of a Christian can be put, by his ridiculous supposition, that all that of which the senses, and men, and even reason, can apprise him, is false and doubtful. Is it not to revive the dangerous sect of the Pyrrhonists, to accustom the spirit to doubt everything, or to cease not to doubt but by its own light; in short, to render oneself the unique arbiter of truth?"

"I know not," repeated I, "if, when one would be a disciple of Descartes, it is necessary to become Pyrrhonian, but I quite perceive that this disposition of the spirit, which it demands, is very proper to make a Calvinist, in consequence of accustoming oneself to believe only what one thinks himself upon natural things, and to defer in nothing to the light of others, such have the same presumption in divine things; the tradition of the Fathers and the Councils will not be considered anything great. The commencement of the metaphysics of Descartes is naturally sufficient to forerun the peculiar spirit of Calvin; it is this which makes all suspects amongst us to favor a great part of the errors of this innovator; to accommodate themselves to this philosophy, and to take care to creep gradually to it, and substitute it for that of Aristotle."

"Those who favor Calvin," said Jean le Brun, "are still able to favor our Philosophy, by reason that they have an object with my voyages; but as these are drawn from Physics, I will pay them, by God's aid, in saying that God is all-powerful, and that Physics and Faith have nothing in common. It is not the same with Metaphysics. You have wisely remarked that it is very dangerous to commence with a principle so much resembling and so favorable to that of Calvin."

"But that is not all the evil; it is necessary that I relate to you a little adventure that I had in the North. When the metaphysics of Descartes appeared, I was sufficiently

simple to let his method serve me against a Manichean." "What!" interrupted I, "are there Manichees yet in the world?" "Many," pursued he, "and of all the heretics there are none more opinionated. I wished at that time to prove to him the unity of all things by the method of Descartes, by which I had at once been a little dazzled, and I avow it, and had not then recognised how pernicious it is. I prayed him firstly, following this method, to suppose all that which he had heard said, and all that which he had believed true, up to the present, was false." The Manichean regarded me with such a look as we give to a fool, with whom we divert ourselves by listening to his folly. 'How is it possible,' said he to me, 'to make this supposition?' I answered, 'Cannot God, who is all-powerful, deceive you for some secret reason?' 'But is it not necessary that I suppose also,' said he, 'that there is nothing of God in it, since it is necessary that I suppose that all that which I have known hitherto is false? How shall I suppose, then, that this God, whom I suppose is not, has willed to deceive me? And then, continued he, what method of reasoning is yours? You suppose this God whom you wished to prove to me, or rather this evil principle, of which you wish to disabuse me; for if I had been deceived up to now, it would be without doubt by the principle of illusion and of wickedness, as well as of all evil in the world.' 'In whatever manner you make this supposition,' said I to the Manichean, 'make it always; then make your reflection upon this universal doubt of all things, make a demonstration of your existence and say; I doubt, therefore, I am.' The Manichean smiled. 'Monsieur the Doctor,' said he to me, 'I ask, if you please, what you wish to say I doubt, for I have forgotten. Will it be by chance the same thing as, I am in doubt?' 'It is the same,' said I. 'That is to say,' pursued he, 'that you reason shrewdly and ingeniously that you are, because you are: I am in doubt, therefore I am, is a

pleasant demonstration; and inasmuch as you say, I am, then I am, one cannot contest with you that the consequence is not contained in the antecedent.' I treated with the chicanery of logic this raillery of the Manichean, and dissimulated the little embarrassment which I felt. 'You are very pleasant,' said I to him, 'it is certain that I think, and that I know that I am, without any other body having contributed to give me this knowledge. I then know in myself this thought, without the knowledge of another body; it follows, then, that my thought is not corporeal, and that it is me which thinks, and neither body nor matter, since neither body nor matter thinks, and they contribute nothing to knowledge and to thought.' The Manichean appeared a little touched by all this. 'Before I answer a demonstration so involved,' said he to me, 'it is necessary firstly that you make quite sure of two things, upon which I fear that you have hardly meditated. For without waiting to contest that, when you have said, I doubt, or I am, that the I signifies forthwith a certain composition of body and soul; and that you are not able to know, without understanding these two things; otherwise, that which makes the I, the *me*, the *person*, will be precisely but the soul, of which the body will be but the prison, or the residence, or the Ship, as said the Platonists, and thus the body would not be an essential part of the physical man. We cannot easily perhaps understand what thought is, and it is not so evident that you believe that we can think without body. It had the consent of the Synagogues, and of the first Christians, as well as of the sect of Plato, that the Intelligences and the Angels are material. According to this ancient Theology, or Philosophy, thought is but a very subtle part of matter, couped up in a certain sense by a subtle means. It would appear that the first Doctors so little took away from matter the power to think, that Tertullian makes it no injury to the Divinity, to say that he was material; and our Doctor Manes

has not determined to the contrary. It is one of those questions which is so difficult, that I may put it that there is not any man living that comprehends fully, and without any obscurity, that which he says, when he says, I think ; or that he is evidently assured that he would think, as he does; if all that which he has of matter was annihilated in him, or even if the organs were troubled or disposed in another fashion ; it comes to this that he cannot judge without hesitation, that his thoughts do not essentially depend upon the disposition of matter, and that he is not such as he is, because the disposition of the organs are as they are placed.'

"I avow to you, my son," said Jean le Brun, "that this Manichean embarrassed me much. Notwithstanding, I wished to come to the demonstration of Descartes for the existence of God." 'It is not the time,' said I to him, 'to refute now the imaginings of Plato and the Rabbins, nor further, all that which the first Christians may have written, in order to draw the wise Pagans to Christianity by some conformity with Philosophy. But suppose that I think that God is; all creatures together are infinitely less perfect than that Being of which I have the idea infinitely more perfect than these; it is certain that they are not able to give me this idea, for the cause ought to be more perfect than the effect. It follows then that there must be a Being much more perfect than the idea, who can give it to me, and this Being so perfect, is God.' The Manichean was grave and sad during all this discourse. 'Are you offended,' said I to him, 'that I open your eyes, and that I show you there is a God.' 'Alas! I am afflicted with this, that your demonstration proves nothing; I would desire with all my heart that it were solid, for the doctrine of the great Manes would be incontestable. I would then say, as you do, to all those who are not of my belief; I have the idea of the principle of all evil, of a Being sovereignly bad, as you have the idea of

the principle all good, and of a Being sovereignly good; nothing of the world is sufficiently wicked to have given me the idea of a principle infinitely wicked, as nothing in the world is sufficiently good to give you the idea of a principle infinitely good. Thus, if it were necessary that a Being infinitely good produced your idea, it would be necessary that a Being infinitely wicked produced mine; but both the one and the other of the proofs have two great defects. Firstly, they suppose that it is not in the nature of the understanding to gather in a single idea a multitude of objects. Notwithstanding, it does no other thing than to range all that we know under certain general and universal ideas, and to reduce all the different beings to a certain unity. It sees in the world a diversity of evils and of things that are bad, it assembles them, and ranges them under a universal idea of evil, and this universal idea is infinite, because it is founded upon an infinity of particular evils: thus, we have the idea of infinite evil without its being necessary that this infinite evil exists to produce in us its idea. It follows, that as it would not be by this reasoning that I should wish to prove a principle of evil, it would, therefore, not serve you to prove your principle of good.'

“‘Besides this defect which I remark to you,’ continued the Manichean, ‘there is a second in your demonstration which is without reply, it is that it supposes that we can have the idea of a thing finite and limited, and, moreover, the idea of a thing which is neither finite nor limited, and that we can understand, moreover, the finite and the infinite. Moreover, let us say that a line is finite, that is to say that it is not infinitely extended; how say that it is infinitely extended, that is to say that it is not finite. We come to this from these axioms so common and so reasonable, that the science of contraries is the same, and that things relative to each other cannot be understood the one without the other,

this is why the idea of the infinite is as natural and as proportionate to our understanding as the idea of the finite.'

"'Truly,' exclaimed I, 'I have nothing to say to you, if you adhere not to our conventions. You speak to me of contraries, of relatives, and of axioms, before that you have discovered that there are the contraries, and the relatives, and against the supposition that we have made that all the axioms which can be, are false and impertinent, above all if they are Aristotle's.' 'My friend,' said the Manichean to me, you have been the first to break the march, I have left you to make the causes and the effects without obliging you to make with me a long Treaty, which might perhaps fatigue you, and which has assuredly hindered you to achieve to day your beautiful sophisms.

"'I have not complained at all to you, of what you have not yourself asserted in the suppositions that you proposed to me, because I saw well that it was impossible to hold your position. For our reason forms itself insensibly upon the ideas which the senses present to us from our childhood, and from the diverse experiences which we make of the truth or of the falsity of these ideas. It is impossible that we reason in a little longer breath, by the aid of those ideas which we have recognised as reasonable; thus it is impossible to suppose, in good faith, that all that which the senses and experience teaches us is false; and I defy any man of the world to make a just reasoning, in holding himself rigorously in that fantastic, and little natural supposition.'

"I assumed the best mien I could with the Manichean; I said to him that he would be damned; that Aristotle and Plato would be the instruments of his reprobation, and that for the rest, I saw that prayer was the unique sword to employ against Heretics. I quitted him to go and make an orison; but to tell you the truth, I was so inquieted upon all that this man had said to me, and so scandalised with my Meta-

physics, that when I was before God, I took less time to pray for the conversion of this Manichean, than to consult him touching the validity of the demonstration that I had enterprised, and the solidity of my method in Metaphysics.

“This Prayer was as follows:—‘O Lord! adorable Author, and consummator of Faith, aid me with this grace, and spread over my spirit this admirable light, upon all the proofs, metaphysical and natural, upon the existence of God, upon the immortality of the soul, and upon other things of the nature, that are proper to be put aside, or to persuade; and if the greatest service which one can render to the Faith, and the most agreeable sacrifice that one can make to the cross of JESUS-CHRIST,\* is for him to destroy all the audacious philosophies which have the insolence to carry their rash theories even into the existence of God.’

“Behold then,” said I to him, “the great reason why *Jordanus Brunus* judiciously renounces the audacious Aristotle, and even the Metaphysics of Descartes. But,” (said I,) “how can you instil, for the glory of the Faith, the physics of Descartes, or of your great-great-grandfather *Jordanus*, since Descartes has pretended that one cannot understand these without the aid of his Metaphysics, and his beautiful demonstration of the soul, and of the existence of God?” “As Descartes,” responded he, “had not in view the general reformation of manners, and only wished to shew his strength of spirit, he has not disdained to march in the steps of Aristotle, whom he pretends to scorn so strongly, and believing himself able to strengthen and disguise altogether

\* See the Theurgic Mysteries of “The Sign of the Cross” in the Press.—“The prevailing unconsciousness that the “Cross has any other meaning or origin, than that around which revolves “The Story that moved the World,” illustrates a prevailing lack of historical knowledge in most people throughout Christendom. The hope to bring within the reach of the average reader an intelligible resumption of its THEURGIC mysteries alone induces the compiler to issue this Companion Monograph to “Supernatural Generation” just published, and is unquestionably the most important of the series.” Keynote from the Preface.

an old and feeble demonstration by a new turn, he has sought to signalise himself and to seize upon the admiration of his Readers by the hardihood of his principles and of his method. But God who flies always from the proud who seek Him, has confounded this, and has permitted that his pretended demonstrations have rather repulsed than attracted people. And *certes*, it was not to prove divine things that Physics were invented. I see well, notwithstanding that it is not for this that God has permitted that I have understood them, I neither care to commence them, nor to bind myself by these. I wish for no admiration from my Disciples to the prejudice of Faith and Christian morals. I have by the grace of God a means more sure and more natural to cause my physics at once to be admired, and to make them at once a marvellous curiosity."

"What! Monsieur," said I to him, "you are able to pass in your Physic to the proof, or to suppose that there is a God?" "Assuredly," responded he, "I can even suppose all the contrary, and it is not in any wise necessary that I make any mention of God, either for the creation, or for its conservation, or for the conduct of the world. I would tell you more, but it is not well to be too public, because of the Monks and the Caps. I have come, by the grace of God, to comprehend that it is quite easy to prove with this Physic, that it is not necessary that the soul is immortal and spiritual, nor that there is a spiritual principle, which governs the world; so that a Christian imbued with this Physic will not lose the glory and the merit of Faith, since he will not need any support for that which he believes. He will every day, be going forward to new victories, since this Physic will furnish him in all, and with all, the reasons against that which he believes." "Praised be God," cried I, "which ever way goes the zeal of the servants of God, when it is according to his science! He carries it even to invent and favor Sects

that are opposed to the existence of God. You are right, Monsieur, to say that you have a sure means to attract the admiration of your Disciples. They will admire you even to astonishment, and perhaps even to scandal."

"That will be nothing," continued he, "because I am about to say to you, that which will be admired by all sorts of people, I would not speak of it to any but solid and good Christians, for the others I would be content to enchant them by an infinite number of rare things, singular, strange, astonishing, unimaginable, and carrying evidence of which our Physic is full. I would propose in gross all such extraordinary things, and it is impossible they will not be enchanted by them, and that they will not have an extreme avidity, to know the details and the proofs." "Enchant me then Monsieur," said I to him, "and overrun in gross all these marvels, I will await your explanation some day in detail."

"Willingly," said he to me, "but Monsieur, you ought to know that talking undermines the body a little, and that long philosophic discourse enfeebles the stomach a little. It seems to me that you have proposed to give me dinner." "Ah! it is true," cried I, "Monsieur Jean le Brun, let us go then."

### THIRD DISCOURSE.

Monsieur Jean le Brun dined without speaking; I remarked that he became extraordinarily changed. After the repast he made a long grace, then approached the fire. "If we had Faith," cried he to himself, "as a grain of mustard seed, we should have no need of eating, and none of drinking; for it is written that the just man lives by faith and by the word of God; by faith Elias and Moses were nourished for forty days." "I believe," said I, "Monsieur, that when the Son of man shall come, he will scarcely find upon the earth the nourishment of this faith. Morality is greatly relaxed and the most devout have no hatred to good cheer." "It is because faith is small," responded Jean le Brun, "for me, by the grace of God, I do not eat much, and I drink only from inadvertence and distraction. Ordinarily I have my head full of some great design upon which my spirit is employed, or on God, or some affair of God, nature which intends to lose nothing, bides its time and comforts itself, to be able to sustain the labours which grace and faith imposes. All things turn to good with those who love God. I think, my child, that the little which I drink makes me more properly a Philosopher." "I wish Monsieur," said I, "that it was true to say at this time that in wine is truth."

