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MAXIMS



*Le Duc de
La Rochefoucauld*

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EDITED BY EDMUND R. BROWN

MAXIMS
of
Le Duc de La Rochefoucauld

This One



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Le Duc de La Rochefoucauld

MAXIMS
of
Le Duc de La Rochefoucauld

Translated by
John Heard



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To A. W. W.

***Who originally suggested and throughout
encouraged this translation, it is
affectionately dedicated***

THE MAN AND HIS OWN IMAGE

(*Fables de La Fontaine*, I Lib. XL.)

*An egotist, unrivalled, loved himself alone
And deemed himself by far the fairest of mankind,
Crying aloud that from each mirror falsehood shone,
And in his depth of folly lived content and blind;
But kindly Fate, to cure him of this sore disease,
Contrived that everywhere he sees
Those silent counsellors of ladies old and young,—
Mirrors, at home, abroad, and in each tradesman's booth,
The mirrors of fair gilded youth,
The mirrors from slim girdles hung.
What does Narcissus then? He moves his habitation
To lands the most remote in his imagination,
Fearing to face again the mirrors' searching stare,
Yet even there a brook, translucent as the air,
Flowed smoothly through these distant parts.
He sees himself, is vexed, mistrusts his eyes, and starts,
Thinking himself the victim of a shadowy dream;
He seeks by every means to flee the treacherous flow,
And yet . . . how very fair the stream,
How very loath he is to go!*

*Apparent is, methinks, my aim;
I sing to all; this greatest of all faults
Dwells variously in each, yet constantly the same.
Our heart's the egotist whom love of self exalts;
The mirrors are the faults our neighbors all display,—
Mirrors that like true portraits our weaknesses disclose;
The brook is—as I scarce need say—
The "Book of Maxims" that the reader knows.*

SKETCH OF THE
DUC DE LA ROCHEFOUCAULD
BY HIMSELF

I AM of medium stature ; I am well proportioned and my gestures are easy. My coloring is dark but harmonious. My forehead is high and rather broad ; my eyes black, small and deep set ; my eyebrows are dark and bushy, but well shaped. I am at a loss what to say of the shape of my nose, for it is neither hooked nor aquiline, heavy nor yet, to my knowledge, sharp ; all that I can say of it is that it is large rather than small, and that it is a trifle too long. My mouth is large and my lips are usually fairly red and neither well nor ill shaped. My teeth are white and moderately regular. People have told me that my chin is too pronounced. I have just examined myself in the mirror to ascertain the truth of the matter, and I do not quite know what judgment to pronounce. My face is certainly square or oval—I hardly know which. My hair is black, curls naturally and is sufficiently abundant to sustain my pretension to a fine head.

My expression is both haughty and sad, which leads most persons to deem me supercilious, although in reality quite the reverse. My gestures are easy, perhaps too easy, for I gesticulate freely when speaking. Such, quite frankly, do I consider my exterior, and I fancy one will find that my opinion is not far from the truth. I shall be as candid in drawing the rest of my portrait, for I have sufficiently

studied myself to know myself accurately; nor shall I be reticent in enumerating my good qualities nor in confessing such faults as are mine.

In the first place, as far as my disposition is concerned, I am melancholy, and that to such a degree that in three or four years I have hardly been seen to laugh the same number of times. Nevertheless my melancholy would be bearable and even pleasant enough were I so only by temperament. Unfortunately I am the prey of many other kinds of melancholy which so strongly affect my imagination and so occupy my thoughts that for the most part I dream in silence, or, when I speak, my words are scarce coherent. I am reticent with persons whom I do not know, and I am not very communicative even to such as I know intimately. I am well aware that this is a failing, and I will spare no pains to cure me of it. Nevertheless, inasmuch as the somber expression of my features tends to make me appear even more reserved than I am, and since it lies not within our power to rid ourselves of an unpleasant expression with which Nature has burdened us, I fear that, though I be inwardly cured, externally I shall still wear the same unfortunate address.

I love my friends, and I love them to the extent of never allowing my interests to militate against theirs. I treat them considerately; I bear patiently their disagreeable moods, but I am not effusive nor am I distressed by their absence.

Nature has made me but little curious in regard to those things which arouse the greatest curiosity in most people. Very secretive, I have no difficulty in keeping to myself what has been said to me confidentially. I lay great store by a promise, and never break one, regardless of the sub-

ject involved. This I have made an unalterable law of my existence. I am punctiliously polite with ladies, and to my knowledge have never said anything to a woman which could distress her. When they are intelligent, I prefer their conversation to that of men, for one is aware of a certain delicacy which is not to be found among us men. Furthermore, I think they express themselves with a greater nicety and in a more agreeable manner. Gallantry I indulged in to a slight degree in former years, but now, young as I am, I have abandoned it. I have given up flirtations, and am surprised to see how many upright men are addicted to them.

I have wit, nor am I backward in asserting the fact. For why quibble over this point? To be over-reticent or to under-rate such natural advantages as we possess strikes me as concealing somewhat of vanity beneath a modest mien, and as making use of a clever ruse to lead others to believe more good of us than we actually claim. I am satisfied that people should think me no handsomer than I paint myself, of no better disposition than I myself pretend to, no more witty nor more intelligent than I am. I repeat, then, that I have wit; but a wit spoiled by melancholy, for although I have a good command of language, a useful memory and a ready grasp of subjects, yet my melancholy has such control over my thoughts that frequently I express very badly what I wish to say.

To converse with respectable folk is one of my greatest delights. The conversation should be serious and should deal with serious matters. On the other hand, I can enjoy the lighter vein and, although I do not often indulge in small-talk, it is not that I am unappreciative of trifles well put, or that I am not amused by banter wherein certain

quick and pleasant forms of wit are made to shine. I write good prose; my verses are not bad, and I think that if I aspired to the glory of authorship I could without difficulty acquire some reputation as a writer.

I am fond of reading, but more especially of those forms from which one derives mental stimulation or guidance. My greatest pleasure is to read with an intelligent person, for then one is constantly thinking of what one reads and the remarks one makes form the most useful and agreeable of conversations.

I am a very fair critic of prose and of verse submitted to me, but I am inclined to speak my opinion too frankly. I am further inclined to err from an over-developed sense of delicacy and from criticising too harshly. I am far from disliking an argument, and not infrequently take a part, although I am inclined to maintain my contentions with too great vehemence. Hence, when my opponent sustains an incorrect theory, in my eagerness to defend the right, I, in turn, become quite illogical.

My sentiments are upright; my impulses are fine, and so eagerly do I desire to be honest that my friends can do me no greater service than to point out my faults. Those who have known me intimately and have been good enough to give me advice on this point can bear witness that I have always accepted their suggestions with the greatest alacrity and submission.

My passions are not violent and are well controlled. Rarely has any one seen me in a rage, nor have I ever hated any person. Nevertheless, I am not above revenge if I have been offended in such manner that honor demands that I resent the insult. Indeed I am convinced that my sense of duty would so well play the part of hate that I

should pursue my vengeance even more tenaciously than the next man.

I am not a victim of ambition ; I am not a coward and in nowise fearful of death. I am not easily moved to pity, and I would prefer to be entirely insensible to it. Yet there is nothing I would not do to console an afflicted person, and I verily believe that one should do all in one's power, even to the extent of expressing great sympathy for their grief, for people in affliction are sufficiently stupid to derive great consolation from such expressions. On the other hand, I maintain that while one should express sympathy, one should scrupulously avoid feeling it. It is a profitless sentiment, which does little but weaken the heart, and one which should be left to the common people, who, since they do nothing logically, must look to passion to stimulate action.