"Let us philosophise then," said he. "What is, in your view, the principle of natural things, and the first matter of all that which we see?" "A German Count," responded I, "who had much of your air and manners, except that he made profession of living without eating or drinking,\* by applying to the navel a certain *lute* [chemist's

\* See page 38, first part, and the 1715 edition adds, an omitted line, that the veradique Paracelsus made proof of this during six months.—Translator.

clay] prepared with wisdom, instructed me last year, very devoutly, that light is the first substance of which all things are made." "That man was a coxcomb and an ignoramus," responded Jean le Brun, "for there is no such thing as light." "What! nolight?" exclaimed I. "No," said he to me. "How then," pursued I, "is not light spread in the air at its time?" "No," said he with raised voice. "Light," continued I, "is it not a body, or a quality, or a being imprisoned in the Sun?" "No, No," cried he, "there is neither light, nor a luminous body, it is an old error." "This commences very well," said I, "and what then is this Sun which we see, and this, I know not what, that we call light?" "That which you call light, of which you are ignorant," answered he, "is but a thought of the reasoning soul, of which man only is capable, for the beasts see not this light; a lynx and a dog see only a mole; and as to the Sun which you term a great body, it is but a whirling of powdered dust, which *pirouettes* rapidly around its centre, and the air is agitated in a certain manner by this whirl; the agitated air also *pirouettes* in a certain manner which affects the muscles of the eyes and the retina; and then our soul, to no name, brings forth a thought that it sees a luminous body; but, God living, there is nothing of light, and when God said in Genesis, '*Let there be light,*' it is to say that a great whirling of powdered dust, and of powdered matter, assembled in their place, which *pirouetted* in such and such manner under a new order."

"This Commentary upon the Scriptures," said I, "is it drawn from some Rabbi?" "Not at all," said he, "the Rabbis have not the clear visions, and this is solidly supported upon Mechanical demonstrations, so beautiful, so natural, and so necessary, that to speak to you freely, it is altogether unnecessary to suppose that God at any time mixed in this affair, for the production of the Sun, of the pretended light which surrounds it, and all the rest of things,

and if the Scriptures had not taught us that God laboured seven days in the production of the world, we should have allowed Him to repose himself from the dawn of the first day, and held Him quit of all labour, seeing that He had created us, and made Matter, which is divisible to infinitude, in little *corpuscles* (atoms) in form of the screw."

"In truth Monsieur," exclaimed I, "I am glad that I gave you some good wine for it has admirably warmed your imagination." "You would otherwise admire me much," continued he, "if I proved to you, that it is not even necessary that God gave himself the trouble of creating matter, and that it is incomprehensible if it be not of itself such as it is; but I think that it is to the purpose to defer, for a little time, to explain to you the essence of matter; this we will engage perhaps to leave for some thorny digression, as it will employ too much our spirit, which it is well to avoid carefully after our refection, for fear of troubling digestion, for it is not necessary to injure one's health to be a Philosopher. So that not to depart from this, that my Physic is agreeable, I shall content myself to remark to you that it is evident and clear as the day, that these, of which I have spoken to you, necessarily *pirouetting* around their centres and rubbing against other things, it has been inevitable that there would be produced an infinite number of scrapings, which, collecting in divers places, have composed by this, the divers whirling (*tourbillons*) of scrapings and powder. These whirling-matters turning continually upon their centres is what we call Sun and Stars."

"Mr. Jean le Brun," said I to him, "do you ever take a noon-tide nap, and have you ever accustomed yourself to sleep after dining?" "Pardon me," said he, "it is a good practice, which several servants of God observe, I will go to my couch for some time, if you will permit me." "Go Monsieur, go then at once. I yet wish you however to

continue your explanation of the formation of the world, and after you have said something of the heavens, to afford a little view of the history of the earth upon which we live. For it belongs not alone to me, and to Descartes, to be the Historians of nature, and to know the details of the states of matter." "Know then, my son, that this earth, at one time, had the glory of being a beautiful Sun and a luminous collection of sparkling scrapings (filings) which *pirouetted* in a glorious manner, as this whirling-matter which we see, enlightening other earths, and some other worlds in particular, but a certain vapour was raised from a certain other place, as it is easy for us to demonstrate mechanically; then around this *tourbillon* of light was formed an obscure crust, opaque and impenetrable, which enveloped this whirling-matter, and hindered its ordinary *pirouette*, or at least made the air which environed it to *pirouette*, so that it could no longer remain in its place and perform the functions of a Sun; it was obliged to set out from the *tourbillon* where it was, to wander without a fixed and determinate situation in the immense spaces of the Universe, until it found the means of becoming this grand whirling-matter which we inhabit; it then rested among the Planets, and became a Planet itself; for our mathematical and philosophical history teaches us that all the Planets are earths such as this of ours, and reached this world (form) from certain distant worlds, where they had the glory of *pirouetting* luminously in the functions of a Sun. I have not yet deciphered well the mechanical laws, through which these planets pass before they enter into worlds such as ours. But behold the veritable adventures of our earth, and of others, as they are all apparently the same. When it had entered upon this state of whirling-matter, four other crusts became allied to the beforesaid crust, which envelopes this *tourbillon* of scrapings, and settled one upon the other, in the same way as the skins of an onion are arranged. We

are as yet in great uneasiness, as we cannot well demonstrate of what the lowest of the earth's crusts is composed. I expect we shall discover that it is an infinite number of atoms in screw-form, and which set out incessantly without becoming exhausted, and proceed to an oval circulation in the air; from this we shall draw in time and place the demonstrative reason, why the loadstone attracts steel, for the screw inserts itself in the steel at a known point, without embarrassing either the one or the other, and without entering any other body, that it attracts mechanically the steel. I hold then that this first crust is the first storehouse of this admirable screw. The second was a mass of all the metals and the stones. The third was a collection of corpuscles of a needle-like form, forming a great body liquid as water. As to the fourth and last crust, it was a little hard, and suspended in a vault-like shape, near in form to the crust of a pie. It arrived then, in the course of time, that this species of light *pâté*, became dry, cleft, and gapped by the ardour of the Sun, broken in short into thousands and thousands of pieces. Judge of the beautiful spectacle that this was to the eyes of God, and of the Angels, and how dreadful was the *fracas*, and the hurly-burly which arose; it rejoices me when I think of it, and it holds me extremely that my soul may have the pleasure, after death, of seeing the same process in the Sun which lights us, when it contracts the aforesaid crusts, for the mechanics show us that it is not able to avoid contracting them. I pray God only, and do the same, if it pleases you, my Son, every day in rising, and in retiring to sleep, that this thing arises not to the Sun, and that it reaches not this point, before our death, for as it is, following the calculation which we have made, several hundred times as great as the earth, it will fall thereon, and drag us with it into some other *tourbillon*, and which will be the cause of the death, without confession, of the human race."

"It was, perhaps, for this reason," interrupted I, "that the first Christians, according to Tertullian, ardently desired the end of the world, and requested God to hasten the day of Judgment, fearing assuredly that the Sun would not contract this fatal crust."

"I know not if they were afraid of it," said Jean le Brun, "but I assure you that all those who are of our principles are trembling with fear for it; so much more as certain astronomers had such good Telescopes, as to remark certain spots in the Sun, from which it is conjectured that assuredly these unfortunate crusts are forming already." "Behold," said I, "an admirable point for Morality, I wish to remark it, if you please, for my Agenda, in order to use it to intimidate the sinners when I preach." "Strengthen well that point," continued he, "marvellous things strike the imagination, and when the imagination is gained, we make good headway and soon reach the heart. But to continue the history of the adventures (evolutions) of the earth. When the last crust opens and splits, the *debris* of this frightful *fracas* falls irregularly, confusedly, and pell-mell, one piece upon another. It follows necessarily that a great part will fall into water, and leave the liquid of the crust to form Sea. Other parts accumulate one upon another, from which result raised masses which we call hills. Upon these masses are collected atoms of diverse kinds, in all imaginable situations, these we call flowers, plants, shrubs, which appear to us to live, grow, and die. And an infinite number of Machines much more marvellous, beyond semblance, feeling, and knowledge, and which in effect neither feel nor think any more than that clock which sounds three hours, and advertises me without knowing that it does so, that it is time I had some sleep." "Go, Monsieur, sleep in the name of God," said I.

As he passed into my Study, two of the greatest

philosophers of the century, to whom God has given profound knowledge, and the rarest Mathematics, which have thrown a fine light upon the imaginings of Descartes, came to see me, they discovered in entering the figure and hat of Jean le Brun. "What sort of man are you entertaining there, Monsieur?" said they to me, laughing. "Speak low, Messieurs," said I to them, "for this is a Servant of God, extraordinarily raised up for the reform of the morals and manners of the Church. He has done me the honor to make me an associate of his Apostolate, and in a few days we go to find by a beautiful road the probabilities, and all the licentious imaginings, which one supports so feebly by the means of the Philosophy of the feeble Aristotle." "But we will prove to you, at least," said they to me, "by your new method, that it is necessary to dress one's self extravagantly like this man, and distinguish yourselves at once by a habit, and fantastic manners, from those who are not of your party?" "This was mentioned," responded I, "but we have not yet been able to reach the end, we have begun solidly, and we have as yet but touched the fundamental principles of the morality.

"We have unfolded a fine career, and my new Master has given me rare light, but speaking has weakened his stomach; he demanded me to dinner, and during the repast, a distraction unlooked for came upon him, my Apostle is enervated by inadvertence, and he has an hour in which he tells me he chosés his foibles, and you and I are very happy that the hour of his mid-day sleep is arrived, without which you would run a risk of being regaled with an extravagant conversation." "We are all accustomed," repeated they, "to hear the extravagances of Reformers. Paris abounds in them. But still what do you say about this, when he speaks to you in good sense, and what is his grand principle?" "The merit and purity of Faith," answered I, "the inutility and even the danger of human reason, the mistakes of all that

we call proved Metaphysics, and a profound aversion for the bold Aristotle, and for the impudence of Scholastic Theologians, which, on the principles of this Pagan, tend to the shame and diminution of Faith, to prove that there is a God, and that the soul is immortal, and other things of that nature, as if the greatest spirit of this century had not been obliged to avow in good faith, that he could not feel sufficiently strong to find in nature wherewith to convince an Atheist."

"This imagining is pleasant," said these Gentlemen, "but it is not new, I well know the people with whom you are struck. This fine spirit of whom you speak has put this vision in his head, and he has undertaken it in concert with a great number of as fine spirits as himself, to make a Book to establish this beautiful principle, that one cannot prove by any natural reason, either the existence of God, or the immortality of the Soul, or any other divine truth, and that all the natural reasons which one can allege, are but the wanderings of spirit. This great man disdains even the Metaphysical demonstrations which Descartes has made, although he has a great approbation of Physics. He does not wish for moral proofs, that is to say, it duly results from all his book, that, morally speaking, there is a God, that, morally speaking, the soul is immortal, but that this species of proof does not convince the spirit. Faith preserves all his obscurity, and all his difficulty, and, in consequence, all his glory, and all his Merit.

"That is somewhat near the jargon, and intention of my Doctor, Mr. Jean le Brun, who reposes therein; but he rises yet above that fine spirit, for beyond this that he desires not a philosophy which seeks to prove the truths of Faith, God has revealed one to him which destroys the grounds of the capital truths and the essential mysteries of Christianity, but that Faith will be more glorious and more meritorious when it dwells firm and unshaken, in spite of the demonstrations of Physics, which this new philosophy overturns in all

points." "Is there in the world," said these gentlemen, "a man so foolish as to form this insensate project? But what is this terrible Physic which seeks to establish Faith upon its own ruins?" "I know nothing yet," answered I, "Monsieur Jean le Brun has discoursed with me upon it during dinner, but he has talked such extravagant things that I thought that he was inspired by the wine. For where is the man of sedate sense who will undertake to explain such things as the origin of the Sun, Moon, and Stars, the Earth, the Animals, and that the entire World has been formed by the necessary and inevitable movement of an infinitude of invisibles?" "Ah! that is sufficient," interrupted they, "we see clearly of what sect this Monsieur Jean le Brun is, that which he has said to you in his cups, is what he will say to you when his wine is in the tub. He is of the number of those servants of God, who profess to say that the philosophy of Descartes offers great difficulties to religion, and notwithstanding that this ought to be an insurmountable reason to reject this doctrine with all persons who are ever so little Christians, they authorise it and make it of value with all their strength. To avoid condemnation, they proselytize openly; and teach it to their young nephews, and to the children of their friends they find something weak in the writings of that man, which is but the demonstration that he has made of the existence of God, for according to them a fine spirit will not find in nature that wherewith to convince an Atheist. But as for the physics of Descartes it is all to their gain, as you have without doubt told your Jean le Brun, because it is quite proper to preserve for Faith all its authority." "I know not," replied I, "either enough of the philosophy of Descartes, or of those servants of God, of whom you tell me, to enable me to judge if you have good reason to say that which you do. But Master Jean le Brun and these people you mention, are animated by the same

spirit, and if they are inspired to give credit to the same Philosophy, I will be instructed before the close of the day in all the aims of their projects. For God has told M. Jean le Brun to hold nothing back from me." "We will leave you then," interrupted they, "and to enable you to catechise this Apostle upon his doctrine, and to instruct you upon his Mission; and in order that you may have the time to run over before he rises these two tracts against the Philosophy of Descartes, of which one is in the form of a Letter, and the other is entitled *La Connoissance des Bêtes*; this reading will the better enable you to penetrate the doctrine of your Doctor. I leave them with you for the present." They then departed and I read these two works. They are both strongly and finely written.

#### FOURTH DISCOURSE.

A little time after, Monsieur Jean le Brun awoke. "God be praised, my Son," said he, on entering my room. "Blessed be God who watches over the safety of His Servants when they sleep, and Who comes to lighten the vapours of sleep by the light of His grace." "God speaks to you then when you sleep?" said I to him. "Sometimes," answered he, "but to-day He has not spoken to me in person, He has only sent me an Angel of Peace to announce His will, and to order me to reconcile myself with Mr. Descartes." "With Descartes," cried I, "Mr. Jean le Brun? This pretended Angel is a spirit of darkness transformed into an angel of light." "Not at all," responded he, "Learn my child as I have learned to-day never to judge hastily, and never to condemn a person unheard. Scarcely had I fallen asleep when the Angel of Peace presented himself to me, holding Mr. Descartes by the hand. 'Embrace each other you servants of God,' said he, and disappeared. M. Descartes embraced me with much respect, and then he proceeded to amply justify himself upon all the complaints which I have made against him. He was an able man my son, and few people penetrate his intentions and understand his doctrine. I reproached him at once that he had sought to diminish the glory and the merit of Faith in proving the existence of God and the immortality of the Soul, and in supposing that God is the author of movement and of all matter. He has very well answered these reproaches and I am quite content with him. It is certain, as he has well said to me, that it is necessary when we make a Book to provide carefully for weak spirits whilst contenting the strong.\* When a weak-minded

\* The first part translates the word *esprit* by wit, I have thought it best throughout to use the word spirit.—*Translator.*

person sees that we seek to prove the truths of Faith, he takes it for so much *argent comptant*, and challenges nothing, but a strong-minded person disentangles easily in a Book that which was put there for the weak or for himself, and easily distinguishes the necessary from that which is politic. It was a part of his prudence to dazzle the Monks and their partisans by a sophism upon the existence of God, and by a specious supposition that He was the sole *Moteur* of matter. One passes that by to cover the persecution of false Christians, who cannot permit that we make philosophy to preserve the obscurity of Faith, and who wish opinionatively to make religion to accord always with reason. Notwithstanding, a strong spirit penetrates sufficiently the sense, and takes that which is written for him, his Faith dwells pure and and inviolable in all its obscurity, and he finds nothing in nature which can convince an Atheist when he is fortified by a Physic so clear and convincing as that of *Jordanus Brunus*, and which Mr. Descartes had been inspired by heaven to put forth in his time." "You believe then, Monsieur Jean le Brun, that your philosophy is proper to conserve the glory and the merit of Faith, in the impeachment that natural reason cannot confirm divine truths." "Assuredly," answered he, "Faith will bring every day new victories, this philosophy opposes itself all together to the demonstrations of physics upon all mysteries." "Ah! Monsieur," said I to him, "make my Faith then to triumph, and arm a little my reason, in order that I may believe these Mysteries with all the merit that a strong spirit may have." "You are very well intentioned for the Moral reformation" answered he, "in not being a Christian of weak spirit. See then what is the question. Firstly, is it not true that, if God was not the Creator of all things, He would not be their preserver nor the end?" "Truly," said I to him, "God is our end, only because He has created us for Himself, and He can only

preserve the World because He has created it." "But do you think," responded he, "that God has created matter, or at least that it is necessary that God has created it?" "Without doubt," I answered him. "You do not think then," added he, "that extension, that is to say width, length, and depth, is the essence of matter?" "When you would have that," answered I, "it follows that God has not created it." "Yes," answered he, "because it follows that it is impossible to imagine a moment when this matter did not exist. and see the little reasoning that I make, to which there is certainly no answer. It says necessarily that a thing exists, when we cannot in any manner conceive that it does not exist, but is it that one can in any manner conceive that matter does not exist?" "Why not?" interrupted I. "It is impossible that before the world was created, this space did not exist which the world occupies. One can conceive nothing of this space. Because it is impossible to have a conception of space, without thinking of a width, a length, and a depth; this width, this length, and this depth is the essence of matter. Conclude, my son, and judge if it be a necessity that matter has been created." "I see well Monsieur," repeated I, "that following this definition of matter, it is only faith which can persuade us of creation, because it is but faith that can persuade us that in all eternity there had not been space, or that this space had not been wide, long, and deep." "Make then an act of Faith my son," said he, "upon the creation of matter, and begin your triumph of Faith, in the name of God, with Praxeus, Hermogenus, and the Platonists, which reason also demonstrates, that matter is eternal, but which the light of grace will not inspire, for it is created in spite of demonstration." "But when settled that matter is eternal," said I, "does it follow that it is not created, and that God has not created it from all eternity?" "Since that it is impossible," answered he, "to comprehend

that space does not exist, again that God did not create it; the one of two things clearly follows, either that God has not created this space, or that He has not created it freely. You have then to make a second act of Faith upon the liberty with which God has created the world, and it is necessary to believe in spite of reason, that He has created it, and that He has created it freely. This in general is to be supposed upon the matter of the world, for, from all which we have seen, it is not at all necessary that God be joined to make it thus. It is impossible, as Mr. Descartes has very well explained, following the laws of mechanics, that the world was not formed by him, such as it is, and you have too much good sense not to comprehend after this manner what I have said, that the supposition which Mr. Descartes makes that God has created a certain quantity of movement and repose in matter, provides that we can demonstrate mathematically the necessary production of all the machines which we see." "You have too much discernment," said I,\* not to perceive that this supposition has been made but to cover the importunities of the Monks, who cannot suffer that we explain natural things without coupling God with them; notwithstanding it is clear that this supposition is useless and ridiculous, and Mr. Descartes merits great praise in having had the humility to say a foolish thing to content little minds. For who sees not, that matter having essentially length, breadth, and depth, its parts have it also; and that a length, a breadth, and a depth, equally, makes one of these or a cubic body, it is impossible that this cubic body has not some weight and a tendency to fall, and that thus all these bodies would run counter to each other, in several senses they do not move one with another, and that in short by the different assemblages which arise from their movement, there results some bodies of different shapes and diverse machines."

\* Evident misprint for "said he."—*Translator.*

"Monsieur," interrupted I, "I am afraid that you may resuscitate the philosophy of Epicurus and Democritus, which would be odious to morality. You know that the Epicureans were accused of being Atheists, and because they believed not in God, nor in a reasoning soul, they placed their sovereign good in voluptuousness. Notwithstanding, all their atheism was but founded upon certain atoms of irregular figure which moved upon a slope, producing quite well all the different bodies which we see; and thus Epicurus to explain nature had no need either of a God which formed the world, nor of a Providence which governs it." "There is no difference," responded Jean le Brun, "between that philosophy and ours as to the basis of things. For, as you see, what does it import to religion, and to Faith, that the parts of matter be square or irregular, that they move in slope or perpendicularly or spherically, for we see that one or the other occurs necessarily, and that from it results the machines without the necessity of referring it to a Divinity, or to anything of that which we call spirit or spiritual soul. But the Philosophy of Epicurus, though it is very fitted to combat divine truths, and to conserve the obscurities of Faith, is not so proper to the design which we have of reforming the Church, because, as you have very well said, it is odious to Christian Morality, and strongly decried by the fathers. That of Mr. Descartes is better for us, it has the grace of novelty, which is a great article for a reformation, and further it is still more suited to preserve the obscurity of Faith, than is the philosophy of Epicurus; for there are two considerable difficulties between us and Epicurus. Epicurus admits a void (in space) and we maintain that it is impossible." "Which is it that makes for Faith?" interrupted I. "Truly if a void were possible," repeated he, "you see clearly that all that which we have said of eternity and of the independence of matter would be overthrown. It would be to put before

the creation of the world a void instead of space." "Ah! I comprehend it," responded I, "an Epicurean is not so contrary to Faith as a Christian." "No, by the grace of God," pursued he, "but there is yet another difference between us and Epicurus. He puts it that all the parts of matter are indivisible, whilst we sustain that the atoms can be infinitely subdivided. It follows that we find it incomparably more easy to compose the Sun, the Stars, and the Planets of the scrapings of cubical bodies, which, rubbing together, are, as shown by the rules of mechanics, thus divided from the larger matter and necessarily collect together in *tourbillon* (whirling); in the other case, Epicurus is obliged to say that all collections of matter are fortuitous, which is absurd and inconceivable. But Faith has all the more glory and merit in raising itself above the necessity of reason and a demonstration of Mathematics, which it would not have in the system of Epicurus."

"It results Monsieur," said I to him, "from all that you have explained to me, that when Descartes supposes that God has created matter, that he did it in cubical divisions, which are agitated in divers ways, each moving round its centre, and all within a common circle, after which supposition this incomparable philosophy asserts that God has made nothing, and taking that view, makes his deductions by the evident rules of mechanics, and in consequence infallable, in all the effects of Nature." "it results" (said I) "that this wise and politic philosopher has only coupled God with his reasoning in order to satisfy the Monks, and that his Disciples do but couple Him, like himself, in order to manage Rome."

"You take it well," replied Jean le Brun, "and it is certain that *Jordanus*, my great-great-grandfather, and Monsieur Descartes have had in mind to emulate Epicurus, and a very great envy to explain things in a better way as to all the effects of nature, and its form-

ation, and of the order and duration of the world, without the necessity of referring it to God, but as effects of matter alone. For if Monsieur Descartes had spoken of God in good faith, and not by consideration or for fear, and if he had believed only that that which lives eternally has created in time all things collectively, why did he consider it advisable to seek it by the rules of mechanics, if the parts of matter which turn around a centre are scrapings, and if it is necessary that these filings assemble in *tourbillon* and make the Sun? If this Sun ought to contract an opaque crust, and then go wandering in the Universe? All this care and all this detail would have appeared useless and ridiculous to him, if he had been perfectly persuaded that this thing had not passed in such manner, and that God had produced all things by a single word; but we who are animated by a spirit of reformation say the same things but with a better motive than he. That which he has said from vanity or in jealousy of Epicurus, and even that which he has said for fear of the Monks, we say from a zeal for God, and out of love for a pure and primitive morality. That is why, when we speak to the weak, we associate God with our discourse, persuaded that the strong-minded will see that we only couple Him *ad honores*; and that it will destroy nothing of the merit of their Faith, since they fully comprehend that in good physics it is not necessary to couple Him with them; for where is the fine spirit who will not see that Monsieur Descartes mocks the Monks and the Doctors, and ironically eludes the censures of the Faculties, when to save the faith in a *Moteur*, he supposes that God from the beginning has created a certain amount of movement and a certain amount of repose; and that He has apportioned both the one and the other in the diverse parts of matter, which undertakes this movement and this repose, at its beginning and in a continual change, from which results all the different effects, and the

changes, and the production and the destruction of all things. When we see that one ball pushes another, it is that the ball which is pushed takes from the other a part of the movement which God has given to it, and that the ball which pushes carries to that which is pushed a part of its repose: and by a mutual exchange of the present that God has made them, the ball which had the repose is moved, and that which had the movement is arrested. With your advice, is not this an ironical burlesque, and are not the Monks very simple to take all this for *argent comptant*? as if it was not more than evident that the grind-stone of a mill, for example, suspended by a brass-wire, falls of itself by its own proper weight, if the wire becomes undone, without the borrowing of other movement, and without taking its repose, whatever that may be. You see clearly that so much of the existence of God, or of the necessity of providence, will depend upon knowing if this mill-stone fell of itself, or if it remains immovable, it is not necessary to have much inclination towards Atheism to conjecture that it is not essential that God has created in particular a thing called movement, without which that stone would not fall to the earth. For, however little inclination one may have towards irreligion, we like better to say that it is the nature of this gross mass of stone to fall by its own weight, than to avow that it is necessary that there is a God, who precipitated it, and that He made it to take the repose which it has to some neighbouring body."

"This borrowing of movement and repose," responded I, "is very extravagant and very burlesque. Descartes assuredly wished to jest with weak minds when he created these two things. It is evident that all reasonable minds will find in this supposition a manifest contradiction, and will penetrate easily the motive why it is made, for this thing is matter itself, and in that case it will have the same indifference

to movement and repose as matter itself, and it would be the inconvenient which one would most fear. Thus, if one says that such is a mode, or a fashion of being of matter, it is clear that this is a fiction still to amuse the simple; for, either this mode is in effect a same thing with matter, or not; if this is not the same thing it is then a spirit; if it is the same thing, is it not ridiculous to think that a thing is able to borrow a quality in order to divest it, and communicate it to another; that is to say, to become another thing without ceasing to be that which it is. Of two balls, for example, of which one pushes the other, if movement is in the same thing with that which pushes, it ensues that if it communicates to the other its movement, it makes a division of itself, and gives a part of itself, which part becomes then the same thing with the ball pushed; in such sort that there would always be in nature a continual transubstantiation, and a transmigration of being into being, and of substance into substance, more incomprehensible than any mystery of religion, since that one thing would be changed into another thing, without ceasing to be that which it is; by which it is evident that Descartes has not added good faith to his philosophy in the creation of two things, movement and repose."

"No, my son," said Jean le Brun to me in embracing me, "by the grace of God, the merit of Faith will never be diminished by any appearance of the necessity of this particular creation of these beings, movement and repose. Let the Monks search if they can find these in Genesis." "What will they seek there?" said I, "if repose is any other thing than the cessation of movement, and if it is not true that matter has of itself a movement which is natural to it. That which it is only necessary to observe is; not to attribute to it an irregular movement, as did Epicurus, in supposing that it proceeded by a slope; it is only to suppose that it

lowers itself by its own proper weight, and in going round its own centre, because it is the movement which demands the least action, and by those two movements, so natural and so necessary, we explain the mechanical action of all the machines that we see."

"I see well, Monsieur," said I to him, "that all which you say is reasonable, but it is an odious thing to say that a man is not of good faith, and the more so as it is very dishonest not to say frankly in Philosophy that which one thinks, above all in the chapter upon Divine things; I am afraid that morality will not receive any great help, if we erect ourselves a Philosophy in bad faith; and if it is necessary that our Disciples have to be always on guard to penetrate when we speak Philosophically, and when we speak with Policy. This is why it seems to me that it will be well to leave belief to those who wish to believe thus, that we say in good faith that there is a God who has joined himself with creation, and applies himself to the preservation of all things; and provided this serves not too much for the confirmation of the truths of Christianity, I do not see that there would be much inconvenience, since Faith preserves all its merit, and Morality all its purity."

"You are right, my son," repeated he, "also have we put good order, whilst yet we take to the letter all that which we say of the necessity of a first *Moteur*; a part of the truths of Faith, very far from being confirmed, are very evidently combative, without speaking of quantities of consequences extravagant and ridiculous, which ensue from them; for think you, for example, my son, that, when a little child has made a house of cards, it is in the power of the Angels of Heaven and of all the Demons of Hell to overturn it." "This would be curious," answered I, "if they could not." "They cannot assuredly," pursued he, "and when all the Demons of Hell and all the Angels of Heaven unite together, the house of cards

will still subsist, supposing that it be true, in good faith, that God is the Author of movement and repose." "The little child," interrupted I, "is then more powerful than all the Angels and all the Demons, since he overturns with a breath his little *château* which they could not throw down." "No, my friend, you lose the stirrup, and you do not hold firmly to the supposed principle. If God is the sole Author of the thing called movement, he is its sole conservator, to Him solely belongs its continuation, since conservation is a creation and a continual production; therefore it is for God and not for the child to overturn immediately the house of cards." "Why!" said I to him, "does not the child with his breath overturn it?" "No, truly," replied he. "And what then does the breath do?" replied I. "It makes sign to God to overthrow the cards," responded he, "for God has made a *pact* with himself from all eternity, to overthrow this house of cards, at all times when this little child should make him the sign in blowing. Thus, when a cannon-ball is thrown against a wind-mill, it is not the fire nor the ball which beats down this weak mill; see philosophically how the affair proceeds. The Cannonader makes sign to God with his wand of lighted priming, or with his warming-pan, and God lights it; the lighted priming makes sign to God to fire the powder which is in the cannon, and God fires it; the lighted powder makes sign to God to send the ball, and God sends it; the thrust ball makes sign to God to push the air; the air thrust pushes the wall; and God does all this to execute the eternal covenant which he has made to be punctual to all the signs; and behold the mill is beaten down philosophically, my son."