I am an ardent admirer of noble passions ; they are the hall-marks of great intellects, and although the anxieties dependent thereupon are somewhat opposed to austerity of mind, they nevertheless conform so well with the severest virtue that I deem it wrong to condemn them. I, who know so well all the delicacy and strength which are a part of a great love, am certain that if ever I love, it will assuredly be after this fashion, and yet, made as I am, I doubt whether this perception will ever pass from my mind to my heart.

MAXIMS

MAXIMS

1.

VIRTUES, as we call them, are often a series of acts and interests which chance, or our own diligence, has arranged. Men are not always brave because courageous, nor women chaste because virtuous.

2.

Vanity out-flatters the subtlest flatterer.

3.

Explore as we may within the boundaries of our self-esteem, there remain undiscovered regions.

4.

Conceit is more subtle than the most finished courtier.

5.

We are no more masters of the duration of our passions than of the length of our days.

6.

Passion often makes idiots of the wisest men, and clever men of fools.

7.

Historians would have us believe that the most dazzling deeds are the results of deep-laid plans; more often they are the results of men's moods and passions. Thus, the war that Augustus waged against Antony, caused, we are told, by their ambition to be masters of the world, was, perchance, but the outcome of jealousy.

8.

Enthusiasm is the only convincing orator; it is like the infallible rule of some function of Nature. An enthusiastic simpleton is more persuasive than a silver-tongued orator.

9.

Our passions are so governed by injustice and self-interest that they are dangerous guides; suspect them most when they appear most logical.

10.

In the human heart one generation of passions follows another; from the ashes of one springs the spark of the next.

11.

One passion is often the parent of its antithesis; avarice gives birth to prodigality; prodigality to avarice; we are often firm because weak, or bold because timid.

12.

However artfully we cloak our passions with piety and honor, the veil is yet transparent.

13.

Egotism tolerates less kindly the censure of our tastes than that of our judgment.

14.

Men not only forget benefits and injuries; they hate those toward whom they are under an obligation and cringe to those who have insulted them. Gratitude and revenge, as duties, are yokes that gall.

15.

The magnanimity of princes is often but a policy to gain the love of their people.

16.

Clemency, usually counted a virtue, is occasionally the outcome of vanity, sometimes of laziness, often of fear, and usually of all three.

17.

Prosperity accounts for the content of the fortunate.

18.

Self-control is a dread of that scorn and envy which people, overcome by their own happiness, deserve. It is a vain display of our moral strength. Self-control, in a word, is the desire of most successful men to appear greater than their achievements.

19.

We all have strength to bear our neighbor's burden.

20.

The quiescence of the sage is but the art of masking his emotions.

21.

A man condemned to die often affects a firmness and a scorn of death which, at bottom, are but his fear of facing it. And this stoicism is to his mind what the bandage is to his eyes.

22.

Philosophy easily masters past and future ills, but the sorrow of the moment is the master of philosophy.

23.

Few men have an intimate knowledge of death. We die not because of resignation, but from stupidity and custom, and most of us die because we cannot help it.

24.

Great men who succumb to misfortunes make it evident that they have borne their past troubles from ambition, not from courage. Except for their great vanity heroes are but ordinary men.

25.

It takes a better man to bear good luck than bad.

26.

Death and the sun ! Who can outstare them ?

27.

Often we boast of our most criminal passions, but envy is so mean and so sordid that we never admit it.

28.

Jealousy is in a measure justifiable ; it is a defense of our own property, or of what we think is ours ; whereas envy cannot tolerate another's wealth.

29.

Our good qualities draw harsher criticism than our bad.

30.

Our strength exceeds our will-power ; hence we often excuse our failures by pleading the impossibility of success.

31.

Had we no faults, we should not take such pleasure in discovering them in others.

32.

Jealousy thrives on doubt ; certainty goads it to fury, or ends it.

33.

Pride is self-sufficient, and is unaffected though deprived of vanity.

34.

It is our own pride that blames our neighbor's pride.

35.

The measure of pride is equal in all men ; the difference lies in its manifestations.

36.

It seems that Nature, which has so wisely constructed our bodies for our welfare, gave us pride to spare us the painful knowledge of our short-comings.

37.

Pride plays a greater part than kindness in our censure of a neighbor's faults. We criticise faults less to correct them, than to prove that we do not possess them.

38.

Promises are measured by hope ; performances by fear.

39.

Egotism plays many parts, even that of altruism.

40.

Interest blinds some men, but lights the path of others.

41.

Undue attention to details tends to unfit us for greater enterprises.

42.

We are too weak to follow our best judgment.

43.

Man thinks he leads when he is being led ; when his mind seeks one goal, his heart imperceptibly draws him towards another.

44.

Strength or weakness of mind are but other names for our good or bad physical condition.

45.

The vagaries of our moods are more capricious than those of Fortune.

46.

The Philosophers' love or scorn of life was a matter of personal taste, no more open to discussion than is our taste in food, or our choice of colors.

47.

Our moods appraise each turn of fortune.

48.

Content depends not on things themselves, but on their desirability ; true happiness lies in the possession of that which pleases, not others, but ourselves.

49.

We are never as happy or as unhappy as we think.

50.

Self-satisfied men pride themselves on their misfortunes to persuade themselves, and others, that they are worthy to be the butts of fate.

51.

Nothing so blights our self-esteem as to disapprove of what we once approved.

52.

However great the discrepancies between men's lots, there is always a certain balance of joy and sorrow which equalizes all.

53.

Great as are the advantages which Nature bestows, heroes are the children partly of genius, partly of chance.

54.

The Philosophers' scorn of wealth was but their secret ambition to exalt their merit above fortune by deriding those blessings which Fate denied them. It was a ruse to shield them from the sordidness of poverty, and a subterfuge to attain that distinction which they could not achieve by wealth.

55.

Our hatred of favorites is but a love of favor, and our scorn of those who enjoy it is only a balm to our vexation at being deprived thereof. We refuse a favorite our homage since we cannot deny him that which brings him the homage of others.

56.

To gain a position in the world we go to any lengths to lead people to believe that we have one.

57.

However much credit men may take for their achievements, chance is more often responsible than sagacity.

58.

It seems that beneficent or malignant stars govern our deeds, and that to them we owe what praise or blame we receive.

59.

A clever man reaps some benefit from the worst catastrophe, and a fool can turn even good luck to his disadvantage.

60.

Fortune smiles most kindly upon her favorites.

61.

Good or bad fortune depends no less on our moods than on chance.

62.

Sincerity is open-heartedness. Few people have it; in most cases it is a delicate dissimulation practised to gain the confidence of others.

63.

Our hatred of untruth is often an unconscious desire to add weight to our statements, and to sanctify our word.

64.

Truth works less good in the world than its counterfeits work harm.

65.

We cannot sufficiently praise prudence ; yet the greatest prudence cannot with certainty predict the least event, since it acts on man . . . that most uncertain of all things mortal.

66.

A wise man co-ordinates his interests, and develops them according to their merits. Cupidity defeats its own ends by following so many at once that in our greed for trifles we lose sight of important matters.

67.

Grace is to the body what reason is to the mind.

68.

Love is hard to define ; in the soul, it is the wish to rule ; in the mind, a bond of sympathy, and in the body, a latent and delicate passion to possess, after many mysteries, what we love.

69.

The only love quite free from the taint of our other passions is hidden so deep in our hearts that we do not even suspect its existence.

70.

No disguise can mask love, nor feign it for long.

71.

Since we are never free to love nor to cease loving, a lover cannot justly berate his mistress for infidelity, nor can she blame him for inconstancy.

72.

Judged by its consequences, love is more akin to hate than to affection.

73.