"Is not this Philosophy, Theurgy\*, my father, or the white Magic of the ancients, which operates, say they, all such marvels by direct covenants with God, and by the signs which the Magi make to him, and which serves collectively

\* Vid. ut supra, p. 29.

instead of *culte* and enchantments?" "I do not like," said he to me, "to hear these curious things spoken of, and I believe that all the Theurgic traditions are fabulous; whatever they be, it is certain that nature or matter can also be ingeniously called a wise Magician, which by the different signs which it makes to God, according to the different situations in which it is found, obliges Him to produce the various movements which we see."

"I do not consider that very ingenious," said I to him, "it is a burlesque upon truth; for since God is the sole Author of all movement, He will be the Author also of the different situations of matter, and in consequence it will be He that will make sign to Himself of that which He would do. This manner of philosophizing is also as ridiculous as it would be if a man desired to make all his actions gesticulatory, and to make an hundred different postures to express his design to himself. Such would be a man to depict, and I should enjoy myself with a Harlequin such as that."

"My child," said Jean le Brun to me, "it would not be a great thing if this Philosophy of motion was only ridiculous; and that which it has of the good and the happy is that it is manifestly heretical on several sides. For according to that which we are saying God is immediately and solely the cause of all effects; it is not fire that burns, it is God in the presence of the fire; it is not man that moves his own hands, it is God alone; and this was long ago condemned by St. Thomas as false, as derogatory to the divine Wisdom, as overthrowing the order of the Universe, taking away from all things their proper effects, and destroying without recourse all the judgements borne by our senses. Beyond that, my son, this opinion admirably destroys liberty, since it takes away absolutely from man dominion over his own action, in which liberty consists."

"This will be," said I to him, "a great affair if we

are able also to exercise Faith touching liberty." "You will come to see," pursued he, "if the faith of a man imbued with our physic has not a great fight to make upon that point. Why is it necessary in our Physic that God is the author of the movement of my hand when I remove it?" "Because," answered I, "the movement of matter has been produced at the beginning by God himself, and it is that which gives being to a thing to conserve. Thus God having given being to the movement, it is He only to conserve it in matter." "You speak well," said he to me; "God then is the immediate and sole author of all the movements of our will, and our soul has in it no more part than matter has had in movement." "How," replied I, "will you prove this consequence?" "Very clearly," repeated he, "Aristotle, St. Thomas, St. Anselm, and generally all the Authors who have spoken in Philosophy, who are Catholics, have supposed, or demonstrated, that God has necessarily given the jog to our will, and himself produced the first movement, or the first action that is felt in it. Reasoning thus in saying, all movement (motion) can be continued only by that which began it; God only can begin the motion in our will, then God alone can continue to move it." "According to that," replied I, "you are not free; even Luther has not fought liberty so well as your Philosophy, and this will be the effect of a refined Faith, and much detached from reasoning and from appearances, when your servants would believe themselves to be perfect masters of their actions." "So far good, my son, that we may experiment hourly, when we come opinionatively an hundred times to think, and to have an hundred desires in which reason has no part, and which is preceded by no deliberation; it appears sufficiently natural to say that they are produced in us by some exterior agent which can only be God; and if we reflect that the essence of the soul is always to think, and to be in continual motion,

it is clear that that which begins the motion is that which continues it."

"The Theologians and the Catholic philosophers tell you, moreover, Monsieur, that the soul conjointly with God is the physical cause of our actions, as well of the movement of the body as of the movement of the soul." "We are not able to say that," repeated he, "without agreeing with them upon two things, and it is necessary to look at them well. Firstly, that a spirit may act upon matter; and in the second place, that the soul is physically united to the body." "Is it that your physic," interrupted I, "contests these two things? If that were so, I see well great inconveniences to Faith." "So much the better," repeated he, "and I know it well; that is why it is necessary always to sustain that all motion comes of God in conjoint action; that it belongs only to Him who has commenced it, and that it rests with Him to continue it; and that the soul, the Angels, the Devils, cannot act against a body, because that as they are spirits they can only think and know; but to think and know makes no impression, and cannot produce any motion in the things known."

"The Monks are then very ignorant," said I to him, "to imagine that an angel raised the prophet Habbakuk by the hair, to carry some dinner to Elisha." "*Crass* ignorance," responded Jean le Brun, "all the Angels together could not draw up the hair of Habbakuk, it was God himself who did that, at the presence and the prayer of the Angel. But there is still another occult reason which I will give you if you wish. Do you not see from this proposition, so reasonable, that a Spirit can only think and know, and that it is against its nature to produce any local movement; it naturally follows further, that the more pure a Spirit is, and the further it is removed from matter, the less capable is it of moving anything. Thus God being the most pure of all Spirits, it is

evident that he thinks more simply than all the others, and that he can act less than all the others upon matter; by which you see, in many ways, a Christian imbued with our Philosophy is obliged to submit his understanding to the obedience of Faith, solely in this truth that God has created the World and governs it." "I have prayed of you, Monsieur," said I, "not to touch further upon that, and to suppose always a God and His providence." "Ah! well," said he to me, "I will henceforth have this complaisance for you, somewhat difficult though it be, to suppose always in our Principles that Faith will be sufficiently victorious to carry others. We are not Christians because we believe in God, and a Philosophy in proving his existence would not diminish extremely the glory of the Christian Faith. But a Philosophy which would prove the possibility of the Incarnation, ah! it would be that which would be pernicious to Christianity and to Morals, because it would diminish the merit of Faith in a mystery which is the foundation of religion."

"Does God then inspire you," cried I, "to destroy the Incarnation by your Philosophy?" "Assuredly," repeated he, "God has given me this grace, which our principles possess. My reason demonstrates to me the impossibility of the Incarnation, and see upon what I base this. According to that which we have said, the soul is not united to the body in such sort that it can be the cause of its actions and the movements of the body. Suppose that God is its sole author, all which one can say to explain the union of soul and body is that God has established a certain affinity between the body and the soul, and that he has made a *pacte* that in all cases where there arises a certain movement of the body, that he will produce such a thought in the soul; and that each time that the soul shall think in such manner, he will produce in the body such a movement. Thus when God agitates the air, after having fired the powder in a pistol,

and which is the cause of this agitation of the air, it rises to certain little nerves which spreads to the *pineal gland*, it executes the *pacte* which he has made to produce within our soul that thought which is called hearing, or the sentiment of sound; thus when our soul thinks that the body walks, following the manner of thought which we call will, to the occasion of this thought, God moves the machine of the body, and makes the springs and the nerves to move which serve for walking, and behold, as it ought to be understood, the union of the soul with the body."

"Behold! that is strong philosophy," interrupted I, "that is to say, very contrary to religion and very injurious to God." "Extremely," renewed he, "extremely. Thanks to God, I love you well, for you penetrate at once into these things; for you see, without doubt, that God is the author and the sole and immediate cause of all filthy movements and dishonesties, which take hold of the reason and the will, and which afflict the soul of the just. God, all pure though He is, according to these principles, is the sole minister and sole executor of most infamies, and the most abominable desires; in a word, the sole physical and veritable cause of the blackest actions of mankind."

"I see well that it follows thence," answered I, "that the union of body and soul is but a moral union, and the soul is but the moral cause of the acts of the body; for a bachelor said to me the other day that the Theologians are advised that the Sacraments are but the moral cause of Grace, explaining the affair in this sort. He said that God had resolved to produce Grace in our souls, whenever the Minister of the Sacrament makes such and such exterior signs, under the requisite conditions, and then these signs are censured to be the moral causes of Grace. Thus, when a foot-soldier comes from the trenches, frightened by the noise of the cannon, the *pineal gland* makes sign to God to produce

in the soul of this foot-soldier the thought which is called fear, and this thought makes sign to God to influence the nerves, the muscles, and the tendons of this soldier in a certain manner, and makes it fly to all his limbs."

"Very good," said Jean le Brun to me, "and from that it follows clearly that the soul is but the moral cause of the actions of the body. I am angry that a certain great partisan of Descartes had not more reason than he has shewn in a certain distinction that he brought me thereon; for we may draw from his distinction a very good demonstration against a certain verity of religion. He said that cause ought to be called physical-cause, when God to a certain sign would always produce a certain movement in the ordinary course of nature; but that when a movement is produced by a singular and extraordinary institution, the sign for the occasion to which this movement is produced, ought to be termed moral cause. Please God that this was true, it would be one of the greatest merit, which it is not, to believe that the reasoning soul is spiritual; for God would be obliged, in the ordinary course of nature, to always produce the reasoning soul every time that an embryo was formed, and when matter was in such and such disposition; it is clear that the matter thus disposed would be the physical cause of the reasoning soul, and that a Spirit could not be the effect of a body; it is necessary to seek otherwise than in spirituality the essence of the soul and the reason of its immortality."

"But in what do you make to consist" said I to him, "the difference between the physical cause and the moral cause?" "I do not know either," answered he, "and I seek them not, because I do not desire to be pushed to find these. Faith will not be better, for besides the difficulties mentioned, it will have other sufficient obstacles to surmount. For example, my reason would tell me to say when it pleases it, that my soul is physically united with the Holy Spirit; for

is it not free to me to explain that Grace by a like union to that of which we speak every hour, and the good Theologians have they not explained it thus?" "Monsieur," interrupted I, "embark not in the mysteries of Grace and for cause; but remember that you have for a long time been digressing; you have, it seems to me, proposed to speak of the Incarnation." "Ah! it is true," remarked he, "but I am not so far from it as you think. That fashion by which we have explained the union of the reasoning soul with the body has carried us to it naturally. You know well yourself that the Fathers, and all the Church after St. Athanasius, or such other as it may be, who is the author of the Symbol that bears his name, explained the union of the Word with our nature as the Union of the soul with the body. *Sicut anima rationalis and caro unus est homo ita Deus and homo unus est Christus.* This union of the soul with the body was not true, but in the sense we have explained, and moreover the soul and the body having, according to us, each its particular substance; that is to say, subsisting independently the one of the other; it is clear that there was not between the *Word* and the humanity of the Lord, but a moral union, and by no means hypostatical; that the union was not in the agent, as say the Theologians, and that it necessarily returns to the Heresy of Nestorius, who did not admit such union, and notwithstanding would admit, between the Word and Humanity, a union altogether such as that which Monsieur Descartes and myself admit between the soul and the body." "It is true," said I to him, "and it is not worth the labour that you explain it more at length. I understand also that one cannot be a Cartesian without being manifestly Nestorian." "That is understood," repeated he, "if one does not take care of making therein good acts of faith against the demonstrations which reason opposes, for without that one will also be a Socinian. I have not found of the Socinian in my travels that he has not

accorded me with all his heart that moral union of the Divinity with the Humanity of Jesus Christ. But they have all sustained that the hypostatical union and the unity of the person is impossible; and they could sustain themselves by the same reasons by which I could prove to them that the soul and the body cannot be united in such manner, that they had not the same subsistence, because the subsistence was, according to us, but a mode of being; the subsistence of matter cannot be a manner of being for the spirit, nor the subsistence of the spirit a manner of being for matter. There is also the contradiction to make matter to subsist by spirit, as to make the spirit to subsist by matter; and there is also the contradiction to unite veritably and physically the soul with the body, as to make the spirit to be long and broad, and that matter thinks." "Admire you not," my child, "to where we have conducted insensibly this principle, that length, breadth, and depth are the essence of matter, and do you not hope that, with the aid of God, this Philosophy will prove a thing of great triumph to Faith, to all those to whom we shall be able to introduce it?" "Is it not contrary to other mysteries?" said I to him. "I have not yet found," said he to me, "any man more insatiable and more indefatigable than you. I believe that you would listen to Philosophy until the day of judgement, without thinking to refresh yourself, and to take some food. You do not know, doubtless, that I retire to rest regularly at half-past eight o'clock at this season, and that there does not remain to us much time for supper, after for our recreation, and then for me to withdraw myself, make my prayer and my examination."

"Ah well," said I to him, "I go to give orders to have you served, for myself, I take only a repast; I will use the time in writing, whilst you are eating."

## FIFTH DISCOURSE.

“Good evening, Monsieur Jean le Brun,” said I, in returning to my chamber after having finished writing, “have you supped well and without disturbance?” “Very well, by the grace of God,” answered he to me, “I have meditated during all my repast upon the extravagances of certain heretics that I have seen in Germany, called Ubiquitarians, who believe themselves to communicate at all times when they eat, because they imagine that the Body of Jesus Christ is in all. Does it not shew that they are fanatics to say that? For if extension and all impenetrability are the essence of matter, is it not also impossible that one body be received into another body of equal or of less extent, that it is impossible that a cubic body of nine feet is enclosed in the space of a cubic body of three feet? That which there is still more ridiculous in these Ubiquitarians is that they believe that their opinion is probable in good physics, and that it does not imply at all that a body can be in two places, or that its extent can be augmented or reduced.” “If these people,” answered I, “were but heretics in these two points, they would not be cut off from our Communion, for a Master of Arts contested with me the other day that these two opinions are problematical in the Catholic Schools; he said to me, ‘that we consider in quantity three different effects. The first is to distinguish the parts between them and their appearance: the second, to distinguish them and the situation of the one outside the others by relation or place: and the third, to exclude all other bodies from the same place.’ The first of these effects is the essence of quantity, and always necessary, the two others are not; in this way the Ubiquitarians are not ridiculous from the side of physic, in this that they assume a thing impossible; but they are on

the side of Theology, of Tradition, and the Scriptures combat them."

"*Mon Dieu*, my child," repeated Jean le Brun in a tone of compassion, "you are fallen in a reprobate sense since you have passed into this study, and will you yet wander in the imaginings of Aristotle?" "Ah! Monsieur," remarked I, "I did not believe that these were Aristotle's opinions. The Master of Arts told me on the contrary that Aristotle was sufficiently conformable to that which you have said of the impenetrability and the extension of matter. He quoted to me Saint Thomas for these three effects of quantity. He said 'that this Saint, whom he praised infinitely, had ratified the Philosophy of Aristotle, and had accommodated it to the Faith, although by an Angelic modesty he disguised often the pit-falls of this philosophy, to deprive himself of the praise that he merited to have received, and contented himself with a modest explanation of these obscurities and errors, by giving them a turn and a sense conformable to the truths of the Faith, in which he merited, without doubt, more praise than all the Founders of Sects and all the Inventors of new Opinions.' This Master of Arts gained my heart in favour of Saint Thomas; that is why, Monsieur, if you will not embroil yourself with me, I pray you not to treat as imagination the most solid thoughts of the most wise of all the Doctors, because for Saint Thomas I would embroil myself with you, with your great-great-grandfather *Jordanus*, with Descartes, and with a certain Cabal of Philosophical hypocrites, who under shade of turning Aristotle into ridicule, confound in their insolent raillery, and couple in their sacriligious scoffs the doctrine of this great man, only perhaps, because he was a great enemy of all that which calls itself invention and novelty in Theology, and in the questions of Philosophy that have some affinity with the truths of Religion.