It is not as difficult to find a woman who has never been guilty of an indiscretion, as to find a woman who has been guilty of only one.

74.

There is but one Love, yet its variations are infinite.

75.

Love is like a flame; it can never be still, and dies when it ceases to hope or to fear.

76.

True love is like a ghost; everyone talks of it, few have seen it.

77.

Love lends its name to many transactions in which it has no more part than the Doge with the doings of Venice.

78.

In most men love of justice is but the fear of suffering injustice.

79.

Silence is the refuge of the diffident.

80.

To understand a friend's mind is easy; to fathom his soul is hard; hence the fickleness of our friendships.

81.

What man calls friendship is a scheme for the mutual exchange of personal advantages and favors whereby self-esteem may profit.

82.

We become reconciled to our enemies from a desire to improve our situation, because we are weary of hostilities, or from a dread of disaster.

83.

A waning love-affair welcomes an infidelity as a release from constancy.

84.

We should be more ashamed to distrust our friends than to be deceived by them.

85.

Interested motives, rather than affection, sponsor our friendship for those mightier than ourselves. We sacrifice ourselves to them that we, not they, may profit.

86.

Distrust justifies deception.

87.

Why expect others to guard our secrets if we cannot keep them ourselves?

88.

Self-esteem measures the virtue of others according to how well we like them. We judge of others' merits from their treatment of us.

89.

Everyone blames his memory, no one his judgment.

90.

The most overweening ambition vanishes utterly when brought face to face with the impossible.

91.

Lazy men are the hardest taskmasters. They seek to appear diligent when they have satisfied their own sloth.

92.

It is as doubtful a kindness to disillusion a man convinced of his own importance, as it was to tell the Fool of Athens that every ship which entered the harbor was not, as he believed, his property.

93.

Old people like to give good advice, since they can no longer set bad examples.

94.

A great name degrades rather than exalts the unworthy.

95.

The grudging praise of the envious is proof positive of exceptional merit.

96.

It is a feeble friendship that is not aware of the estrangement of its friends.

97.

To differentiate between mind and judgment is a mistake; judgment is the light of the mind; judgment goes to the root of things; it perceives what should be noted, and sees what otherwise is imperceptible. Thus we find that it is really the scope of the mind to which should be attributed the praise bestowed on judgment.

98.

No one hesitates to praise his heart, yet who dares laud his mind?

99.

Intellectual politeness is the delicacy and purity of thought.

100.

Intellectual gallantry is the art of saying flattering things in an agreeable way.

101.

A spontaneous expression is often more accurate than the most studied effort.

102.

Mind is the dupe of heart.

103.

Those who know their minds best, know their hearts least.

104.

Men and affairs must be seen in perspective; some close at hand, some from a distance.

105.

Stumbling upon wisdom makes no man wise; the sage must understand, grasp, and enjoy his wisdom.

106.

Knowledge is an absolute mastery of details, and since of details there is no end, ours is always an imperfect and superficial knowledge.

107.

Calling attention to our sincerity is one form of coquetry.

108.

Mind cannot play the part of heart for long.

109.

Youth's impetuosity is swift to change its tastes, while force of habit makes the aged stable in their likes.

110.

We are never as liberal as with advice.

III.

More we love a mistress, more nearly do we hate her.

III2.

Mental like facial peculiarities are accentuated by old age.

III3.

Many a marriage is happy ; none is ideal.

III4.

We never forgive a friend or a foe who betrays us, yet we do not resent betraying ourselves.

III5.

It is as easy to deceive ourselves without realizing it, as it is hard to avoid detection in our deception of others.

III6.

A man is never less sincere than when he asks or gives advice ; when he seeks counsel with humble deference to the judgment of his friend he seeks to commend his own conduct, and to make his friend a surety for his acts. Giving advice is but repaying with feigned zeal the confidence of others, and, at the same time, seeking to further one's own ends by the counsels one gives.

III7.

No deception is keener than feigning cleverly to fall into the snares laid for us. We are most often deceived when seeking to deceive others.

118.

A desire not to deceive others constantly lays us open to deception.

119.

We spend so much time deceiving others that we end by deceiving ourselves.

120.

Deception is more often the fruit of weakness than of an intent to deceive.

121.

Often we do right, that later we may do wrong with impunity.

122.

When we resist temptation it is usually because temptation is weak, not because we are strong.

123.

How little we should enjoy life if we never flattered ourselves !

124.

The cleverest men go through life decrying trickery either to be in a position to deceive in a crisis, or to achieve a great ambition.

125.

Habitual trickery is a sign of small intellects; he who covers himself with deceit at one point, usually exposes himself at another.

126.

Trickery and treachery are a mark of stupidity.

127.

The surest way to be deceived is to think one's self cleverer than one's neighbor.

128.

Super-cleverness is indelicate ; true delicacy rests on true cleverness.

129.

Stupidity is often the best shield against a clever rascal.

130.

A light woman's smallest vice is her lightness.

131.

Weakness is our only irreparable fault.

132.

It is easier to preach virtue than to practice it.

133.

The only good imitations are those which accentuate the faults of their bad originals.

134.

Our true qualities never make us as ridiculous as those we affect.

135.

We are often as unlike ourselves as we are unlike others.

136.

Many would never have fallen in love, had they never heard the term.

137.

We rarely talk unprompted by vanity.

138.

We prefer to malign ourselves than not to talk of ourselves at all.

139.

One reason why so few people converse agreeably or logically is that a man pays more attention to his own utterances than to giving an exact answer to questions put to him. Even the most charming and clever do little more than appear attentive, while in their eyes one may see a look of bewilderment as one talks, so anxious are they to return to their own ideas. To be bent on pleasing one's self is a poor method of pleasing or of convincing others. A man who listens well and answers to the point is a master of conversation.

140.

A clever man would often be a fool, without an audience of dullards.

141.

We boast that we are never lonely only because we are too vain to admit that we find ourselves poor company.

142.

As it is a trait of powerful intellects to express much in a few words; inversely, small minds talk much and say little.

143.

We emphasize the good qualities of others more because we esteem our own virtues, than from an appreciation of their merits; we invite praise by appearing to praise others.

144.

We do not enjoy praising others, and we rarely praise except to advance our ends. Praise is a skillful flattery, subtle and concealed, which satisfies both him who gives and him who receives; the one accepts it as a reward of merit, the other gives it to call attention to his justice and perspicacity.

145.

Many of our tributes are double-edged; they serve to draw attention to faults in those we praise to which otherwise we dare not point.

146.

In general we praise only to be praised.

147.

Few are sufficiently sagacious to prefer useful censure to compromising praise.

148.

Censure often praises, and praise as frequently censures.

149.

We decline commendation that we may be twice commended.

150.

Our eagerness to deserve the praise that is given us strengthens our character, and commendations of our intellect, courage, and good-looks help to increase them.

151.

It is harder to avoid being influenced than to influence others.

152.

Did we not flatter ourselves, the flattery of others could not harm us.

153.

Nature creates ability ; circumstances set it in motion.

154.

Circumstances correct many of our faults which common sense could not set right.

155.

The virtues of some people repel us, yet the vices of others are their greatest charm.

156.

The redeeming quality of some people lies in their faculty of making useful blunders. How useless these people would be, were they to change their ways!

157.

Glory is measured by the means used to attain it.

158.

Monarchs rate men as they do coins—arbitrarily; we must take them at their current, not at their actual, value.

159.

It is not enough to have great qualities; we must know how to economise them.

160.

However brilliant an achievement may be, we should not deem it great unless it be the result of a noble thought.

161.

Deeds and schemes must be proportionate to achieve the best results.

162.

The art of making the most of mediocre ability defrauds merit, and often brings us more fame than does true worth.

163.

Many proceedings seem ridiculous when in reality they rest on wisdom and good sense.

164.

It is easier to appear worthy of positions which are not ours, than to discharge our own duties creditably.

165.

Merit procures us the esteem of the upright ; success that of the world.

166.

Apparent virtue is more often praised than true merit.

167.

Avarice is more nearly the antithesis of economy than of prodigality.

168.

Our hopes, often though they deceive us, lead us pleasantly along the path of life.

169.

Although it is frequently laziness and timidity that keep us within the path of duty, it is virtue that reaps the credit.

170.

It is often hard to determine whether a straight-forward and sincere action is the result of high-mindedness or of cleverness.

171.

Virtues lose themselves in selfish motives like rivers in the sea.

172.

A close examination of results will show that we neglect more duties from boredom than from selfishness.

173.

Curiosity is of two sorts; that based on interest, which impels us to discover what may be to our advantage, and that based on vanity, which is caused by our desire to know more than our neighbor.

174.

We make better use of our abilities by endeavoring to bear our misfortunes, than in seeking to forestall possible catastrophes.

175.

Constancy in love is a perpetual inconstancy whereby we are successively enthralled by each of the qualities of our beloved, exalting now one, now another, until our constancy becomes inconstancy within fixed limits.

176.

Constancy in love is of two sorts; in one case we are forever discovering new qualities to love in the same person; in the other we merely pride ourselves on our own constancy.

177.

There are few of us who are not ashamed of a mutual passion when love has died.

178.

Whatever we love, we love selfishly; and it is solely because of our selfish tastes and pleasures that we prefer our friends to ourselves. Yet only through this preference can true friendship exist.

179.

Our first thrill of pleasure at the happiness of our friends is not entirely due to the unselfishness of our nature, nor to our friendship for them; it is more frequently a selfish impulse at the prospect of being happy in our turn, or a hope of deriving some advantage from their good fortune.

180.

Men would not live together for long, were they not dupes of each other.

181.

Constancy is not a quality to be praised or censured, since it is but the duration of likes and dislikes over which we have no control.

182.

We like new acquaintances, not so much that we are wearied of our old friends, or that we enjoy change, but because of our disappointment at not being sufficiently admired by those who know us too well, and because of a

hope that people who know us less intimately may admire us more.

183.

We often complain lightly of our friends to justify in advance our own levity.

184.

Repentance is less a sorrow at having sinned than a fear of the possible consequences.

185.

That frivolity or weakness of mind which makes us accept all the ideas of our neighbors, is one form of vacillation; another, more excusable form, is due to general indifference.

186.

Vices are as often component parts of virtues as poisons are of healing potions; shrewdness combines and blends them to relieve the ills of life.

187.

We are bound to admit in the defence of virtue that man's greatest woes are caused by his own wrong-doing.

188.

Some crimes, because of their very scope, number, or atrocity are held harmless, or even glorious. Hence picking pockets is an art, and seizing provinces without pretext a conquest.

189.

We admit our faults that our sincerity may redeem our reputations.

190.

Vice as well as virtue boasts its heroes.

191.

We do not always scorn the man who has his vices, but we inevitably condemn a man who has no virtues.

192.

Virtue serves a selfish end as frequently as vice.

193.

The soul is as susceptible to disease as the body ; however secure we may deem ourselves from the dominion of our passions, we are nevertheless in as great danger of succumbing to them as of falling ill when we are well.

194.

Nature, it seems, has from our birth set a limit to the scope of our virtues and of our vices.

195.

Only the great have great faults.

196.

It may be said that vices like the inns where we must sleep, await us along the road of life ; and I doubt whether, should we travel the same road twice, experience would teach us to avoid them.

197.

We flatter ourselves that we quit our vices ; in reality our vices quit us.

198.

Maladies of the soul are as subject to relapses as are maladies of the body ; we frequently mistake a relapse, or a change of ailment for the cure itself.

199.

The short-comings of the soul are like wounds of the body ; do what we may to cure them, a scar remains, which may at any time reopen.

200.

We are not the victims of a single vice only because we are the victims of so many.

201.

Failings known to us alone are easily forgotten.

202.

Of some we cannot believe evil until we have seen it ; in none should it surprise us !

203.

We exalt some to abase others ; hence we should not praise M. le Prince or M. de Turenne so loudly, did we not wish to blame both.

204.

Cleverness eludes the keenest pursuit ; hence our failures.

205.

Virtue would be shorter lived, were vanity not its companion.

206.

The man who thinks he can do without the world errs; but the man who thinks the world can do without him is in still greater error.

207.

False sincerity disguises its faults from itself as well as from others; true sincerity appreciates and confesses its failings.

208.

Kindliness takes offence at nothing.

209.

The coldness of women is like their rouge—an artificial aid to beauty.

210.

Women are virtuous chiefly because of their reputations, and somewhat because of their consciences.

211.

True honesty invites the scrutiny of the upright.

212.

Folly pursues us throughout our lives, and the man whom we call wise is he whose follies are proportionate to his age and to his fortune.

213.

Some fools appreciate their imbecility; and so use it to advantage.

214.

A man who is never foolish is not as wise as he thinks.

215.

Folly and wisdom grow with age.

216.

Some people are like rag-time—their popularity is short-lived.

217.

Most people judge a man only by his popularity or by his good-fortune.

218.

What causes this bravery we so loudly boast? The love of glory, the desire to abase our neighbor, the dread of shame, the pursuit of money, and a craving for a life of ease and comfort.

219.

Bravery in the ranks is but a dangerous way of earning a livelihood.

220.

Perfect bravery and absolute cowardice are extremes to which we rarely attain. In the vast distance that divides them we find all degrees of courage. They differ as widely

as men's faces and men's moods. There are men who expose themselves recklessly at the beginning of an engagement, but who quickly drop behind. Some are satisfied when they have lived up to the standards of the world, and do nothing more. One frequently finds men who are not to the same degree masters of all their fears; some are carried away by a general panic; others charge because they dare not stand still. In some the habit of braving little dangers prepares them for greater ones. Some can meet cold steel unflinchingly, but are afraid of musketry; some can face bullets, but flee from a sword. Yet all these forms of courage have this in common: as night enhances fear and conceals noble as well as cowardly acts, so also it offers an opportunity for caution. A more universal form of caution is due to the fear of death, for no man fights as valiantly as he would, were he sure of returning from battle. Clearly, then, fear of death to some extent diminishes men's valor.

221.

Perfect valor accomplishes without witnesses what anyone could do before the eyes of the world.

222.

Bravery is an especial force of the soul which exalts it above the fears, emotions, and feelings which the sight of great dangers might have upon it. Thanks to this power heroes remain calm and keep their heads in the most terrible and unforeseen contingencies.

223.

Hypocrisy is a tribute vice pays to virtue.

224.

At the front most men expose themselves sufficiently to satisfy the demands of honor, but few are willing to risk themselves enough to assure the success of the enterprise for which they are exposing themselves.

225.

Vanity, shame, and especially temperament, account largely for men's bravery and women's chastity.

226.

No one wishes to lose his life, and everyone is anxious to win glory; hence, brave men are cleverer in avoiding death than pettifoggers are in preserving their property.

227.

In almost every case the first approach of old age brings to light our physical and mental infirmities.

228.

In everyday existence we please others more by our faults than by our merits.

229.

A man is ungrateful when he is less to blame for his ingratitude than he who conferred the favor.

230.

Gratitude is like credit; it is the backbone of our relations; frequently we pay our debts not because equity demands that we should, but to facilitate future loans.

231.