“Content yourself, Monsieur Jean le Brun, that I abandon Aristotle to you in all points in which he accords not with Saint Thomas. As we hardly read the works of this Doctor,” responded he, “because he reasons much, and even undertakes the task of proving all the points of religion, and to shew that physic is not contrary to them, and as I guard myself well in applying myself to read him, in fear of diminishing the merit of my Faith, I am not able to judge of the esteem which you have for this Saint, and the complaints which you make have much foundation: thus I will not embroil myself with you for that, and we can continue to say, save for the respect for Saint Thomas, that he had a more easy manner to explain nature than by embarrassing himself by supporting Aristotle where they have some resemblances. Was it not shorter and easier to say that there are substances only? But as each Servant of God has his particular vocation which makes his character, and which is proper to the time in which God has caused him to shine in the Church, the character of Saint Thomas was to correct the manners of his time in rendering the truths of the Faith probable, and my character, and that of the conductors of my vocation, is to cause it to be clearly seen that the truths of the Faith are contrary to reason, and to reform the morals of Christians in reforming their manner of belief. For you ought to know, my son, that there are three kinds of Faith. The first is blind belief, without examining whether that which we believe is reasonable, before we propose to believe it. The second is when one believes, either by knowing, or in seeking the reason of that which one believes. And the third is the belief in knowing clearly that that which one believes is contrary to reason. But of these three kinds of Faith you see clearly that the third is the most glorious, and the most meritorious. Blessed be the Father of Lights, who has made the first Fathers of the Church the

Apostles of the first of these three kinds of Faith, Saint Thomas of the second, and me of the third." "That is why," said I, laughingly, "you may have, without doubt, wished that the Ubiquitarians had taken your principle of the impenetrability and the essential extension of matter, in order that they might see that that which they believe of matter is altogether contrary to reason; but you should not be very easy also that the Roman Catholics will follow this Philosophy, in order to elevate their Faith in an evident demonstration that all which they believe of this mystery is physically impossible?" "You have said it, my son," said he, embracing me, "as that which we believe in respect to the Eucharist is the essential point which divides the Heretics of our time from the Church of Rome, and as it will be always a subject of discord, as even the Calvinists are relaxed upon the other points, it is important to exalt the faith of Christians upon this mystery, to augment its merit, its glory, and its purity, and to distinguish those who have some leaning to Calvinism from those who are inviolable in their trusts." "This design is praiseworthy," said I to him. "And also very easy," replied he, "for, by the mercy of God, that which I tell you of the extension and the impenetrability of matter fully overturns the basis of the mystery of the Eucharist, and it destroys it so evidently that the most ingenious man and the most able Sophist in the world will not be able to answer it. Even where our Philosophy may not have the glory of furnishing by Faith matters of triumph in the other truths of religion, it will necessarily do it in this mystery, so that, if only for this purpose, we should labour to bring it into fashion, in order to hasten the Reformation which we meditate. For in short, it is impossible that in our Principles Reason and Faith could ever accord in the Eucharist. Suppose that extension be the essence of matter, and that it is the essence of a body of three feet occupying the space of

three feet, is it not true that it is physically impossible that this body of three feet should be (contained) in the small particle of the Host? We have much to trouble us, we can never answer that, no more than this. Impenetrability is the essence of matter, then it is impossible that one part of matter can be in the same place as another. I leave it to the greatest *Chicaneur* of the Universe to answer this."

"You are very presumptuous, Monsieur Jean le Brun," said I to him, "and I myself find that it is very easy to answer you. Is not God all-powerful, and has not the angel Gabriel said that nothing is impossible to God?" "Ah! my son," cried he, with a great peal of laughter! Behold one of those easy and politic things which the wise Monsieur Descartes has ironically inserted in his Works to amuse the simple, mock the Monks, and elude the censures of the Universities, and he has thus prudently made use of it. With a passage of Scripture we easily dazzle the eyes of these people, and with a little credit and intrigue we gain some time. But between us who know in what sense the Scriptures has spoken in regard to the omnipotence of God, how wish you to use this to destroy my two demonstrations by an answer so frivolous? Is it that you enlarge seriously on the power of God upon the essences of thing? Let us see a little what is your belief upon the power of God."

"Since it is always necessary," said I to him, "to answer positively, precisely, and sincerely, when one questions us upon our Faith; I will tell you what I believe upon this question. It is that which a certain great Jacobin said to me the other day, and what Saint Thomas believed. He told me 'this Saint explained it in this fashion. He said that the all-powerful God could do all things, but that everything could not be done by this all-powerful God.'" "What is that," cried Jean le Brun, "are you rallying me, and your Saint Thomas, does he reason contrarily?" "Attend," said

I to him, "you will assuredly be contented with him. There are some things, according to the holy Doctor, which are essentially impossible, and there are others which are only impossible by accident. A thing is essentially impossible when it cannot be arrived at without an implied contradiction, as if one were to say of it, or of some other thing, that it is and that it is not altogether. A thing is impossible by accident when in truth it does not imply the impossibility of reaching it, but which it cannot reach in the ordinary course of nature, but which it might arrive at by an extraordinary disposition of God. The first impossibility is ordinarily attached to the essence of things; and the second to the properties and the accidents. An Angel, for example, cannot eat and drink, because the nature of spirit is to think and will, and it would be a contradiction to suppose that they ate and drank. We cannot say at the same time that it is spirit, and that it is not spirit; that it is spirit because it is an Angel, and that it is not spirit, since it eats and it drinks. But you, Monsieur Jean le Brun, you eat and drink very well, by the grace of God, is it not true in the ordinary course of nature that you eat and drink?" "Assuredly," said he to me. "Very well," responded I, "such is called a thing impossible by accident, for it would be an extraordinary disposition of God to make you live without eating or drinking, whilst you were none the less a reasoning animal." "I understand," said he to me. "Saint Thomas says then," pursued I, "that God can do all things which are only impossible by accident, and this implies nothing of contradiction; but that for those things which are essentially impossible, and which cannot be reached but by a manifest contradiction, God does not do them, not from any defect of power on the part of God, but by the defect of possibility on the part of the things." "Very strong," cried Jean le Brun, "Saint Thomas is an excellent man, does he not intend to say that

God cannot change the essence of things?" "Or at least," answered I, "that the essence of things cannot be changed." "This is why," added he, "that impenetrability and extension being the essence of matter, it is impossible that the Body of the Lord has not all its extension in the Eucharist."

"That is certain in your principles," said I to him, "but here is a certain idea which may embarrass you. All the Body of Jesus Christ was in the embryo when God created it a reasoning Soul, and at that moment one may say that this was Jesus Christ. But God, who foresaw that Jesus Christ ought to leave himself in the viands of the Eucharist, could He not cause that this embryo be also little as the smallest particle of the Host? and can we not say that Jesus Christ is but left such as he was at the creation of his holy Soul?" "Ah! no, my son," cried Jean le Brun, "because that would be to treat little seriously this mystery, this would be to change entirely the fashion of the explanation, and, moreover, it is also impossible that Jesus Christ would dwell in all his grandeur and dimensions, if he was reduced to the figure that he had at the creation of his Soul, which it was impossible to do if he had not had thirty-three years when he died, and if he had not grown in size and in grandeur since his birth; God cannot hinder to pass that which has passed." "There remains then no answer," said I, "than obstinately to say, without knowing why, that God can change the essence of things." "And in that case," responded Jean le Brun, "one would be of the heretical Sect of Praxieus, who rashly extended the power of God to things past, as well as to the essence of things. It was very damaging, for he had spirit, and was a good Philosopher. He sustained that matter was eternal and independent of God. If we had lived at the same time we should have well accorded together. I had made him leave this insensate idea, that God can change the essence of things, and cause that time

passed be not past. As he intended to catch the people by their foibles, I would have made him see that he gave by this, great advantage to his antagonist, Valentinius, the father of the Valentiniens, as Praxieus was of the Praxiens; for, I should have said to him, if God can change the essences of things, He can cause that two and one are thirty, and not three; in this manner it is not impossible that the Divinity may be multiplied into thirty Æons, as Valentinius represented it, and that these thirty Æons further result in a swarm of Divinities, about which Tertullian railed against Valentinius for having had the liberality to enrich the heavens; on this, I should assuredly have brought back Praxieus to my advice."

"It would be desirable, Monsieur Jean le Brun," said I, "that you should bring back again all those who profess to explain, or to follow Descartes, for they say all with common accord, that they do not wish to put bounds to the omnipotence of God, and under shade of respect and submission they have a hundred contradictory suppositions." "Embarrass yourself not by that," responded Jean le Brun, "and remember the politic reasons that they have had to make them speak in that manner, seeing that the truths of the faith may be much combatted by that philosophy, Morality will go well, and not put ourselves in trouble of the rest. I praise God of this, that above all it combats the mystery of the Eucharist with so much right, that it is impossible that this mystery can ever accord with any of our Principles."

"You know well, for example, that it is the Faith of the Church that the accidents of the bread and wine remain after the consecration, it is the language of the Fathers, of the Popes, and of the Councils. The Council of Constance, the Pope Martin III., and the Roman Council under John XXII., the Council of Trent, that of Cologne, are all formal

upon that. Notwithstanding our Philosophy demonstrates that there is not an accident in nature, that all is substance, because all is matter, and that the different arrangements of the parts of matter make all the machines, all the colors, all the sounds, and all that which we feel, and that which we see. But do you comprehend, my son, how great the blow of this demonstration, that there are no accidents, gives to the confidence that you have that the Holy Spirit presides in the Councils directed by the Popes, and preserves the Tradition; for if there are no accidents in nature, why has the Holy Spirit decided that the accidents subsist without subject in the Eucharist? Although we cannot necessarily conclude by the Infallibility of the Church in the truths of Faith, of its Infallibility in matters of Philosophy there is hardly an appearance of that, when the Holy Spirit speaks of Philosophy by the mouth of a Council, in deciding some point of Faith, it wills, in censuring Heretics, to expose itself uselessly to the censure of the Philosophers, and make, an unworthy alliance with the darkness of crass ignorance and so unfruitfully with the salutary lights, no further than to explain the truth of an obscure mystery by the falsities of a Philosophy yet more obscure. When the Holy Spirit shall serve itself by a proposition of Philosophy to explain a mystery, if that proposition was not Faith, it would be neighbour of Faith, so tied and chained to Faith, that it would seem that we cannot detach the one from the other. The destruction of the foundation is the ruin of the edifice; and the absence of the Holy Spirit in the examination of a truth is a great conjecture that it is scarcely present at the decision of that truth. Also can we hope that our Philosophy renders very difficult the belief in the Eucharist, since we can hardily say with Monsieur Descartes, that no one yet has been able to explain to us veritably the Mystery of the Eucharist, since all the world has supposed until now that

the accidents of the bread and of the wine remain therein. The advantage that Morality and Faith will receive in this, is that beyond this demonstration against the existence of the accidents it discredits and much invalidates the truth of the Tradition of the Church, and taxes with ignorance the Popes, the Councils, the Fathers, and all the Doctors; we arrive at this, that admitting no accidents, we cannot explain this Mystery by our Principles without falling into great inconveniences, and without renewing several Heresies. Have you heard speak of the Heresy of Stercoranistes?"

"I have heard say," answered I, "that the Cardinal du Perron, and the President Manquin spoke of it, and that they proved that these foul Visionaries believed in the truth of transubstantiation, but that they said that the Body of Lord had the same sort, as the viands that we may digest."

"That is not all," answered Jean le Brun, "they explained their views by saying that the Body of Jesus Christ had in the Eucharist the form of bread, and all the sensible accidents that bread had, or to say better, all the appearances of bread. This was the end of their opinion, and the reason why they disputed thence, if the Eucharist passes away in excrement, or is insensibly transpired. Although Thomas Waldensis reports that Heribalde, Bishop of Autun, and Raban, Bishop of Mayence, were of the party of the excrements, we see in the seventh volume of *Spicilegium* that Amalarius, who, according to my authority, was the Chief of these fantastic Heretics, left it problematical whether the Body of Jesus Christ, when we have received it, returns invisibly to heaven, or remains in our body until death, or exhales by transpiration, or leaves with the excrements. It was in this way that these Heretics shewed their extravagant curiosity, which is that the Body of Jesus Christ in the Eucharist has the same form, the same accidents, and the same appearance as the bread; that which

we are also necessarily obliged to say in our Philosophy. For taking away the accidents, as we do, it is necessary to say that the exterior parts of the Body of Jesus Christ takes the same situation, and the same place, and *pirouettes* same as the exterior parts of the bread: now the constituent parts of matter, according to us, form essentially the things; it necessarily ensues that the essential form of the bread remains in the Eucharist, of such sort that besides the Error of the Stercoranistes, we yet see here the *Impanation* (being in the bread) of Luther, since the parts of matter are all disposed, as were those of the bread a little before, constituting the essential form of the bread. For the rest, it arises here, in spite that we have in it a thing *bizarre*, for the bread is transubstantiated into the Body of Jesus Christ, and the Body of Jesus Christ is transubstantiated into bread." "You are ingenious," said I to him, "to draw these great extravagances from your Principles." "That is not all, my child," pursued he, "as to the accidents and the appearances of the bread, which the Stercoranistes stated to be necessarily in the Body of the Lord, it is clear that this ought to be so in our Principles. The change which arises in certain parts of the wine, without destroying the essential form, making it sour, for example, will arise the same in the holy Chalice, if we expose it for a long time to the air, and this should be, according to us, certain parts of the Blood of Jesus Christ, which will take that character, and which will sting our tongue and our smell, as truly that will be so of wine which begins to turn sour; hence, it is necessary to conclude with the Stercoranistes, that the Body of Jesus Christ has the same accidents and the same form as the bread and the wine, and further, that it is bread and wine, since the parts are arranged the same as the parts of the bread and the wine."

“This is convincing,” said I to him, “a Cartesian is worse than a Stercoraniste villain.” “Yes, he would be without Faith,” pursued Jean le Brun, “but Faith purifies itself by these contradictions. See yet another, the Church has always said and believed that the same accidents in number, which were before, remained after the consecration; but that cannot be, since that this whiteness and this roundness are no longer due to the different arrangements of the bread, but by the diverse disposition of the exterior parts of the Body of Jesus Christ; in such manner that that which we have said hitherto is false, that for a veritable transmutation, it is necessary that there remains something of that which was there before, since there remains nothing, though this be. You find not, my child, that our Philosophy makes such great ravages.”

“I wonder,” said I to him, “why the Seigneur Descartes threw himself inconsiderately upon all the precipices, and ran his head against all the Heresies.” “It is true,” answered Jean le Brun, “that it is mavelloous that he was always able to favor so many Heretics, for he seemed still to be of the Sect of those who troubled the Church from the time of Charles the Bald. They sustained that in the Eucharist there is neither vail nor figure; that we there see, and that we there touch Jesus Christ veritably; and that between that which we there see, and that which we believe thereon, there is no difference. It is impossible in our principles, that we would not subscribe to this, that we say not that we veritably touch the Body of Jesus Christ, and that there is no other vail nor other sign but Himself. For the rest, as to the Tradition which say that in the Sacrament there is a sign, and a thing signified, this is incompatible with our Principles, if this were so, we should assent to a ridiculous thing; we should avow that the sign is not distinct from the the thing signified, and that the Body of Jesus Christ is the sign of Himself.”