People who discharge merely the obligations of gratitude cannot boast that they are truly grateful.

232.

The discrepancies between the measure of gratitude which we receive, and that which we expect for our services, are due to the fact that the pride of the creditor can never agree with the pride of the debtor on the value of the service rendered.

233.

Excessive zeal in discharging an obligation is a form of ingratitude.

234.

It is easier to curb gratitude than hope or desire.

235.

Pride hates to owe, and vanity hates to pay.

236.

Accepting favors from people compels us to swallow the injuries they do us.

237.

Nothing is as contagious as example. Each of our very good or very bad acts reproduces itself. We imitate good examples from a desire to emulate them, and bad ones from the perversity of our natures, which pride restrains, but which example stimulates.

238.

Posing as the only wise man is the acme of folly.

239.

To whatever we may ascribe our misfortunes, they are generally the results of selfishness and of vanity.

240.

Sorrow is tinged with many forms of hypocrisy. Thus when we mourn a beloved friend, it is ourselves that we are mourning; we grieve at a loss of money, or of prestige, or of our pleasures; we regret the good opinion our neighbor had of us, and we shed tears for the dead which we did not bestow upon the living. All these I term hypocrisy, since by such sorrow we deceive ourselves. Another form of hypocrisy—and far from an innocent one, since it deceives all the world—is the grief of certain people who seek the glory of a fair and immortal sorrow. After Time, which heals all wounds, has cured them of such grief as they felt, they continue to inflict their tears, their complaints and their sighs upon the world; they assume a woe-begone countenance, and try to convey by their every word and act that only death will end their misery. One finds this unpleasant and burdensome form of vanity most frequently in ambitious women. Since their sex bars the road to fame, they strive to attain prominence by the exhibition of an inconsolable grief. There is yet a third sort; namely tears which spring from little sources; they flow and are dried with equal ease. We weep because we have a reputation for tenderness; we weep to win sympathy and, in our turn, to be wept over; finally, we weep to save ourselves from the stigma of hard-heartedness.

241.

The tribulations of our best best friends arouse sentiments in us which are not entirely unpleasant.

242.

We are easily consoled for the disgrace of our friends, if it affords an opportunity of exhibiting our devotion.

243.

At times vanity seems to be the dupe of benevolence, and forgets itself when we are striving for others. Nevertheless, there is no surer road to our ends; it is usury cloaked as a gift; it is a subtle and delicate method of acquiring universal esteem.

244.

No one should be praised for benevolence if he is too weak to be wicked; most benevolence is but laziness or lack of willpower.

245.

It is not as dangerous to wrong most men as to heap them with benefits.

246.

Nothing flatters our pride more than the confidence of the mighty. We consider it a tribute to our worth, and we rarely perceive that it is usually bestowed out of vanity, or from their inability to keep secrets.

247.

Charm without beauty is a symmetry without rules ; it is a secret harmony of the features as a whole, and of the features with the coloring and carriage of the person.

248.

Coquetry is the foundation of women's dispositions ; all, to be sure, do not practice it ; in some cases coquetry is held in check by fear or common-sense.

249.

We are often unwelcome when we least suspect it.

250.

We are far from appreciating the full scope of our desires.

251.

Nothing is impossible ; there is a means of accomplishing everything, and had we sufficient will-power we should find no lack of means.

252.

The perfection of cleverness is to be a good judge of values.

253.

It takes a clever man to hide his cleverness.

254.

Apparent generosity is often only a scorn of trifles in the pursuit of great profits.

255.

Loyalty in most men is a scheme of their vanity to attract confidence ; it is a method of exalting ourselves, and of making ourselves the trustees of great interests.

256.

Great minds seeking great ends do not stop at detail.

257.

Eloquence depends as much on the tone of the voice, the eye and the general appearance of the speaker, as on his choice of words.

258.

True eloquence lies in saying everything one should say, but nothing that one should not.

259.

Some are glorified by their faults ; others are damned by their virtues.

260.

Changes of taste are as frequent as changes of characteristics are rare.

261.

Selfishness brings into play all manner of vices and virtues.

262.

Humility is often but a feigned submission used to subordinate others ; it is a trick whereby pride abases itself

only to exalt itself later, and, although manifested in many ways, it is never as well masked, nor as capable of deceiving as when wrapped in the cloak of humility.

263.

Every sentiment has its own intonation, its own gestures, and its own expression; this inter-relation, good or bad, pleasant or unpleasant, makes people sympathetic or repellant.

264.

In every walk of life we assume the expression and appearance of what we would be esteemed. Hence, we may say that this world is a world of masks.

265.

Gravity is an attitude of the body intended to conceal the short-comings of the mind.

266.

Flattery is a counterfeit coinage, current only because our vanity accepts it.

267.

The joy of love is in loving, and we are happier in our own emotion than in the passion we inspire.

268.

Civility is a wish to be civilly treated, and to be thought polite.

269.

Educating children usually creates in them only a new form of vanity.

270.

Selfishness plays a greater part in love than in any other passion ; we are usually more inclined to sacrifice the peace of mind of our beloved, than our own.

271.

So-called liberality is in most cases but the vanity of giving—a thing we prize more highly than the gift.

272.

Pity is often a perception of our own troubles through the woes of others ; it is a clever anticipation of the misfortunes which may befall us. We help our neighbor to make sure of his assistance under similar circumstances ; hence, the kindness we do others is in truth an anticipated kindness we do ourselves.

273.

We are stubborn because we are narrow-minded ; it is hard to believe what is beyond the scope of our vision.

274.

It is a great mistake to believe that only violent passions, such as love and ambition, can make us masters of others. Laziness with all its indolence is often the most absolute sovereign ; it encroaches upon all the plans and acts of our lives, and, little by little, saps and destroys our passions and our virtues.

275.

A ready belief of evil without examining the facts is a form of pride, or of indolence. We are anxious to ferret out criminals without taking the pains of examining their crimes.

276.

We take exception to the ruling of a judge on the most trifling pretext, yet we are willing to let our reputation and standing depend upon the judgment of men who are hostile to us, either from jealousy, or from indifference, or from limited vision. It is only to obtain their favorable verdict that we expose our tranquillity and our very life to so many dangers.

277.

No one is sufficiently keen to realize to the full the harm he does.

278.

The glory we have acquired is but security for the glory we shall obtain.

279.

Youth is a continuous delirium; it is a fever of the brain.

280.

We like to analyze others, but we dislike to be analyzed.

281.

We think highly of some people whose only merit is that they possess those vices which are essential to our daily existence.

282.

Devoting one's life to keeping well is one of the most tedious of ailments.

283.

Good-nature which boasts of its sympathy may often be choked by a trivial selfish interest.

284.

The same wind snuffs candles yet kindles fires ; so, where absence kills a little love, it fans a great one.

285.

Many a woman thinks she is in love when she is not ; the excitement of an intrigue, the emotion which gallantry arouses, the natural inclination to the pleasure of being made love to, and the difficulty of a refusal all help her to believe that passion exists where there is only coquetry.

286.

What we object to in promoters is that they almost always subordinate the interests of their friends to the interests and success of their scheme, or, rather, to the honor of being successful promoters.

287.

We exaggerate our friends' affection for us more from an eagerness to exalt our merit than from gratitude.

288.

We often encourage people who are setting out to make their way in the world because we are jealous of those who are firmly established.

289.

Pride is as great a factor in killing as in creating envy.

290.

Some well-disguised falsehoods so cleverly simulate truth that it were ill-advised not to be deceived by them.

291.

It is often as hard to follow good advice as to be of good counsel.

292.

Some wicked people would be less dangerous, had they no redeeming qualities.

293.