"Can we not," said I to him, "elude a part of these things which you oppose to the Faith, and say that God conserves to our senses the impression that the bread and the wine have made upon us before consecration; and that thus in some manner as the Body of Jesus Christ is in the Eucharist, we may believe always that we see and taste the bread, although it is not there effectually?" "This would be, my son," answered Jean le Brun, "an extravagant answer. Firstly, besides that it would be out of place in regard to those who would not have sight of the bread before consecration, we attribute to Jesus Christ, if I dare say it, a prestige and a continual enchantment; this would be to accuse him of fascinating our eyes, without comparison, as we say is done by Demons and Sorcerers; and we should make him at once the Author of a fantastical illusion, very unworthy the gravity and the Majesty of God, and very injurious to the sincerity of His love." "I remember in effect," said I to him, "that the great Jacobin, of whom I spoke to you before, said to me yesterday, that Saint Thomas took a very great care to justify that there is no sort of illusion in the Eucharist; because that the senses could judge but of the accidents, and reach only what there is of whiteness, roundness, and taste. But all these accidents are effectively the same as they were before; thus there is no illusion, since the reason is not forced to conclude that there is aught but bread, although the accidents of the bread are recurrent; because a Divine Light, which enlightens him better than the senses, makes him see the body of Jesus Christ under the accidents that the senses show him."

"Although it be so," answered Jean le Brun, "it is certain that, if God did no other thing to preserve the appearance of the bread and the wine, than to preserve or produce this impression on our senses, there would remain in the Eucharist nothing of all that which was there before;

and if they had thus explained the Mystery in the time of Theodorus, the Eutichiens had carried from him all the advantage, and he would have had nothing to reply. These Eutichiens sustained that by the Resurrection, or by the Ascension, the human nature of Jesus Christ was entirely absorbed by the Divine Nature; in such manner that there now remained in Jesus Christ but the Divine Nature. Theodorus and Gelasius sustained for the Catholics the truth of the two Natures in Jesus Christ, also strongly maintaining that He is at the right hand of the Majesty of His Father, even as He was amongst men. The one and the other will serve to explain their beliefs, of the comparison of the Eucharist. The same, said the Heretics, that the symbols are entirely changed by the Consecration, and become another thing than that which they were. Thus the Human Nature is entirely changed by the Resurrection or by the Ascension into the Divine Nature. Theodorus and Galasius pretended also to convince the Eutichiens by the same Mystery. As the sacred signs, said they, are not changed in such manner, but that their first figure, and the same accidents remain, the same of the Human Nature, it is not entirely absorbed in the Divine Nature. You see, my child, that, whatever there is, perhaps, to say of this comparison of the Bishop of Cir, and of the Pope, it gave all the advantage to the Eutichiens; but that is only on the supposition that there veritably remains something of the sacred symbols. For if there resides in it nothing at all, as it cannot effectually dwell in our Philosophy, the Eutichiens have gained, it is necessary to quit their party; and behold, by God's mercy, a new subject of triumph for our Faith."

"But are we not able to say," answered I, "in this Philosophy, that there remains effectively something of that which was before, in this that God miraculously conserves there the appearances of the bread, that is to say, the same

modes of the bread, without conserving the bread?" "That implies a contradiction," answered Jean le Brun, "for since it has not any accidents, the modes would be of substances, which could not be distinguished from the bread, and consequently that they could not be, the bread not being. Can we imagine a greater chimera, than to say that the manner of being of a thing can exist without that the thing is; that is to say, that a man can be seated upon a chair, without the body being upon the chair."

"We say sometimes things very weak, sometimes strong as they are," replied I to him, "I have heard this answer made to a man of good sense and spirit that had undertaken to explain the philosophy of Monsieur Descartes." "It is impossible," repeated Jean le Brun, "that those who explain this Philosophy ever accord with the Faith; and every time that they undertake it, they are never able to avoid saying things very weak. He has no other way to take than that of saying that the human spirit is not capable of comprehending the bonds of certain truths of Faith with certain truths of Philosophy, and very far from us to lament this weakness of spirit, we ought to praise God for it, since that the more the truths of Philosophy are extended by the truths of the Faith, the more we deserve to be faithful."

"Notwithstanding, as this great opposition, which our philosophy has to the Faith, may perhaps render it odious, it will be well to remark that the Philosophy which sustains that the accidents cannot subsist without subject, is not the Philosophy of the Church Fathers; and for this it is necessary to collect with great care as many Passages of the Fathers, as one may be able to find, which would seem to say this; above all it will make strong support upon that which was said by the Cardinal Pierre Daille, that, if it is found that someone has said that the accidents cannot subsist without subject, he will not be found a Heretic."

“You see, Monsieur,” responded I, “that I doubt that all our Confreres, the Reformers of Morals, will not seek with great care, to furnish the passages of the Fathers, to combat the Philosophy of the accidents; but I see in this very great inconveniences. Firstly, if it is true that the Fathers of the Church had not held this Philosophy of the accidents, can we say that they held this of yours, and that neither your great-great-grandfather *Jordanus*, nor *Joannes Brunus*, nor Descartes, have had the glory of inventing it.” “It would be ridiculous to say,” responded he, “that the Fathers have made this Philosophy, nobody would believe it. It is necessary to say that the Faith of the Fathers was a blind and submissive Faith, which had no union, and depended in no wise upon any particular Philosophy that each of them could hold; that they simply proposed to believe the Mysteries, and that they in no wise made it to depend upon the explanation of questions of Philosophy.”

“All that which you say upon this, Monsieur,” replied I, “saves you not from a strange inconvenience, which it astonishes me that your friends have not felt. See you not what advantage this will be to the Calvinists, and how much their Error will be confirmed, if you teach them this, or if you copy in the Books of their Ministers, the passages of the Fathers which seem to prove that the Accidents do not subsist without subject? They would infer from that, that the manner in which the Roman Church explains the Eucharist, is not conformable to the tradition of the Fathers; since they will see that your Philosophy proves so evidently, by so many demonstrations, that that which the Roman Church believes of this Mystery is physically impossible, that they will never range themselves with it.” “So much the worse for them,” responded Jean le Brun, “if they are predestined they will believe against reason and against demonstration, and if they are reprobate, God abhors them from all eternity,

and I abhor them also: *Esau autem odio habui, iniquos odio habui.*"

"It would be better to love our brothers, and to labour for their conversion," said I to him, "and it would be again to the purpose not to scandalise the Faithful, and not to give them occasion to doubt our Faith, nor to think that we are Calvinists at heart. For in short, whatever we can say, we should never dissuade the world that we are not Calvinists at heart, so much more should be our efforts to give course to a Philosophy by which the Errors of Calvin are physically demonstrated. But I avow to you, Monsieur, that your Sect of Calvin appears to me so very injurious to the rights of Jesus Christ, and so little Christian, that not only would I rather die a thousand times than embrace it; but I would like better to die and renounce the glory of being a Coadjutor in your Apostolate, than give the least shadow of favour to that Sect."

"It is quite impossible," answered he, "to speak of it freely, but you are altogether exempt from suspicion. But, my son, do not the servants of God put themselves in penalty of the esteem of Man?" Yes, when it is a question of Faith," answered I, "and I declare to you, once for all, that absolutely I wish to risk nothing thereon." "Ah! my son," answered he, "it will be very difficult to find an expedient for that. I will ask God of it, this night; for, in short, I desire that you be one of ours, and I hope that he will reveal to me something during sleep, which begins to press upon me. That is why I wish you good night, it is near nine o'clock, I will see you in the morning. Go, Monsieur Jean le Brun, sleep well, you need it."

## SIXTH DISCOURSE.

Hardly was it day, when the venerable Jean le Brun knocked rudely at my door. The Valets cursed him; and after they had opened the door, they came to tell me in bed, that the tippling Pilgrim requested to speak to me upon an affair of importance. "Let him enter," said I, "and leave us together." "Monsieur Jean le Brun," said I to him, on seeing him enter, "have you had in the night some grievous adventure, and do you come this morning to ask my assistance?" "So much is necessary," responded he, "I hastened to come, before I had even made my Meditation, to give you some news which will rejoice you." "And what is that?" said I to him. "It is that you are Predestined; Moses has told me." "The news is gladdening," answered I, "and so much the more that you hold the good part. But still, what commerce have you with Moses?" "I never saw him before this night," answered he, "I rested in the evening with great sweetness upon the difficulties which you have made to me. I slept well, and at dawn, at the hour when God is accustomed to send Celestial Visions, Moses appeared to me, and after having acknowledged on the part of God, the long labours that I have suffered for the reformation of Morals, he said to me that God has predestined you to be the Staff of my old age, the Coadjuter of my designs, and the Inheritor of my Zeal. In saying this, Moses, who held his Pentateuch in his hand, opened it and proffered these words: 'From my part to the Coadjuter of thy labours, and to the Companion of thy Crowns, that Philosophy which marks thee, and which he appears to suspect, is to the letter the same which I had in spirit when I composed the Genesis; I never had any other. God, for the sins of the world, desired not that we should yet reveal it, but His anger has passed, and the

time of His mercy has come. They shall understand henceforth the two first Chapters of Genesis, and they shall see how the world has been made.' Then he has read, and rested himself at each verse, at that part to apply my Philosophy, so clearly and so invincibly, that I have been quite consoled. After having read the two Chapters, he closed the Book, and the noise which he made in closing it awoke me. I rose upon the instant, and made haste to tell you this great news."

"Moses," repeated I, "has he but explained Genesis to you, and has he said nothing of the Æneid of Virgil, and of the Metamorphosis of Ovid?" "No," answered he, "why do you put this question?" "Because," said I to him, "Messieurs the Alchemists will have a great advantage over you. An extraordinary man came to Discourse with me during the past year, as you have, he also had a Revelation, that his system, and all the Mysteries of the blessed Philosophical-Stone, were clearly contained in Genesis, in the Book of Job, in the Book of Wisdom, in Proverbs, in the Apocalypse, and further, in the Æneid of Virgil, and in the Metamorphosis of Ovid; and that all these Books had been composed but for its explanation. That which is so pleasant in this, is that the Man explained to me all these Books to the letter, in a manner so precise, that, although I laughed at the folly, I could not control my admiration.\* I will also admire you, Monsieur Jean le Brun, if you will apply the Genesis to your Philosophy, as neatly as this Man; insensate as he was to apply it to his." "Alas!" said he, "it is not me that you must admire, it is Moses, who has explained it to me. I avow to you, that until this morning, I had always held that Genesis was absolutely contrary to my Principles, and I was not much troubled about this, because it gave me so much more on which to exercise my Faith. For by my

\* Read the Reprint of Æsch Mezareph, recently published by Dr. W. Wynne Westcott.—*Translator.*

Principles the Sun is the Cause of the assembling of the interior parts of the Earth. It is this body which has formed the Crusts of which we have spoken; hence this Earth was not perhaps formed for a long time after the Sun. Further the Sun is the cause of the trees, flowers, fruits, etc. Notwithstanding Moses says, that Earth, Water, Heaven, the fruits, flowers, and the trees, have been created after the Sun. I have always flattered myself that these two things were a manifest contradiction, and that it was impossible to reconcile thereon Philosophy and Faith. Further, I know by physical demonstration, that light is but a thought of man. Notwithstanding the Scriptures say, that Man was not created until the sixth day, Light the first, and the Sun after the Light. Further the Scriptures speak of the animals of the air, of the earth, and of water, giving them a living soul that caused them to move. But by my Principles no beast is animated, they are purely automata and insensible machines. All this appeared to me very proper to the exercise of Faith. Praised be God, who desired not that I had so much Merit, and who has caused me to learn this day that the Philosophy of Genesis is the same as mine, and behold the way of this. I have made you understand, or I ought to have done so, that between all the diversities which the figures assume amongst the atoms, that are parts of matter, a great number, are round as little balls, others so subtle as to fill the spaces which are between these balls, and others of irregular and embarrassing figure, of all this assembled blend, is formed the great masses, such as the mass of the Earth. On the top of this mass there is supposed to rest a quantity of needle-like particles, very pliable, and a quantity of others resembling those of which air is composed; all of which ought necessarily to be covered around with an infinite number of little balls, and others infinite in number and in subtlety to fill the intervals between

the balls. Behold very clearly, and very intelligently, this thing, all as Moses records it in Genesis." "Ah, Monsieur," cried I, "see a Bible upon that table. Shew me that if you please." "Behold it," said he to me, on opening it. "*In the beginning God created the Heaven and the Earth; but the Earth was useless and barren, and darkness was upon the face of the deep, and the Spirit of God was borne upon the waters.*" Behold the affair: can one speak more clearly, and with a greater detail?" "That is very clear," cried I again, "and I wonder that Saint Augustine, who had so much spirit, and that Plato, who was so speculative, and who had read the Books of Moses, had not perceived this system, which is explained so clearly, so far it is true that this Spirit, which was borne upon the waters, blew where it would." "You speak according to the moral sense," said he to me, "for you see that it is evident, according to the literal sense, that this Spirit which was borne upon the waters, was the subtle matter which was agitated under these atoms in needle form." "Behold this is very philosophic, very natural, and very Catholic," responded I. "I pray you to apply to your system all the words of the Passage which you have just cited." "How," said he to me, "is it that you do not find this passage very formal and very clear?" "Pardon me," replied I, "but I would wish to see whether I understand it altogether as you do." "That is so, without doubt," said he, "since you are predestined to the reform of Morals with me: it is hardly necessary that I lose the time to explain this to you at length. Let us remark notwithstanding that our Philosophy alone has the privilege of being able to explain this great difficulty, which for so many centuries has tortured the spirits of everyone, as to how it was necessary to understand that which Moses has said, that Light was created before the Sun; as for that it was only necessary to suppose that God created forthwith all there is in the

Heavens, the Earth, and the Waters, and the Bodies so subtle, as to be called Spirits of the Lord, to be carried here and there : and that in fine all the works of the six days has been but to regulate all the movements of the bodies already created; in such sort that the first day which commences with the formation of light, is to say manifestly that there were formed different *tourbillons* of the little balls of which we have spoken, and that these little balls turn round a common centre, the subtle matter which filled the interstices of these balls collecting itself necessarily at the centre; in this way the globules were pressed by the surrounding matter; these globules thus pushed made the light, in all places where was found a sufficient mass of subtle matter, resembling that which filled the interstices of the little balls; but as there could not yet be collected in the centre a great quantity of subtle matter, its effect upon the little balls could not be carried very far, and as these were impeded, that is why darkness remained, and is precisely and literally that which is written, that *God divided the light from the darkness*: that is to say, that the little balls were agitated in certain places, and in a certain sense, which agitated certain subtle matter in a certain other place, in which, if there had been a man, this man had formed the thought which is called light, and had said, *it is day*; and if he had been in another place where the subtle matter had not been thus agitated, he would have said, *it is night*; and see that which is written, *God divided the light from the darkness*. What do you say of this?"