Magnanimity is a sufficient definition in itself ; one might add, however, that it is the common-sense of pride, and the noblest path to praise.

294.

When we have actually ceased loving a person, it is impossible to love them a second time.

295.

It is not so much our resourcefulness that assists us in finding several solutions to the same problem, as a lack of discernment, which makes us pause at each thing that catches our eye, and so prevents our choosing the best course at once.

296.

Some complications, like ailments, are aggravated by treatment, and the greatest skill lies in knowing when interference is dangerous.

297.

Affected simplicity is a subtle imposture.

298.

Our moods are more fallible than our wits.

299.

Men's merits, like fruits, appear in their proper seasons.

300.

Men's natures are like most houses—many sided ; some aspects are pleasant and some are not.

301.

Moderation cannot claim both to strive with and to have mastered ambition ; the two are never co-existent. Moderation is the indolence and the sloth of the soul, while ambition is its activity and its energy.

302.

We always love our admirers, but not always those whom we admire.

303.

It is hard to love people whom we do not respect, but it is harder still to love those whom we respect more highly than we respect ourselves.

304.

The humors of the body follow a fixed routine, and imperceptibly influence our will ; they go hand in hand, and rule us in turn, and so, without our knowledge, play an important part in all our actions.

305.

Most men's gratitude is a secret and keen desire to obtain still greater favors.

306.

Nearly everyone takes pleasure in discharging his petty obligations ; very many are grateful for average kindnesses, but few indeed are not somewhat ungrateful for great services.

307.

Folly is as contagious as certain diseases.

308.

Many scorn favors ; few know how to confer them.

309.

It is usually only in trifles that we do not suspect appearances.

310.

Flatter me as you will, you teach me nothing !

311.

We can forgive people who bore us, but never those whom we bore.

312.

Self-seeking, which is blamed for all our mis-deeds, should often be credited with many of our virtues.

313.

We never find ingratitude while we can confer favors.

314.

It is as becoming to be proud of ourselves as it is unbecoming to tell the world thereof.

315.

Moderation has been called a virtue wherewith to curb the ambition of the great, and to console men of moderate means for their small fortunes and insignificant merits.

316.

Some people are predestined to be fools, and act foolishly not only from preference, but because constrained thereto by fate.

317.

One must be a little mad to extricate one's self from certain dilemmas.

318.

If there are men not open to ridicule, it is that their absurdities have not been carefully sought.

319.

A man and his mistress are not bored when they are together because they are continually talking of themselves.

320.

Why is it that our memory recalls even the minutest details of our experiences, but cannot recall how many times we have told the same story to the same person?

321.

The vast pleasure we derive from talking of ourselves should make us suspect that the pleasure of our audience may not be as great.

322.

Mistrust of ourselves, rather than mistrust of our friends prevents us from treating them with perfect frankness.

323.

A weakling is incapable of sincerity.

324.

It is no great misfortune to put an ingrate under an obligation, but it is a very great misfortune to be indebted to a dishonest person.

325.

Folly may be cured ; an evil mind never.

326.

It is impossible long to maintain the sentiments due friends and benefactors, if one allows oneself frequently to discuss their faults.

327.

Praising the mighty for the virtues they do not possess is one method of insulting them with impunity.

328.

It is easier to love people who hate us, than those who love us more than we wish.

329.

Only such as merit scorn fear it.

330.

Our wisdom is as much the toy of Fate as our fortune.

331.

Jealousy springs more from love of self, than from love of another.

332.

Weakness of mind often consoles us for misfortune when logic fails.

333.

Ridicule shames more than disgrace.

334.

We admit our petty foibles only to disclaim greater faults.

335.

Envy is more implacable than hate.

336.

Sometimes we think we dislike flattery when it is only its method we dislike.

337.

We can forgive as long as we love.

338.

It is harder to be faithful to a mistress when she is gracious than when she is abusive.

339.

No woman fully fathoms her coquetry.

340.

A woman's absolute refusal is always tinged with aversion.

341.

A woman is more mistress of her passions than of her coquetry.

342.

In love deceit generally outstrips distrust.

343.

There is a form of love, which, carried to excess, makes jealousy impossible.

344.

Certain good qualities are like the senses; those who lack them can neither appreciate nor understand them.

345.

Violent hatred puts us beneath those whom we hate.

346.

We appreciate our good and bad fortune only in proportion to our conceit.

347.

Most women's wits serve their folly rather than their reason.

348.

The enthusiasm of youth is no more harmful than the indifference of age.

349.

The accent of our native district is as strongly marked in our minds and hearts as in our speech.

350.

To attain real greatness one must be able to reckon all one's assets.

351.

Men are like plants ; most of us possess qualities which chance discloses.

352.

Circumstances make us known to others, and still more to ourselves.

353.

A woman cannot regulate her mind or heart in opposition to her temperament.

354.

We rarely consider anyone sensible unless he agrees with our ideas.

355.

Lovers often doubt their own creed.

356.

The greatest of all Love's miracles is curing coquetry.

357.

The reason we feel so bitterly against those who play tricks on us, is that they think themselves cleverer than we.

358.

Parting is doubly hard when love is dead.

359.

One is most bored with those with whom it is not permissible to be bored.

360.

A gentleman may love madly, but not stupidly.

361.

Some faults, used to advantage, outshine virtues.

362.

We lose friends whom we regret without mourning, and others whom we mourn without regretting.

363.

We rarely praise anyone who does not admire us.

364.

Little minds are deeply offended by little things; great minds see comprehensively, and do not take offense at trifles.

365.

Humility is the hall-mark of Christian virtues; if we lack humility, we retain all our faults veiled only by pride, which conceals them from others, and often from ourselves.

366.

Love of justice on our part is usually only a keen apprehension lest others take our property—hence our consideration and respect for our neighbor's interests, and

the pains we take to do him no wrong. This fear keeps man strictly within the limits of what is his by birth or by fortune, whereas, without it, he would constantly be encroaching upon the rights of others.

367.

Justice in a conservative judge is but pride of position.

368.

We blame injustice not from aversion to injustice, but from fear of the resulting harm.

369.

Moderation in prosperity is usually a dread of the stigma attendant upon excesses, or the fear of losing what one has.

370.

Moderation is like temperance; we would gladly take more, but we fear the after-effects.

371.

We all criticise in others what others criticise in us.

372.

Knowing just how unhappy one should be, is one form of happiness.

373.

Happy people rarely correct their faults; they consider themselves vindicated, since fortune endorses their evil ways.

374.

Novelty is to love what the bloom is to fruit; it imparts a lustre easily destroyed, and which, once gone, is gone forever.

375.

Young people think they appear at their ease when they are merely rude and boorish.

376.

A mind of mediocre attainments condemns everything beyond its scope.

377.

It is more often our pride than our limited understanding which makes us fly so violently in the face of public opinion. We find the best seats on the correct side already occupied, and we do not care to sit in the rear.

378.

Good taste depends more upon sound judgment than upon a keen mind.

379.

Nothing should be more offensive to men worthy of great praise than to note the pains they continue to take to draw attention to themselves by trifles.

380.

To be sure of what we shall do, we should be sure of what we shall have.

381.

Infidelity should kill love, and one should never be jealous when one has reason to be; only those who avoid causing jealousy are worthy of our own jealousy.

382.

People fall more in our estimation through trifling infidelities which affect us, than through greater ones which affect only others.

383.

Jealousy and love are always born twins, but they do not always die together.

384.

Most women mourn the death of a lover, not so much that they loved him, but that they may appear more worthy of being loved.

385.

Self-inflicted wounds smart most.

386.

People realize that they should not talk about their wives, but they cannot grasp how much worse it is to talk about themselves.

387.

Some natural virtues degenerate into faults, and some acquired ones can never be perfected. Hence reason must administer our property and guide our confidence, whereas nature must endow us with kindness and merit.

388.

Little confidence as we may have in what people tell us, we always think them more sincere toward us than toward the next man.

389.

There are very few virtuous women who are not weary of the part.

390.

Most virtuous women are like hidden treasures, secure because no one is seeking them.

391.

We suffer more from the restraints we impose upon ourselves to keep from falling in love, than from the refusals of our beloved.

392.

No coward appreciates the full extent of his cowardice.

393.

It is a lover's failing not to perceive when he is no longer loved.

394.

One is always most afraid of meeting one's mistress after flirting elsewhere.

395.

Some tears end by deceiving us after having deceived others.

396.

The man who thinks he loves his mistress for her sake is a fool.

397.

Given the courage to admit one's failings, one should make the best of them.

398.

True friendship is as fatal to envy as true love is to coquetry.

399.

The greatest fault of being far-sighted lies not in failing to reach one's goal, but in over-reaching it.

400.

We may advise a man, but we rarely control his actions.

401.

Our good taste degenerates along with our merit.

402.

Prosperity or adversity discloses our virtues and our vices, as a candle reveals various objects.

403.

Enforced fidelity to one's beloved is no better than infidelity.

404.

Our acts are like rhymes ; we adopt whatever sequence we please.

405.

A desire to talk of ourselves, and our anxiety to disclose only such aspects of our faults as we wish, is nine-tenths of our sincerity.

406.

We should be surprised only at our susceptibility to surprise.

407.

We are equally hard to please when we are deeply in love, or when we have ceased to care.

408.

People who most hate to be in the wrong are those most apt to err.

409.

A fool hasn't enough good stuff in him to make him wise.

410.

Even if vanity does not completely destroy our virtues, it shakes them all.

411.

What we most dislike in the vanity of others is that it wounds our own.

412.

It is easier to fly in the face of one's interests than of one's tastes.

413.

Fortune appears most blind to those whom she overlooks.

414.

We should use fortune as we do health; enjoy it when it is good, bear it patiently when it is bad, and employ heroic remedies only in the severest ills.

415.

Middle-class manners may pass in the army, but never at court.

416.

Many as you may outwit, someone will outwit you.

417.

It is often less painful to be deceived than to be undeceived by those we love.

418.

A first love lives long, unless supplanted by a second.

419.

Though rarely bold enough to assert that we have no faults, and that our enemies have no virtues, we are not far from believing it.

420.

Of all our faults we think most leniently of laziness ; we deceive ourselves into believing that it embodies all the more placid virtues, and that, instead of destroying our other qualities, it merely suspends their functions.

421.

There is a form of superiority which does not come from wealth ; it is a certain distinction which seems to destine us for great things. It is a valuation which, unconsciously, we put upon ourselves, whereby we exact deference, and which, even more than birth, honors or indeed merit, exalts us above others.

422.

Merit may exist independently of dignity, but no dignity is without a certain merit.

423.

Honors are to merit what jewels are to beauty.

424.

Nothing is so far removed from gallantry as love.

425.

Fortune often uses our faults to exalt us ; so we find people constantly in our way whose merit would be but poorly paid, were we not willing to buy their absence.

426.

It seems as though nature had hidden deep within us talents and cleverness of which we ourselves are ignorant,

and which only our passions can bring to light, giving us a more accurate understanding than art or education ever achieve.

427.

Each age of life is new to us, and we find ourselves hampered by inexperience regardless of our years.

428.

A coquette makes a point of being jealous of her lovers to conceal her own jealousy of other women.

429.

We do not consider those who fall into the traps we set for them nearly as ridiculous as we think ourselves when we are caught in the snares of others.

430.

The worst form of ridicule to which old people, once charming, are susceptible, is to forget that they are no longer attractive.

431.

We should often be ashamed of our noblest actions, could the world read our motives.

432.

The hardest task of friendship lies not so much in showing our faults to our friend, as in making him perceive his own.

433.

None of our faults are as reprehensible as the methods we use to conceal them.

434.

Whatever disgrace we have deserved, it is almost always within our power to rehabilitate our reputations.

435.

We can not make ourselves agreeable for long, if we possess but one form of wit.

436.

Fools and bores judge others by themselves.

437.

At times wit helps us to be daringly foolish.

438.

Vivacity in the old is not far removed from foolishness.

439.

In love first cured is best cured.

440.

Young women who would not appear coquettes, and middle-aged men who would avoid ridicule, should never mention love as a personal matter.

441.

We may appear great in a position beneath our powers, but we often seem very small in a position above our merits.

442.

We often think that we are brave in misfortune when we are merely stunned ; we bear it without daring to look it in the face, as a coward allows himself to be killed because he is too frightened to defend himself.

443.

Confidence plays a greater part in conversation than wit.

444.

Every passion makes us commit faults, but love leads us into the most ridiculous blunders.

445.

Few people can accept old age.

446.

We pride ourselves on those faults which are the opposites of our failings ; thus, if we are weak, we vaunt our stubbornness.

447.

The power of penetration wears an appearance of far-sight which flatters our vanity more than all the other attributes of intelligence.

448.

The charm of novelty and the permanency of habit, opposites though they be, prevent us from seeing the faults of our friends.

449.

Most friends disgust us with friendship, and most pious souls with piety.

450.

It is easy to forgive in our friends faults from which we do not suffer.

451.

Women who are in love forgive grave infidelities more than petty indiscretions.

452.

In the old age of love, as in the old age of life, one continues living for sorrows, but no longer for pleasures.

453.

A desire to appear natural inevitably makes one artificial.

454.

Loudly praising noble deeds amounts to arrogating to oneself a part therein.

455.

To be born without envy is the surest sign that one possesses great qualities.

456.

When our friends have betrayed us we should meet their advances with indifference, but we must always show them sympathy in their sorrows.

457.

Wealth and temperament rule the world.

458.

It is easier to know mankind than any man.

459.

One should judge a man, not by his noble qualities, but by his use thereof.

460.

Some gratitude is so lively that it not only repays the benefits received, but makes our friends to that extent our debtors.

461.

An accurately defined wish is rarely ardently desired.

462.

Few women are touched by friendship because friendship is insipid to one who has tasted love.

463.

In friendship as in love, ignorance often makes us happier than knowledge.

464.

We boast the faults we are unwilling to correct.

465.

Even our most violent passions grant us an occasional respite ; vanity never.

466.

An old fool is a greater fool than a young one.
[“No fool like an old fool.”]

467.

Weakness, rather than vice, is the antithesis of virtue.

468.

The pangs of jealousy and of shame smart most because vanity is powerless to soothe them.

469.

Good-form is the least of all our laws, yet the most strictly observed.

470.

Pompous funerals are a homage to the vanity of the quick, rather than a tribute to the memory of the dead.

471.

It is easier for an upright nature to be guided by the evil-minded than to guide them.

472.

When good fortune surprises us by exalting us to a lofty station without leading us there by slow degrees, or when we attain a high position through no efforts of our own, it is almost impossible to appear worthy of it, or to occupy it suitably.

473.

Our pride increases proportionately to the faults we overcome.

474.

No fool is as obnoxious as a clever one.

475.

No one deems himself at every point inferior to the man he most admires.

476.

In important affairs we should apply our energies more to utilizing the opportunities which present themselves, than in seeking to create new ones.

477.

We never strike a bad bargain by bartering the good people say of us against their promise not to slander us.

478.

Cynical as the world may be, it spares false virtue more frequently than it condemns real merit.