"This explanation is solid and new," answered I. "The second day is it as wisely and also as curiously explained?"

"All the same," answered he, "it is, if you will, still better. See how it is in the Scriptures: God said: 'let the Firmament be made in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters; and He divided the waters that were under the Firmament, from those which were above the

Firmament, and He called the Firmament Heaven.”

“The Firmament, my son, as Moses said to me this morning, is no other thing than the perfect arrangement of that infinity of *tourbillons* which necessarily fills the immense space which matter occupies. All these *tourbillons* being perfectly arranged, the masses which are found in this *tourbillon* where we are, were separated by the subtle matter of the whirling which spread itself amongst them, and which divided them lengthwise from the centre, accordingly as they were found more or less weighty or solid. This matter of the *tourbillon* is no other thing than the matter of the Firmament. These great masses composed of particles embraced and covered with long needles, pliable and delicate, are no other thing than the earths covered with water. Therefore it is true to say, that the Firmament has divided the waters from the waters, since that it has divided the Earths, or the Planets, for it is all the same. You learn at once of what nature were the cataracts which opened themselves at the time of the Deluge. It was some one of these Masses, of these Earths, or of these Planets, which the Sea poured upon our Earth.”

“The second day which you explain to me,” said I to him, “enables us to comprehend that there may be men also in the other Earths, Masses, or Planets.” “Believe in this as you wish,” continued he, “it is not now a question of that. God on the third day assembled the waters which covered all the round earth, in order that a part of the earth might dwell uncovered, enabling it to produce plants and trees.” “That is then the day,” Monsieur, said I to him, “in which was made the frightful crash, of which we spoke yesterday after dinner, in the history of the adventures (evolution) of the Earth.” “Exactly,” continued he; “for if the earth had remained round, the waters could not have assembled in one place, and had necessarily covered always the whole surface. It is

necessary then to say that the superior crust opened out on this day, heaping itself up in irregular masses, one upon another, forming mountains and hills; behold the work of the third day. For the fourth day, God created the two great Lights, that is to say that He caused to flow so much subtle matter towards the centre of this *tourbillon* where we are, by this effort, which made the little balls to spread themselves from the centre, the said little balls were pushed even to the circumference of the *tourbillon*, it is these which form the rays which we behold so brilliantly in this subtle matter, or these fillings, or scrapings, which are collected in the centre of that *tourbillon* which we call the Sun. It is not necessary to say now, if this is not that subtle matter assembled in the centre, which has sufficient force to push the little balls of the adjacent *tourbillons*, in order to make them set out in action, and we easily comprehend that it is this which constitutes the light of the Moon and the Stars, this is why, without stay, I pass to the fifth and sixth days, which are of the greatest consequence in our Philosophy. It is written that God said on those days: '*That the waters produced all reptiles having a living soul*, and all flying creatures; and that the Earth produced living soul according to their species, reptiles and beasts.' I have believed even unto now, that our opinion upon these automata or machines, apparently living, which we call animals, was contrary to the Scriptures; but Moses has remarked to me this morning that his Genesis insinuates to us sufficiently that beasts have no soul. For although the Vulgate has it, '*That the Earth produced living soul*,' the true Hebrew bears, '*That the Earth produced an individual*.' Now an individual signifies no other thing, but a certain Machine disposed and organised in such fashion, that if it was broken it would no longer have the same movement, and would be no longer the same. And to shew that this is so, this machine, which the Vulgate calls

living soul, is produced by the earth and the water; since it is said, '*That the Earth produced living soul.*' Now all that which a body produces can be but a body. Then this living soul, or this individual, is but one body. In this way, that which makes the beasts to live and move, is but a certain disposition of the parts of matter, as that which causes a Clock to go, is but a certain disposition of the wheels. From this principle necessarily follows this other, that Man is moved also by the same springs, and by a disposition of matter and the organs, of a like kind to those of the beasts. Whence comes it that the Scriptures, after having said that the individual was produced by the Earth, says also that man was formed of the mud. Of such sort, it is constant that it is not a soul which made the beasts to move. And further, it is certain that it is not a soul which made the man to move; the soul but causes thought. I am well content of Moses, my son, in that which he has explained to me this morning of his Pentateuch, and with which he has opened my eyes. I now see clear as the day, and I believe it leaves nothing to which to object."

"I have upon this," responded I, "two or three little scruples. Give me that Bible. Why does God forbid us to eat the blood of beasts? And why," added he, "is it forbidden, but because the blood holds the place of soul with them; and more strongly because the soul of all flesh is in the blood? God repeated with terrible menaces this reason, even to three times in six verses in the seventeenth Chapter of Leviticus. It seems that this weakens extremely the reflexion, that the Hebrew, in the first Chapter of Genesis, in place of the words *living soul*, uses the word *individual*; for beyond that we read *soul* and not *individual* in Leviticus; it would appear that the reason which God gave for this dreadful menace, which He made to those who should eat of the blood, that there was something in the blood which

merited some sort of respect above the rest, and which was more dear to God, as coming more immediately from His hand than the rest of the Machine. In this way it seems that the earth and the water had the virtue of producing the bodies of beasts, after the command which God had given, and that God had reserved to Himself the glory of drawing by His power, from that matter, a soul which he caused to live, move, grow, and multiply its species. This is that which Moses said so formally in the first Chapter; behold his words, '*God said also that the waters should bring forth reptiles with living soul and birds upon the earth, under the Firmament of Heaven, and God created great whales, and all living soul and movable, that the waters had already produced in their species.*' If these waters had already produced the fish in their species, what necessity for God to create them again, or moreover how would He produce them? Does not this evidently shew that there was formed from the water, in virtue of the command which God had given, the bodies of all species of fishes which are in the Sea; and after God drew from the power of the matter thus disposed, the souls of different species, following the exigence of this disposition, to inform these bodies, make them live, grow, and multiply in their species? And this soul veritably lives, and has a material and sensitive understanding. According to the Scripture, '*The Ox knew its Master, and the Ass the Manger of its Lord.*'"

"I am well assured, my son," said Jean le Brun, "that all that which you have said, is not reasonable because it is the jargon of Aristotle: *Sensitive Knowledge draws from the power of Matter!* What villanous terms are these? Notwithstanding there is something in that reflection which you have made upon the Scriptures, upon the menace of God, and the reason that he has given for it, and upon that production of the beasts, after the water and the earth had

produced them. In it there is something embarrassing, it is necessary to meditate a little thereupon." "I conjure you, Monsieur," rejoined I, "to demand of Moses the first time that he comest to you." "Aymarry," said he. "I am notwithstanding troubled that these difficulties are come upon me unlooked for in the Scriptures; for, thanked be God, on the side of Physics there is nothing to object against our automatas. In any case, it will be necessary to say, as to these contrarities of the Scriptures, that which we have said as to all the other contrarities of Faith: the merit of believing them will be greater, and the triumph of Faith more diversified." "All the better," said I to him, "you think to explain all that which makes the animals, without attributing to them any sort of soul, or of understanding? You do not believe that they see, that they hear, that they have memory, pleasure, grief, hunger, thirst, etc?"

"Nothing of all that," responded he, "it is only necessary to well comprehend four or five things upon which all this doctrine rests, and we see clear as the day that they are pure Machines, without sentiment, and without knowledge. Firstly, it is necessary to know all the laws of movement, that, Monsieur Descartes has very well explained. In the second place, to be perfectly instructed of the nature of philosophy upon light. Thirdly it is necessary to know well that the retina of the eye is composed in such manner, that all the filaments of the optic nerve, terminate in a certain manner. In the fourth place, to be able to explain well the movement of the members, it is absolutely necessary to comprehend that the body has some muscles, and certain valves very commodious for these movements. Fifthly, that which is the most important, to be able to comprehend the operations and the passions of animals; to know very precisely how all the fibres and all the nerves abut upon the pineal gland. Without all that, it will be impossible to explain the

machine of the Beasts, or the machine of Man; but with these, all is demonstrated mechanically."

"But all these five things, are they really true?" said I to him. "It is very necessary that they should be," answered he, "Monsieur Descartes has founded thereon all this Philosophy." "It has then some appearance," responded I, "that he was well assured of them. Ah well, with those can you explain to us all which the beasts do?" "All," said he. "Even to that surprising action," continued I, "of the Monkey of a King of Poland?" "What did it do?" asked he. "A thing of strong good sense," pursued I; "It played all day at Chess with the King." "At Chess!" cried Jean le Brun. "That game of Chess is a play of reasoning power; it is necessary even to have some spirit to play it; there are thousands of people who are incapable of it. This monkey did for all that," answered I; "it played chess, and it played the game very well. One day after having for a long time disputed a move, it did so well that it gave Check and Mate. The King was so piqued that he gave the monkey a great blow." "It was wrong," cried Jean le Brun; "but is not this but an apologue, and one of these fables after the manner of which you contest with me?" "It is a true story," said I to him. "But attend a little: you are not done with this *bon marché*. Some days after the King wished to play again with his monkey: it placed itself gravely on its chair, and began its moves judiciously. After having strongly disputed for a long time, it took in its left hand the bonnet of the King, which application to the game had caused him to place upon the table; it placed it on its head and with its right hand pushed the pieces to Check and Mate, and ran away. What say you of this machine, Monsieur Jean le Brun?" "It is admirable," answered he, very pensively. "But this story, is it really true?" "It is at least very celebrated," answered I; "and I believe that you would have much trouble to make

the Poles understand, that this monkey which could remember a blow that the King had given it, and that gave Check and Mate, and considered for a long time a move of Chess, was without the strength of understanding."

"It is very necessary for all that to say thus," responded Jean le Brun, "for if we accord thought to beasts, and the movements of subtle matter can produce those sentiments which we call thought, we become inquired upon the reasoning soul, and upon that which the souls of animals may become after death. That is why a great man of England, called *Morus* (Sir Thomas Moor), has believed that Monsieur Descartes had good aim in saying that beasts have no souls, in not being obliged to answer certain importunate spirits, with which the century abounds, who conjoin religion with all, and who put faith in all the disputes; idle people and unworthy philosophers, who would not fail to demand what becomes of the souls of beasts; wherefore they are not immortal and spiritual since they think; or why the soul of Man is immortal because it thinks. This is why we have always wise recourse to a certain general answer, which disembarasses us of all those little incommodious historiettes,\* which are made us in these days, upon apes which have had children from women who were exposed in the Islands, of the amorous elephants, of the cunning of the fox, the prudence of the ant, and the bees, and of all those other machines, which do not seem to be deprived of understanding. This is, that God is the immediate principle of all the movements in matter. Thus it was God that immediately moved the hand of the monkey of the King of Poland, and it was God who gave Check and Mate."

"Monsieur Jean le Brun, I lose all patience; and all the respect which I have for your grey hairs, cannot hinder me from saying that they cover one of the most empty

\* See page 105, part first, Ed. of 1886.—*Translator.*

brains which can be in the world. The design which you have of reforming the Church, is the most chimerical idea which any man, of so little virtue as you, can put in his head, and your detestable Philosophy is the most detestable way, and the most extravagant road, and the most remote, that one can take for such a design as that. I call your fantastic Philosophy detestable. But in short, perhaps one ought not to detest a chimera, which combats and which destroys itself, as well as that which is the most holy in Religion, and which covers with a sacrilege of obscurity all the truths of Christianity! I excuse those who embrace it for the natural love of novelty, without perceiving the wrong which it does to Religion, or without being persuaded that the objections which we can draw are insurmountable. But you, in understanding the strength and the danger, who avows it, who says it, who by I know not what fantastic imaginings, have set yourself up as a Reformer, you give course to these novelties so pernicious, and of which you declare yourself to be the Protector. I should desire for you the frightful maledictions that an irritated God has towards those who call evil good, if I had not some compassion for certain traits of zeal which I see in you; if at the same time this is not an hypocritical appearance; I see so much in you of foolish vanity, of complaisance for yourself, of intemperance, of care of your person, of contempt for the talents of others, and, above all that, a certain spirit of singularity worse than all these things, the enemy of good sense, source of Heresy, and the aversion of honest men. Go, old dreamer; God confound you, or convert you." A Valet who heard my raised voice, entered. Jean le Brun paled, reddened, knit his brows, and departed.

## LAST DISCOURSE.

I thought that I was delivered from Jean le Brun, but the day after a young servant came to give me a note from him conceived in these terms: "*This Creature of God will say to you, Monsieur, that I am very ill; and that there has come to me a great affliction, which will bring me to the tomb. It is important for the Glory of God, that I see you before I die.*" This letter surprised me. I demanded from the Creature of God where her Master lodged, and having learned that it was near the *Petites-Maisons*, I promised to go there within an hour, and in effect I went there. "Come my son," cried he, "come, console a man who esteems you sufficiently to pardon you the little transport of anger which a little too much zeal gave you yesterday, come, console me for the most dreadful disgrace which could arrive to a man of my age, of my knowledge, and of my zeal. Alas! all my labours are vain; I have lost my time and my cares, I shall not reform Morality. The Philosophy of *Jordanus Brunus* and of Monsieur Descartes, will not have course amongst reasonable people; no wise man will hear it spoken of. O God! for which of my sins have I merited this great affliction? Is it necessary that a Philosophy so beautiful be destroyed without resource, and that all my designs of reformation shall be abortive in this place."

"This is a great loss, Monsieur," said I to him, "and it will be a still greater loss if you augment your fever, in speaking with the agitation that you do." "I have not got the fever," he answered me, "my evil is a dreadful tribulation of mind that the Castillians call *passion d'animo*; I shall be trussed in twenty-four hours, for I cannot carry myself further with this illness." "But," interrupted I, "you may perhaps find the means of consoling yourself." "It is impossible," returned he, "for behold the subject of my affliction."

"It happened yesterday that the unexpected anger which you shewed, put me in such a great passion, that I was obliged to go to my couch. The Creature of God that you see was advised that I ought to be let blood. I believed it, and she went to fetch a Chirurgien known to her." "O God! hast Thou willed to humiliate *Joannes Brunus*, unto the point of causing him to be confounded by a Surgeon?" "Is it because you have entered upon a dispute with him?" interrupted I. "No," said he, "behold how the thing happened. He asked me at once what ailed me, to judge if I ought to be bled, and what amount of blood he should draw. I told him freely that all my illness was a great anger that I had against you, upon that which took place in respect to the reasons which I had given to convince you that beasts have no souls; you had treated me as a dreamer, and I know not what other qualities, without having any regard to the express revelations that I had from Moses."

"'How, Monsieur,' cried the Surgeon, 'beasts have no souls, and Moses has revealed it to you! I will not let you blood, if it please you. We have this respect for people with a revelation that we never draw it. And as to the base of the thing, with the reverence that I owe to Moses, who has appeared to you, the beasts are assuredly animate, and while we see this in continual solution, we would dress their wounds same as Men.'

"You do not understand this, Monsieur Surgeon," said I to him, "although, as a Surgeon, you ought to understand it better than any other Philosophy. For if you knew your anatomy well, you would be aware that all the fibres and all the nerves go direct to the pineal gland, and by this great principle you would explain easily all the passions and the operations of animals, without having to resort to the imaginary soul with which you endow them. Further you would have remarked in the joints, certain muscles and

certain valves, by the aid of which the movements of the members of the body are made. In the third place, Monsieur Surgeon, you would know that the retina is formed in such way that all the filaments of the optic nerve terminate in a certain manner, and from all these things we should be able to draw the explanation of all the movements of beasts, and even of men; for to the ready thought, there is no difference between the man and the beast, as to the machine.

“‘Moses,’ said the Surgeon, with an insolent smile, ‘Moses, has he revealed to you all these fine principles?’ ‘No,” said I to him, “but the great Descartes, who was a universal genius, and who was ignorant of nothing, has said it, has proved it, and has placed them for a foundation.” ‘Add,’ replied the Surgeon, ‘that he has imagined them. I have made forty-two dissections in my life, and I answer you from my head that these three principles are absolutely false.’ ‘You are an ignoramus, Monsieur Surgeon,” said I to him, “if these three principles were false, our Philosophy would also be so, and this would be to blame Monsieur Descartes who has acquired so much reputation.” ‘I sustain positively,’ said he, ‘and peaceably, because you are sick, that there are neither fibres, nor nerves, which abut upon the pineal gland. Secondly, as to the muscles and the reciprocal valves, by which you explain the movements of the limbs, I sustain that there has never been either in man or in beasts the least little appearance of these valves: and as to the retina, this pretended conjunction with the filaments of the optic nerve is the greatest chimera that ever was; for the retina is constantly a uniform skin which has no conjunction with the optic nerve, and all that I say you can see to-morrow, if you wish, as I am going to make a Dissection at Saint Côme. As to your Monsieur Descartes, I have been his Surgeon, and have let blood and attended him during a fever that he had before he was obliged to leave the Kingdom. He was a man

of spirit, and of a very wise appearance, but upon my word he had much emptiness in his brain pan. He would satisfy me one day that he desired to rest Philosophy upon seven mechanical laws, which he claimed to have found, and by which he pretended to explain everything that arises in nature. I prayed him to explain to me these laws. He did so: and without vanity, I made him see with his own eyes that they were not altogether true; and he was never able to satisfy me upon that which I opposed in them. Another day he told me, with much ostentation, that no one up to him had known what light is. And having demanded of him if he knew it himself; for light, all clear as it is, is the most obscure thing in the world to understand. He answered me arrogantly, that if one could convince him of falsity upon his manner of philosophising upon light, he was ready to avow that all his new system was false, and that he knew nothing of Philosophy; but beyond his vision upon the retina, I shewed him in his pretended demonstrations four or five insurmountable errors. That is why, my good Monsieur, if you are infatuated with this Philosophy, and if that is your malady, cure it if you are wise; for as to the blood, I will not let you any; I go to draw that of an Abbé who is not sick of your malady. Good day.'

"Behold the cause of my affliction, my son," continued Jean le Brun, "what will become of us? It is necessary that each should believe in his Art. If what this man says is true, our Philosophy cannot subsist, and the system of Descartes is chimerical. I would wish then, my son, that you would go to Saint Côme after dinner to see if that which the Surgeon has said is true. O God! can it be possible that so great a genius as Descartes had supported altogether a system upon things which the Brotherhood of Surgeons can convince us is false. If that is so, it is not possible to speak further, as neither me nor my companions

can ever reform Morals by this Philosophy. Alas! it is necessary to let that of Aristotle flourish. As for me, rather than I should see it triumph, I wish to die; my resolution is taken upon it."

"I would counsel you," said I to him, "Monsieur, to reconcile yourself with Aristotle before you die. Otherwise, you will have this man in head in the other world, which will desolate you; and his irritated shade will be always after yours, making a hundred importunate reproaches." "You suppose then that I shall be damned," responded he. "You cause me to remember a certain Father le Brun, my cousin and my compatriot, who always told me that, which I took in aversion, and this caused me to leave Ireland, for there it would have made me suspected of the Heresy of Calvin." "Although it be so," responded I, "the thing is not impossible morally. Take the thing at its worst, I assure you that if the shade of Aristotle and that of yours encounter each other in the other world, you will pass a bad time." "What can he say to me so grievous?" enquired Jean le Brun.

"Aristotle will say that you have robbed him of all that you have taught that is good and reasonable, and that all that which you have invented is false and chimerical, as the Surgeon told you yesterday. He will support to you that his Problems contain the details of your Philosophy upon colors, upon light, upon sounds, upon harmony, upon plants, upon animals. He will treat you as an impostor, you and one of your Colleagues of good faith, upon that which you have imposed upon him, that he holds that the air is not ponderable, and that you have shewn great vanity by giving a proof as very new of the weight of this element by the test of a balloon. Notwithstanding that Aristotle, in his fourth Book of *Heaven*, Chapter the fourteenth, expressly proves that the air is ponderable by this same experiment of a balloon." "For all that, Pascal," replied Jean le Brun, "who was the

greatest spirit of the century, has pretended to deserve much praise in proving contrary to Aristotle that the air has weight by this demonstration of the balloon." "He was a fine spirit, I avow," said I to him, "but you can see from this the good faith of this personage thereon, and whether we can rely blindly upon his quotations. The people who read him do not always give his Memoires faithfully. Hence, when I read his Works, I only take care as to the form, which indicates a great depth of spirit and invention, and I challenge for myself the subject. I imagine that Aristotle would welcome him well in the other world."

"Apparently," said he, "this raillery of duty has been a little overdone." "Let it not displease you, Monsieur," replied I, "you will be very much embarrassed by him; for you have taken the pains, you and your great-great-grandfather and Descartes, to pillage this Aristotle, and to appropriate to yourselves that which there is supportable in your Philosophy, with the reasons which you have to prove it. In short, you attribute to him opinions contrary to his views, you disclaim against him, and you erect yourselves the Founders of a Sect. This opinion, for example, that it is only man which thinks, and that the beasts do not think, and are in a manner, so to say, automata, is all taken from Aristotle, who proposed it, agitated it, and who in short seems to have decided it, all as you, by the same reasons that you allege for it; it is not very wonderful that you have had the spirit to copy him, although you have not comprehended his thought, and the difference that he has between dependant thought and in virtue of a universal proposition which one can understand, which belongs to man, and again to think or understand a singular thing through interposition only of the senses, which is the kind of understanding beasts have.

"Is it not again Aristotle who has given you the idea of your subtle matter? The Æther of Aristotle, is it not

matter, the most subtle, and the most agitated, which mixes itself with the air and the water, as the air mingles itself with water and the earth? The Shade of Aristotle will lead you on this a bad time, and will tell you that it is by that (æther) he has explained the diaphanus (transparent)."

"Although he may say this," repeated Jean le Brun, "he will not be able to dispute us, the glory of having thought a hundred things which he never thought. That was assuredly a short mind which did not know what fire and flame was. I will teach him as to the cause of smells, tastes, the difference of sounds, as grave and acute, in a word, all the details of natural things, of which he knew nothing."

"I know not your opinion upon all these things," said I to him, "and it may perhaps be that in some of these you will have some advantage over Aristotle. For it seems to me that there are some frivolous things in the researches which he has made, and he determines certain things that it is impossible to know with truth. For example, that flame is no other thing than little particles in very rapid movement, of which one continually succeeds the other. That fire is composed of little bodies of a pyramidal figure, of which the angles are very trenchant, which prick us upon entering our pores, and which melts metals when it enters into them. That the difference of sound between grave and acute arises from the quickness or slowness of the vibrations of air. That taste arises when the saliva dissolves certain bodies, of certain figures, which we call salts, and which are found in the viands. And that odours are also caused by certain very delicate corpuscles (atoms) which leave the body, spread in the air, and which penetrate the nose."

"Has Aristotle said all these things," interrupted Jean le Brun. "Yes," said I to him. "But," answered he, "This is precisely our Philosophy, I have then been very wrong in not reading Aristotle in my youth. Descartes is the

cause of it, he had read him exactly. I found him one day in the third Book of the *Soul*: he said to me that Aristotle was of his opinion upon the manner in which sensation arises: that he was rejoiced that this Philosopher had once in his life known the truth, and that he himself perceived that all sensation arose by touch. As I saw that there was but this good place in Aristotle I resolved not to lose time in reading him."

"A fine design," repeated I, "Monsieur Jean le Brun! But do you believe that Descartes acted in good faith in this matter. It pleased him better to attribute this opinion to Aristotle than to Democritus whose it is, from desire that we might not ourselves perceive the conformity of his doctrine with that of Democritus." "Is that which you say quite true," asked Jean le Brun? "You have but to verify it for yourself," responded I.

"But if that was so," continued he, "and that, with others, Descartes found the greater part of his opinions in Aristotle, he would be ungrateful, and a man of very bad faith, to disclaim incessantly against his master, and I have been all my life the dupe of this. For upon the word of Descartes, I untied myself from Aristotle. Notwithstanding I see well that we cannot proceed in good faith with our reformation. I am a great Sinner but God has never abandoned me to imposture, and to bad faith. I have not learned great craft as you see, and I have always regarded duplicity of heart, as a character to be reprobated." "It is, at least," said I to him, "the certain character of a dishonest man, such company I have avoided all my life, and would never eat with them in friendship. I tell you the truth, the little chagrin that I had yesterday against you, came of that which seemed to me a thing of bad faith, to bluster as you did against Aristotle, and make a thousand imprecations against his *Enthymemes* and his *Syllogisms*, notwithstanding I see well that you have never read him."

"It is true," answered he, "but Descartes had told me so much evil of him, and further, a certain Father le Brun, of whom I have spoken to you, had caused me so much disquiet with his Aristotle, and had cited him to me so much in the disputations which we had together, and had so battered my ears with him, that he gave me a mortal aversion to him. In this way that, when I heard the name of Aristotle, it appeared to me as if I saw this Father le Brun at my heels, who chased me from Ireland, and who made me pass for a Calvinist."

"I much deceive myself, Monsieur Jean le Brun," said I to him, "if all this raising of the buckler, which you have made for the Reformation of the Church of God, and all the great care which you have taken to give value to the Philosophy of Descartes, is not precisely this, because Father le Brun, your enemy, pretended to make the profession of following Aristotle.

"To check this Reverend Father in all, and by all, you have undertaken to give course to a Philosophy that was opposed to his; and as nothing is capable of hindering certain people in their revenge, even in things at the same time the most indifferent, when they pretend to be offended, you have abandoned in your vengeance upon this Father le Brun, interests the most venerable and the most sacred—God and His existence, the holy Trinity, the Hypostatic Union, the adorable Eucharist, the Spirituality and Immortality of the Soul of Man, Divine Providence, and all that there is inviolable in Faith, and constant in Religion. You like better to introduce in the world the Heresies of Hermogenus, of Praxeus, of Valentinus, of Manes, of Nestorius, of Euticheus, of the dirty Stercoranistes, of Luther, of Socinius, and of Calvin; in one word to open all the gates of Hell against the Church, rather than be the friend of Father le Brun.

“That the hatred of a Devotee is ingenious, and that the imprudence of your cousin the Father le Brun, has been great, to cause the withdrawal of a Servant of God of your species, and to commit himself with a man who has such doubtful revelations! What machinations, and what a diabolic tour are you making to seek the which to contradict this good Father? Why, overturn all Religion, and all our Mysteries, under shade of a fantastic revelation; all this because it was necessary that you should follow a Physic which was different from that of the Father le Brun, in order that it be not said in the world that one is not contrary to the other in all things! I know not, Reformer, what is your soul and your conscience: but in truth it seems to me that it is more than Devilish to have been able to imagine a vengeance of this nature.”

“The human heart,” answered Jean le Brun, with a great sigh: “The human heart is impenetrable, and its malice is an abyss which is bottomless; who is able to know it? Alas! it may well be that my animosity against Father le Brun, may have inspired me with that aversion for Aristotle; and with the idea to exalt the Faith, and augment its merit, in establishing a Philosophy equally opposed to Aristotle and the Faith, and as you have remarked to me more opposed to the Faith than to Aristotle. I see clearly that God was not the author of my design, and that this Reformation comes not from Him. As to myself I have always walked in simplicity: but from that which I see my Coadjutors are not the same. Notwithstanding it is certain that God never enters into double counsels, and that He never favours fraud and artifice.” “I am sorry for you, Monsieur Jean le Brun,” said I to him. “You have whitened in enmity, and in the spirit of vengeance and of discord; it is always a great evil, and a deplorable state. If you have not been so dishonest a man, as to proceed in bad faith, you have been

a sufficiently bad Christian to live without charity, and sufficiently weak and sufficiently vain to put it into your head that God had extraordinarily raised you up to reform the morals of the Church, of which you destroy the doctrine, and overturn the belief. Allow me then to exhort you to bow your white head to penitence; and since God was not the author of your visions, implore his mercy, renounce your chimerical Reformation, quit this atheistic Physic, become the new Creature of God, be not so distrait to play a part; in one word be irreproachable in your Faith and Morals, and you will return to grace with the Father le Brun; he will re-establish you with honour in Ireland, and you will pass for a good Catholic, Apostolic, and Roman."

He appeared touched by my remonstrance, and I believed that he would live, he had not been altogether so foolish; but the malady of *passion d'animo*, being always mortal, when I returned to see him the following day, I found the Creature of God altogether bathed in tears, who told me that she had closed his eyes. I am very sad about it, for apparently he is damned.

END.



## ERRATA.

- Page 23, *for* "Calvanist," *read* "Calvinist," also at pp. 32 and 33.
- „ 32. Note.—"See page 38" is a mistake for page 47 of the edition of 1886. After the publication of the Third Part of the 1715 Edition of the "Comte de Gabalis," the publisher proposes to give to the Press a New Edition of the First Part which has been revised for that purpose on the edition of 1715.
- „ 80 (line 8), *for* "created after the Sun," *read* "created before the Sun."
- „ 89, *for* "Moor," *read* "More;" but Sir Thomas is a hasty slip of the Translator. The person *Morus* is Henry More the Platonist, who in 1640 published "Psychozoia;" in 1647 "Philosophical Poems." He was also the author of "Conjectura Cabalistica;" "The Mystery of Iniquity;" "A Key to the Revelations;" "Enchiridion Metaphysicum;" "Enchiridion Ethicum;" "An Apology for Des Cartes;" and "The Immortality of the Soul."

TRANSLATOR.

## COMTE DE GABALIS.

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