479.

A fool may sometimes have wit, but never sound judgment.

480.

We should gain more in the end by allowing the world to see us in our true colors, than by trying to appear what we are not.

481.

Our enemies judge us more accurately than we judge ourselves.

482.

There are various cures for love, but none is infallible.

483.

We are far from appreciating everything that passion makes us do.

484.

Old age is a tyrant that, under penalty of death, forbids all the pleasures of youth.

485.

The same pride which makes us condemn the faults of which we think ourselves free, impels us to scorn the virtues we do not possess.

486.

Pride is often a greater factor than kindness in our sympathy for our enemies' misfortunes; we pity them only to make them feel our superiority.

487.

Happiness and sorrow may exceed our powers of perception.

488.

Innocence is far from being as well protected as guilt.

489.

Of all violent passions, in women, love is the least offensive.

490.

Vanity makes us offend our own good taste more frequently than does common-sense.

491.

Some bad qualities make great talents.

492.

A thing desired only rationally is not very ardently desired.

493.

All our qualities, good and bad, are contingent, depending for the most part on circumstances.

494.

In their first passions women are in love with their lover ; in later ones only with love.

495.

Pride, as well as other passions, has its contradictions ; thus we blush to admit jealousy, but we pride ourselves on having been jealous, and on our capacity of being so again.

496.

However rare true love may be, true friendship is still rarer.

497.

Few women's popularity outlives their beauty.

498.

We confide in others largely to win their pity on their admiration.

499.

Envy always outlives the happiness we envy.

500.

That strength of character which withstands love makes love more violent and lasting ; weak natures, constantly the victims of passion, are rarely very deeply affected.

501.

Imagination could hardly frame as many contradictions as nature plants in each of us.

502.

One must have strength of character to be truly amiable ; most kind people are merely weak, and may easily become sour.

503.

It is dangerous to call attention to timidity when seeking to correct it.

504.

True amiability is the rarest of virtues ; most people who think themselves amiable are only indolent or weak.

505.

Weakness or force of habit attaches us to what is easy or pleasant, thus limiting our knowledge. No one ever troubles to exert his powers to the full.

506.

Vanity slanders more than malice.

507.

A heart still agitated by the remains of one passion is more susceptible to another than one completely cured.

508.

Those who have known a great love regret and rejoice at their cure all their days.

509.

More people are free from selfishness than from envy.

510.

Our mind is lazier than our body.

511.

Of all our failings laziness is the least known to us. None is more powerful or more malignant, although its ravages are hidden. If we examine carefully into its influence we shall find that it is invariably mistress of our sentiments, interests and pleasures. It is an octopus which holds up the greatest ships ; it is a flat calm more dangerous to important ventures than reefs or hurricanes. The indolence of sloth has a subtle and hidden charm for our souls which suspends our most ardent efforts, and crumbles our firmest resolutions.

512.

Whether we are of a reposeful or active temperament depends less upon the events of our lives, than upon the pleasant or unpleasant sequence of the trifles of daily existence.

513.

However depraved men may be, they dare not openly condemn virtues ; hence when they wish to persecute the righteous they pretend their virtue is feigned, or charge it with crimes.

514.

We frequently exchange love for ambition, but never ambition for love.

515.

Extreme avarice almost always overreaches itself ; no passion more frequently misses its goal, and over none does the present exercise such a powerful influence at the expense of the future.

516.

Avarice often produces contrary results ; many a man will stake his all on a remote and uncertain expectation, while just as many sacrifice a glorious future for a paltry, but immediate, profit.

517.

It would seem that man thinks himself insufficiently supplied with faults, for he increases the number by sundry strange qualities which he affects and cultivates with such diligence that they finally become faults so natural to him that he can no longer correct them.

518.

One perceives that people know their own faults better than we suspect, since they never admit their errors in speaking of their conduct. At such times conceit, which generally blinds them, enlightens them, and so sharpens their wits that they can suppress or conceal the slightest thing which might be incriminating.

519.

When young people first go into society they should appear either embarrassed or thoughtless ; in general an air of poise and self-possession soon turns to impertinence.

520.

Quarrels would be but short lived, were all the wrong on one side.

521.

Youth without beauty, or beauty without youth are of no avail.

522.

Some people are so frivolous and inconsequential that they are as far from possessing real faults as stable virtues.

523.

A woman's first indiscretion does not attract attention until she is guilty of a second.

524.

Some people are so self-centered that when they are in love they can engross themselves in their passion to the entire exclusion of the beloved person.

525.

Love, agreeable though it be, pleases more by its manifestations than by itself.

526.

An upright fool is, in the long run, less of a bore than a corrupt genius.

527.

Jealousy is the greatest of our afflictions, yet the one which evokes the least sympathy from those who cause it.

After having spoken of the falsity of so many apparent virtues, it is appropriate to say a word about the falsity of the scorn of death. I mean that scorn of death which the heathen boast they derive from their own courage unsustained by hope of a better life. To meet death unflinchingly, and to scorn death are very different; the former is common enough, but I doubt if the latter is ever sincere. Much has been written to prove that death is not a misfortune, and the weakest as well as the bravest have a thousand times given examples to support this contention, and yet I do not think any sensible person ever believed it. The great pains people are at to persuade themselves, and others, of the truth of the statement proves in itself that the task is not easy. Many things in this life may disgust us, but one never has good grounds to scorn death. Men who take their own lives do not think lightly of death, and they are shocked, and hold it off when it comes to them through some channel not of their choosing. The great discrepancies one notes in the valor of brave men is due to the fact that death appears to them under different disguises, and seems closer to them at one time than at another. Thus it happens that, having scorned that of which they are ignorant, they fear what they have come to know. In order not to deem it the greatest of afflictions one must avoid facing it in any of its forms. The wisest and the cleverest are those who adopt the most honorable pretexts not to encounter it, but every man who can face death such as it is, knows it to be the most awful of calamities. The inevitability of death was the hypothesis of the Philosophers; they believed that one should go gracefully

whither one must go, and, since it was impossible to perpetuate their lives, they left no stone unturned to perpetuate their reputations, and to save from the catastrophe whatever might be saved. Let us content ourselves, for appearances' sake, with not admitting, even to ourselves, all that we think of death, and let us trust more to our temperament than to these flimsy arguments which would make us believe that we can face death indifferently. The glory of dying bravely, the hope of being mourned, the desire of leaving behind a fair name, the certainty of being freed from the tribulations of this life and of no longer depending upon the vagaries of fortune, are considerations one must not overlook, yet one should not deem them of infallible assistance. They afford the same sort of encouragement that a simple hedge gives soldiers who are approaching the firing line. From afar it looks like secure shelter, but at close range one finds it but scanty protection. We flatter ourselves if we believe that death at close quarters is what we deem it from a distance, and that our feelings, which are but weaknesses, are sufficiently well tempered to withstand the severest of all tests. We underestimate, too, our pride by discounting what needs must destroy it; and our power of logic, on which we so much depend, is not strong enough in this contingency to persuade us as we would. In fact, it is our common-sense which plays us false, and, instead of leading us to scorn death, discloses to us all its terrors and horrors. The best reason can do, is to advise us to turn our eyes aside and to look at other things. Cato and Brutus chose lofty objects; a flunkey, not long since, was satisfied to dance on the scaffold whereon he was to die. Hence, although the motives may vary, the results are the same; and so it is also true that

however great the difference between great men and common people, one has frequently seen both meet death in the same way, but always with this distinction : in the scorn of death which the great show, it is the love of glory that blinds them, while in the case of ordinary men, it is only their limited vision which prevents them from knowing the scope of their calamity, and leaves them free to think of other matters.

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